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Statement

This thesis is the result of my independent research

[Signature]

Joanne Claire Pemberton
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Abstract

This thesis investigates some key aspects of intellectual life in the interwar years. It examines a number of significant debates which took place in this period. It begins with a survey of the crisis literature which appeared at the end of the Great War. This is followed by an examination of arguments in favour of the scientific control of social development. The next debate is about the nature of science in the light of modern physics, and the lessons that modern physics was deemed to hold for other areas of intellectual inquiry. The fourth debate concerns the philosophy of pragmatism, its various meanings and proposals for social and intellectual reconstruction. The principal debate examined in this thesis covers the broad question concerning the political manifestations of pragmatism and pluralism. Making sense of this debate requires detailed historical and philosophical analysis. The final issue that this thesis considers is the impact of the philosophy and vocabulary of pragmatism on certain economic debates in the 1920s and 1930s. In discussing these topics this thesis demonstrates that the interwar years witnessed vigorous intellectual exchanges across a broad range of disciplines. This thesis shows that participants in these intellectual debates shared and retained faith, despite many instances of misunderstanding, in the unity of all knowledge.
Introduction

This thesis is primarily concerned with intellectual life in the interwar years. It begins with a study of the sense of crisis, or more generally, with the sense of uncertainty that was seen to prevail in Western civilisation during that period. This sense of crisis was exhibited in different areas of discussion. Within this context, the thesis focuses on the philosophy of pragmatism: its influence, how it was understood and misunderstood, and how it was variously related to other responses to crisis.

In one sense, what I have uncovered in researching and writing this thesis is a confusion of tongues. Various intellectuals were often talking at cross-purposes with each during the interwar years. Yet, at the same time, there was a degree of coherence and concordance in these debates. Furthermore, there are lines of thought which were continuous throughout the period.

One thing that might spring to mind on reading this thesis is the question as to why one would accord the interwar period any special coherence at all. This is a question which I deal with in the first chapter. My argument in that chapter is that the pervasive sense of uncertainty, manifested in the talk of crisis, constitutes one reason why we can draw lines of demarcation around this period. But there are other themes which were either peculiar to or given added emphasis during this
period. In chapter two, I illustrate the drive to find scientific solutions to social problems. This in itself is a good example of the way in which intellectuals responded to crisis. That is, one can observe amongst intellectuals a tendency to see social uncertainty as a consequence of intellectual uncertainty or the failure to apply the intellect to practical difficulties. As I said, the attempts to establish scientific control of social development were only one manifestation of this. Philosophers often had quite a different response to crisis and could be heard calling for the need to achieve spiritual understanding.

The debates about the philosophy of pragmatism which developed in the interwar period are crucial to this study. Pragmatist philosophy, in its various forms, was both widely embraced and widely scorned during the inter-war years. Arguments both for and against pragmatism appeared regularly in philosophical, political science and economic journals. Pragmatism is important because it claimed to close the yawning gap that was believed to have opened up between science and morality — this was yet another perceived cause of crisis.

Two other identifiable features of the period are related to the philosophy of pragmatism. Firstly, many intellectuals during this period were preoccupied with developments in modern physics. Relativity theory and quantum theory were interpreted by scholars (including philosophers, social theorists and even scientists) in ways that made it seem as though physics provided justification for a range of already existing philosophical positions. For example, modern physics was seen to give support to the idea that reality is composed of flux or mind-energy; it
was seen as giving support to the principle that being is being perceived, and as giving support to the pragmatist belief that knowledge is useful rather than true. Developments in modern physics were interpreted by some to mean that even science, the last bastion of certainty, had succumbed to irrationalism. There was talk of the "collapse" of science and this of course, only added to the sense of crisis.

The second identifiable feature of the period which I discuss in relation to pragmatism was the growing prominence of economics in relation to public-policy debates. In contrast with the interest in physics, the prominence of economics in public life continued after the Second World War, but it emerged during the 1920s and 1930s. A great deal of methodological literature appeared pertaining to issues such as the relation between economic theory and practices and the place of values in economic analysis. As we shall see, the philosophy and vocabulary of pragmatism played a role in these methodological debates.

These are some brief indications of the sort of debates which emerged in intellectual circles during the inter-war years. I am not suggesting that this list is exhaustive; other important topics were debated during this period. Nevertheless, these themes do emerge strongly in any examination of the literature produced by academic commentators in the English-speaking world during this time.

I should stress that those who participated in the debates I
have examined were nearly all professional scholars. These scholars were mainly drawn from the areas of philosophy and the social sciences. However, the work of some non-academic intellectuals has also been referred to where relevant.

Most of my sources are derived from English-speaking countries, in particular America, Britain and Australasia. Where I have cited scholars from Australia or New Zealand this is not in order to suggest that there was a particular antipodean response to crisis. Rather, much of this material may be regarded as further evidence of British intellectual opinion. I should point out that many of the scholars working in Australasia at that time had either originally come from Britain or had undertaken graduate or post-graduate studies there.

The evidence I have gathered has mostly been drawn from books and journal publications in the areas of philosophy, politics and economics. The material published in journals was particularly useful in helping me establish a pattern of intellectual debate. A study of the journals gave me a good indication of what books were being read, discussed and criticised.

Some works published by European intellectuals have also been examined for purposes of both comparison and contrast. Edmund Husserl's interpretation in the 1930s of the crisis in science as a crisis in European man could not be overlooked in any discussion of the uncertainty of that time. The Russian philosopher Nicholas Berdyaev is mentioned because his arguments
either pre-dated or paralleled the arguments put by Husserl and others in relation to the causes of crisis. A number of European sources have also been dealt with because of the interest expressed in them by members of the academy in English-speaking countries. The writings of the French philosopher Henri Bergson, in particular his challenge to the cult of science, generated a great deal of excitement and criticism. Also important to English-speaking audiences was the alleged association between Bergson's philosophy and the activities of the syndicalist movement in France. Most of the European sources I have examined were translated into English at that time and it is the English translations I have used. In the case of a few French sources I have had to rely on the French language source. Many European intellectuals were also contributing articles to journals in English-speaking countries and these were either originally written in English or were translated by the publishers.

The use of current or recent sources has been sparing. Where they have been used it has been for the purposes of clarification or because they help to extend or illuminate a discussion. In some cases, where I have discussed a topic related to my immediate field of interest, such as the history and development of the syndicalist movement, secondary sources drawn from both contemporary and current works have been more extensively used. It should be noted that my main interest in relation to the syndicalist movement is the alleged association between it and the philosophies of Bergson and William James, not the actual
movement itself. However, in order to establish the validity of the claims concerning the influence of these philosophers I have had to look at the actual history of the movement during the interwar period and not just at the proclamations of its theoreticians and critics.

The syndicalist movement was important because some intellectuals claimed that it was but an extreme version of political pluralism. Indeed, some argued that it was the logical conclusion of political pluralism. James was seen as exerting an intellectual influence on the syndicalist movement precisely because he was seen as giving inspiration to political pluralism in general.

I have included a substantial discussion on the development of pluralist thought, including an examination of the intellectual and empirical conditions that gave rise to it. I included this material in order to demonstrate that the association between pluralist thought and pragmatist philosophy was not inevitable – although it might appear otherwise from reading some of the criticisms of pluralist theory put forward after the Great War. Nevertheless, there were certain points of conceptual and political agreement between the pragmatists and the pluralists which I explore in depth.

The approach I have taken is both thematic and historical. Each chapter covers a basic theme expressed in the academic literature of the period. In turn, each chapter is organised into a number of sub-themes, which represent certain aspects of a
more general debate. I have sought in these chapters, and in particular within the parameters of each sub-theme in each chapter, to present debates in a chronological fashion in order to demonstrate the persistence and development of certain topics over a period of time. Again, where sources have been used outside the immediate time-frame, this is for the purposes of comparison and contrast.

This thesis describes and examines the arguments and opinions of a great variety of scholars. Many of these scholars are obscure. Nevertheless, they have been used either because of the veracity of their arguments or because they provide supporting evidence for some of the claims made by other scholars about ideas and events at that time. It should also be pointed out that while many of these writers are unknown now they were publishing in the major intellectual journals of the period; in some cases, their books were being reviewed in these same journals. As a more general point, it could be argued that an attempt to characterise the intellectual life of a period should involve much more than a discussion of a handful of well-known thinkers. Indeed, thinkers who are well-known to us today may have failed to achieve prominence during the time in which they were writing due to the vagaries of intellectual fashion. The converse is also true. That is, that there may be scholars, little regarded today, who nevertheless were widely read and talked about during their own time. Whether these thinkers are worthy of our attention on purely intellectual grounds or not is irrelevant to this thesis. Famous or not, the scholars I include
in this thesis are those I consider to have cast light on or achieved currency in their own time.

The interwar discussions of the themes that I have examined exhibited a remarkable degree of continuity. This is also true of the criticisms of pragmatism. From the outset pragmatism was dismissed as something that would give rise to political opportunism at best and an ethics of power and domination at worst. It was a criticism that was seen to receive its final confirmation when Mussolini began invoking the name of James as one of his mentors. Furthermore, he invoked Nietzsche and Sorel along with James.

There are certain problems inherent in any study of the history of ideas. In particular, there is the problem of trying to strike a balance between exposition and criticism. Obviously both are important. What I have tried to do is to illustrate the arguments which were put during the period and examine the criticisms that they generated. I have also, where appropriate, developed my own criticisms of the arguments and the counter-arguments which appeared. Much of the thesis thus consists of the responses of certain intellectuals to each other as well as my responses to them. However, given that this is a history of ideas rather than a straightforward philosophical study, the focus of my attention cannot only rest on examining the logical structure or accuracy of the arguments put by those scholars I discuss.

One has to be careful that in looking for the deficiencies
in any argument one does not lose sight of the idea itself. Consideration must be given to the meaning or significance of an argument in relation to a broader intellectual context, and why it proved or did not prove persuasive within that context. Although of course, logical consistency and factual accuracy may be part of the reason why an argument proved persuasive. Furthermore, testing for the accuracy of the claims made by thinkers about other ideas is also crucial if one wants to know whether an author or event has been misinterpreted or misunderstood. This I have attempted to do.

Nevertheless, my main interest remains with the work that certain ideas or vocabularies were called upon to perform. Arthur O. Lovejoy described ideas as highly migratory. (Lovejoy 1940:4) What he was really referring to was the process by which words and ideas are developed and criticised, interpreted and misinterpreted and redeployed outside of their immediate intellectual environment. The notion that ideas migrate from one area to another, in the way in which I have defined it, is crucial to this thesis. As we will see, the journey on which an idea was taken was often one which involved continuous reinterpretation, redefinition and misinterpretation. My aim is not to correct misinterpretations although I certainly draw attention to them. Such corrections are secondary to the study of how certain ideas circulated and were responded to, including the misinterpretation of those ideas.

I should point out that one of the great difficulties in analysing these debates is the fact that the vocabulary used by
many of the participants in them included so many terms of a general nature. This is an issue that I examine in detail in chapter four - although it is a point that is stressed throughout my discussion. In particular, the problem lies with the fact that so many of the terms used in these debates were words that end in ism. An examination of the books and journals published at that time, especially in the area of philosophy and political theory, sees the isms fly past at an alarming rate. We hear of not only pragmatism, but positivism, voluntarism, intuitionism, mysticism, empiricism and so on.

I must stress that I use these terms because they were part of the general intellectual currency of the period. One cannot examine these debates without referring to these categories. However, one must try to analyse the meanings of these terms and this is where problems arise. For the more closely one examines them, the more ill-defined and ambiguous they become. Often these terms referred to a number of different tendencies, some of which, as I argue in the case of both positivism and pragmatism, could contradict each other. The fact that these terms could be construed in different ways is part of the reason why intellectual confusion was a feature of these debates. Of course, these points do not simply apply to the use of isms. For we also witness debates (ostensibly philosophical) which are essentially about definitions. We see this in the debate between the philosophers and Einstein about the real meaning of simultaneity and time. Again my interest here is not so much in getting to either the real meaning or to even the most suitable meaning that
these terms should possess; rather, it is in examining how these terms were used and the various meanings that they were given.

I should also point out that a number of the debates I examine were explicitly about the nature of reality (in the areas of philosophy, politics and economics) yet implicitly they were about metaphors. In particular, they were debates about what sort of metaphors, whether of a mechanical or biological kind, describe reality best. Here we find two things. Firstly, we see attempts to eliminate mechanical metaphors from philosophical, political and economic description. Secondly, we see attempts to reconceptualise nature or machinery as tools or instruments. These moves can be detected in the arguments of Bergson and the pragmatists and were important to both political and economic debates.

The ideas and debates that I have drawn attention to are of historical interest because an examination of them allows us to characterise certain aspects of intellectual activity in the interwar years. Many of the ideas I have examined are also of historical interest because they were taken up and applied to the realm of practical activity. It is interesting to observe how obscure and difficult concepts and theories were passed on from thinker to thinker until they finally reached the social domain in what was frequently a distorted form. Indeed, some of these ideas or rather words that philosophers and scientists employed actually gained currency in political, economic and administrative debates. We find Bergson's idea of the vital
force, a notion he developed several years before the Great War, being applied to the study of public administration in the late 1930s. The vocabulary and arguments of the pragmatists were another example. Pragmatist arguments were used by economists, students of administration and academics who became policy-makers in order to stir up political debate and to rearrange political priorities. We find both scholars and policy-makers averring their pragmatism, by which they could mean that one should adopt either a scientific or a practical attitude towards social problems. In either case, when used in these ways, the word pragmatism had different meanings to those that it was endowed with by Sorel and Mussolini.

As I have noted, the gaps between science and morality and between intellectual and social life were seen as a cause of crisis. The pragmatists sought to reconcile intellectual and practical activity. A major part of this thesis will be an examination of where they were deemed to have been successful and where they were deemed to have failed. It is this discussion that allows me to raise some general points, which I think are implicit in many of the debates of the period, about the relation between intellectual and political life and between intellectual and practical activity.

Each chapter is an attempt to characterise an intellectual debate which took place in the period. In the following pages I will give a brief summary of each chapter and point to some of the key terms that were used in the course of these debates. I
shall also provide a definition of key terms which is consistent with the way they have been used in this thesis and the way in which they were used at that time. I have in all cases but one taken as my source for these definitions two works by the American scholar Ralph Barton Perry, himself a significant contributor to the scholarly debates of the time. I shall mainly rely on an early and major work, *The Present Conflict of Ideals* (1918) which was an examination of all the conflicting philosophical doctrines which he claimed lay behind the military struggle which was the Great War. (Perry 1918:2) I shall also refer to a work he wrote twenty years later called *In the Spirit of William James* (1938).

I should point out that any further modification of the usage of these terms which is required due to their ambiguity or due to a particular meaning they may have in other contexts, shall be recorded in the main body of the thesis. This list is not complete; not every ism that appears in the text has been defined herein. Where I have not done this it is because the term does not appear frequently or because its meaning is obvious from the context.

In the first chapter I discuss the literature of crisis or uncertainty. This was not a school of thought. Rather it comprised a disparate range of thinkers who to a degree shared a common vocabulary (that is, words such as crisis and uncertainty) and a common concern with what was seen as a dangerous moment in the history of Western civilisation. The reasons given for the
appearance of this climate of uncertainty were manifold. However, we can isolate a number of sub-themes. Not surprisingly the authors of this crisis literature were largely concerned with events such as the Great War and its aftermath, the economic depression and the appearance of tyrannical governments in Europe.

But there were other less obvious concerns. Intellectuals in particular were concerned that, despite all the mechanical wonders that had appeared as a result of scientific progress, society was becoming increasingly empty of a moral or religious spirit. The First World War was viewed as a demonstration of the dangers that scientific progress could unleash if unmatched by a similar moral development. In addition to this, there was the fear that a scientific, secularised and cosmopolitan culture, one which was being hailed as the force of the future, would see human existence become passive and trivial. Furthermore, it was feared that this would lead to increasing outbursts of irrational behaviour. What was characteristic then of many of the intellectual responses to crisis was the belief that it had deep philosophical or spiritual roots.

Chapter two deals with what was the most obvious response to crisis. This was the belief that crisis could be solved by the stricter application of scientific methods to the organisation and running of society. This was precisely the sort of belief that many philosophers and those holding religious beliefs rallied against, because they thought it would only worsen the crisis. Nevertheless, I show in this chapter that there was among social
scientists a great deal of faith in what science could achieve when applied to social life.

It is in this chapter that I introduce the term scientism, by which is meant the cult of scientific methods. (Perry 1918:45ff) Also in this chapter, I introduce the term empiricism (or "the philosophy of experience") which dictates that knowledge must begin with that which is given in experience; that is, that which is immediately disclosed by our senses. (Perry 1938:44)

We should, however, draw a slight distinction between empiricism and what was called radical empiricism, which I address in chapters three and five. Radical empiricism is a much stricter term than empiricism insofar as its emphasis is wholly on the given — on pure sensations. The radical empiricists were less concerned with those formal procedures by which a particular sensory event could be verified, proving a certain hypothesis. Radical empiricism was distinguished from pragmatism to the extent that pragmatism is a method which tells one how to approach experience and not just an account of what lies in the content of experience. (Perry 1938:66)

The conjunction of empiricism with techniques of verification was what characterised the positivist, which is a term introduced in chapter two. The core of the positivistic approach was the "acceptance of a determinate sensory event as constituting the final verification or proof to which every theory must be submitted." (Perry 1938:51) However, I will demonstrate in this and later chapters that the vocabulary and
methods of science as adapted by social scientists did not quite accord with this definition. Frequently, the claim to be a positivist entailed no more than the assertion that one was paying attention to facts or was impartial in one's approach to a particular subject. Furthermore, the description positivistic was also used to refer to the idea that society should be run by fact-finding bodies. Like rationalism, (defined below) it had a political as well as an epistemological significance. To this extent, invoking the language of science was a rhetorical exercise and did not actually entail the transference of laboratory procedures to the social arena – even if that were possible.

Chapter three looks at the development of positivism, in particular, its transformation into logical positivism (sometimes known as logical empiricism) in the hands of the Vienna circle. The important thing to note about logical positivists is that they, like pragmatist philosophers, stressed the importance of both "formal logic and an empirical criterion of the scientifically meaningful concept and hypothesis." (Morris 1970:148) We should also note that positivism and empiricism were opposed by a group calling themselves the new or neo-realists. The neo-realists argued that because the positivist only spoke of sensations or experience, and not of any reality that existed independently of those things, the implications of their position were solipsistic. Pragmatists were also accused of being anti-realist in this sense. However, we should note that the neo-
realists did share with the positivists a faith in scientific methods.

Chapter three also examines the reaction against the cult of science in the early part of the 20th century, particularly in the philosophy of Henri Bergson. Bergson was opposed to the mechanical understandings of nature which he held to be prominent in both classical and modern science. Bergson's philosophy, as with the philosophy of the pragmatists, was also defined in opposition to what was called rationalism—the belief that reality could be divined by the use of "pure intellect" without appeal to experience. (Perry 1938:170) We should note here, however, that the word rationalism also acquired other senses in the 1920s and 1930s. At first, it was used as a term of praise and referred to the rationalization movement or the new rationalism which developed after the Great War and which sought to apply scientific principles to the running of government and industry. Later however, the term rationalism was used to condemn formulaic approaches to the running of society. This understanding of the term rationalism is important for our discussions in chapters two, six and seven.

Because of its opposition to rationalism, Bergson's philosophy was often described as a form of intuitionism or voluntarism. The former referred to non-intellectual forms of understanding and the latter referred to the elevation of will over intellect. (Perry 1938:29) The term voluntarism was also frequently applied to the pragmatists.
The discussion in chapter three demonstrates the problems one faces in attempting to clearly define positivism and empiricism. In the case of empiricism this was because the apprehension of sensations could be related to Bergson's idea that true knowledge came from the intuition of the immediately given. Here, the empirical and the intuitive were combined. Indeed, we should note that because Bergson's philosophy placed great emphasis on intuition it was also described as a form of mysticism - a label which Bergson rejected. Perry defined this term (although not in relation to Bergson) as the belief that our intellects cannot, due to their "abstract and indirect" methods, enter a "deeper reality" which can only be reached by "feeling, immediate insight, ecstasy and intuition." (Perry 1918:28)

In relation to positivism, it was frequently pointed out that it was prone to "collapse" into a form of personal or subjective idealism; that is, the belief that the individual was the ultimate origin and source of all meaning. (This position contrasts with that of absolute idealism, which viewed reality as the "aggregate of phenomena arranged by a single mind", and ethical idealism, which held that all individuals were driven by the one moral will. [Perry 1918:190,235]) This is because the positivist and the empiricist (and this was also true of Bergson in some respects), deny that phenomena need to be supported by an extra layer called reality. The argument was that without this layer of reality the retreat into subjectivism was inevitable.

It is not surprising that where modern physics (especially the theory of relativity) was seen as giving support to a form of
subjective idealism or phenomenalism, it was associated with the name of Bergson. Phenomenalism was the view that the contents of experience were mental in character. (Perry 1918:189) However, relativity theory and quantum physics were also seen as supporting a form of panpsychism, the belief that phenomena were actually comprised of a substance which was "mind-stuff" (or sometimes mind-energy) and that all that one saw in the world were shifting arrangements of this stuff. (Perry 1918:190) I demonstrate in chapter three that such interpretations of modern physics were wrong. Nevertheless, I also reveal their importance in relation to the development of pragmatist philosophy. It should be noted that the discussion of the meaning of the terms relativity and time in this chapter is also crucial in relation to my discussion in chapter seven of certain developments within economic thought in the interwar years.

Pragmatism as a philosophy is the central theme in chapter four. The meaning of pragmatism is extensively explored in this chapter while its political influence is discussed later in chapter six. In chapter four, I first examine the origins of pragmatism and its early development. However, my main focus is on its later development in the hands of John Dewey and Sidney Hook, as a form of experimentalism or instrumentalism. Experimentalism meant the scientific technique of verification. That is, the idea that a hypothesis was proven where its verification was successful. Instrumentalism, however, was a broader term which applied the experimental criterion of success to a much broader range of phenomena - such as moral behaviour,
economic policy and public administration. It was also construed in more a voluntaristic manner to mean whatever can satisfy a passion or desire.

Dewey denied that instrumentalism implied subjectivism. Hook stated that the pragmatism of Dewey was scientific, unlike the mystical pragmatism of James. Dewey and Hook tried to give pragmatism an objective status in order to avoid the charge of subjectivism that was levelled at the positivist and empiricist. In order to do this they embraced a form of naturalism; this term referred to the view that man was a part of nature and that his behaviour should be seen as a process of adaptation to the environment which was guided by his own instinctive and intellectual capacities. This view was often labelled deterministic because it appeared to view man's behaviour as a mechanical function of his environment. Dewey and Hook however denied that the implications of their naturalism were deterministic. They argued that naturalism allowed for and even facilitated human freedom because it encouraged men to seize the scientific tools they had created and turn these to good ends. For Dewey, the reason for putting man back "inside" nature was so that he could rediscover his creative powers. He could recall the fact that industrial civilisation was the result of his capacity to adapt to the physical environment. This was similar to an idea that Bergson had put forward some years earlier that man must rediscover his creative powers. Again, this discussion points to the fact that many different meanings can be given to the terms used in the course of these debates. Depending on the meanings
given to terms such as instrumentalism and the concept of nature, there may be a range of philosophical outcomes. This fourth chapter concludes with a discussion of the pragmatists' attempts to bridge the gap between science and morality.

In chapter five I begin to examine some of the political implications of the philosophies I have discussed. In this chapter I discuss the development of pluralist political theory. The pluralist was one who held that the group and not the individual or the state should be the real unit of political autonomy. This was a political theory that developed in reaction to what the pluralists called political monism—the belief in the all-encompassing state. This belief was said to be derived from the philosophical position that "nature is one interrelated system." (Perry 1918:227) This view was most commonly associated with the neo-Hegelian movement in Britain. Bernard Bosanquet, whom I discuss in chapters five and six, was one of the chief targets of pluralist thinkers. Bosanquet was held to be a representative of the view that the state, as the representative of the general will (which itself was based on the idea of a "spiritual community") should be the body charged with the ultimate adjustment of social relations. (Perry 1918:271)

The philosophy of pragmatism was frequently associated with this attack on political monism. However, in this chapter I also discuss the development of pluralist political theory in relation to a much wider range of historical and intellectual forces in order to be able to determine the actual influence of pragmatism.
In this chapter, as well as addressing the pluralist theory of Frederic William Maitland and John Neville Figgis, I examine the syndicalist movement. Syndicalism was seen as an extreme form of pluralism and this identification helps explain the hostility that pluralist theory aroused both before and after the Great War. I examine the influence of syndicalism in France, America, Britain and Italy. As noted above, studying this movement is important because of the alleged association between it and the ideas of Bergson and James. The syndicalist movement, in terms of its motivations, was seen as a political manifestation of romanticism and irrationalism. The former was the "cult of spontaneity of passion", and the latter referred to any philosophy which "disparages intellect" and "exalts instinct, passion and intuition." (Perry 1918:285:294)

Syndicalism was said to stand mid-way between anarchism (which posited the individual as the unit of political autonomy) and collectivism (in which the state as the representative of the collectivity is supreme). However, I also show that syndicalism and pluralism were used to refer to a form of social organisation other than one composed of autonomous groupings. I discuss in this chapter what was called administrative syndicalism or administrative pluralism. These terms were usually applied to arguments in favour of the independence of the public services from the political power, which stated that the sole duty of government was the efficient delivery of public services.

When used in this way, syndicalism or pluralism was held to be close to the fascist idea of the corporate state, in which
individuals practising a certain vocation (or with a certain function to perform) were organised into groups which were subject to hierarchical discipline and which were under an obligation not to endanger the well-being of the corporate body. Also in this chapter, I briefly discuss guild socialism (which was described as the British variant of syndicalism) which was said to stand mid-way between the idea of the corporate state and those who argued that groups should be largely autonomous. The guild socialists also envisaged a society in which functions were organically arranged but, unlike the theorists of the corporatist state, their vision would allow each of these functional groups to be represented in the system's overall governing body.

This chapter finally examines the marriage between pluralist political thought and what was called internationalism; that is, the belief that the national boundaries which separated people were artificial and should eventually be dissolved. I demonstrate that within pluralist theory there existed a conjunction of the particular (that is, an emphasis on the power of groups within the boundaries of the state) with the universal (that is, the emphasis on the ideal of an international community.) This picture was the mirror-image of the one held up by many of their opponents.

In chapter six I directly examine the influence of pragmatist philosophy on political theory and theories of jurisprudence. Here, the political possibilities opened up by pragmatism are shown to have been manifold. I begin this chapter
by developing the relation between the philosophy of James and the pluralist theory of Harold Laski. On James' pluralistic view, the universe is a shifting arrangement of partially united forces. It is a universe in which some things are continuous with each other and others are not. It is a universe where there was only a limited place for exact causal prediction. In this chapter, I explore Laski's transformation of James' philosophy into political theory. The world depicted as a result of this transformation was comprised of shifting arrangements of only partially unified groups and collectivities.

Laski saw his political philosophy as a way of preventing the state from accumulating too much power. However, the critics of pluralism and pragmatism argued that Laski's political theory, in conjunction with James' philosophy, led to exactly such an outcome. That is, it gave rise to fascism. There were two reasons put forward in order to argue this point. The less serious charge was that pluralism led to social chaos and the eventual imposition of rule by force. The second charge was that there were things intrinsic to pragmatism itself (its emphasis on voluntarism, on the malleability of the universe and on the understanding of truth as success) which gave rise to fascism. The argument was that any group which embraced this creed would attempt, not only to assert their own autonomy against the state, but would also to seek to dominate all other groups within the state. I explore in some detail this form of criticism of pragmatism, as well as the responses to it. In addition to this, I examine the charge that the ideas of the French philosopher of
jurisprudence. Leon Duguit (as well as those of John Dewey) had also prepared the basis for fascism because they were seen as supporting the idea of the state as a functional arrangement. Of course, my analysis of explanations for fascism in the interwar period considers only ideas which were related to pragmatism.

This chapter concludes with a discussion of the shift away from pluralist theory in the 1930s in response first to the depression, and then to the onset of the Second World War. Pragmatist philosophy is discussed in relation to this. It was pragmatism in its more scientific form (that is, as a philosophy imitating the experimental sciences) that came to the fore then. This is a theme that I also develop in chapter seven. Chapter six concludes with a general discussion about the problems of defining pragmatism and pluralism, and a consideration of the fraught question about the relation between political thought and political action.

Chapter seven is a concluding chapter which looks at the use that was made of pragmatist philosophy and the ideas derived from the new physics in the area of economic theorising. In this context, I examine the various ways in which the concepts of time, indeterminacy and the metaphor of creative evolution were imported into the realms of economic theorising. These ideas provided the means by which traditional theories could be destabilised, and be forced to accommodate different patterns of thought. I argue that in reconceptualising economic life, economists were better placed to respond to the political demands of the time. Furthermore, I argue in this chapter that it was
largely through the gateway of economics that pragmatism, and the vocabulary associated with it, entered the language of public administration in the English-speaking world. Hence, we find in the administrative and economic journals of the late 1930s and 1940s an emphasis on the need for administrators to be practical and empirical in their approach to social planning. Indeed, it was economics conceived as an empirical science that was above all seen as the answer to the crisis of the 1930s. Not surprisingly, however, when pragmatic methods became just one of many techniques of social experiment and adjustment, they ceased to be controversial. Pragmatism came to be seen as a word used to describe justifications of the status quo. Ironically, given its earlier challenges to intellectualist theories, it even came to be called a form of rationalism.
Chapter 1: The Age Of Uncertainty

1. The Literature of Crisis

The spectre of crisis loomed large in the literature produced by intellectuals from both within and without the academy in the period between the end of the Great War and the onset of World War II. The word was used to give expression to distinct yet also overlapping concerns about the trajectory of Western civilization. Military crises, economic crises and political crises came one after the other. After 1918 it also became common to speak of an intellectual and spiritual crisis caused by a collapse in the foundations of knowledge and belief. As we shall see, a scepticism of foundations was one of the defining features of the age.

By the 1930s a substantial amount of material centred on the idea of a "crisis" in the Western world had appeared. While frequently used to highlight short-run political or economic problems, the word was also used to describe certain long-range tendencies which had profound implications for the Western way of life. In these years we can observe the flourishing of a whole vocabulary of crisis and social turmoil. For instance, in 1936 in the preface to Karl Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia* Louis Wirth noted that, in response to the spread of conflicts both within and between nations, there had "arisen an extensive literature" which spoke "of the 'end', 'decline', 'crisis', 'decay', or 'death' of western civilisation." (Mannheim 1936:xiii)
These platitudes and ideas about the collapse of Western civilisation can be found throughout the interwar era. Of course, we could say that fears about the end of the world are evident throughout history and that therefore, there is little reason to argue that this period constitutes a special case. Further to this, we could argue that any attempt to isolate a discrete set of writings on crisis is to impose an artificial unity on what may be quite unrelated concerns.

It is true that warnings of social chaos and collapse are not peculiar to this period. The mere fact that some intellectuals warned of danger might not be remarkable. Indeed, it is in the nature of intellectuals as a group, insofar as they see themselves as the guardians of civilised customs and habits of thought, to issue such warnings from time to time - although they may often be ignored. Yet what is notable about the interwar years is the high degree of visibility and currency that the rhetoric of crisis obtained. Crisis was acknowledged to be a central preoccupation of the times in both the intellectual and political spheres. Laski spoke for many in the English-speaking world when he announced in 1933 that there was abroad a temper of "profound and widespread disillusionment", and that the only successful literature was that of despair and protest. (Laski 1933:16-18)

Crisis literature also exhibited a degree of self-consciousness. Writers could not have been ignorant of the fact that they were contributing to a body of work centred on themes
of social and intellectual chaos. Nor could they have been untouched by it. As each new difficulty or problem arose, it was possible to attach it to and interpret it in terms of previous expressions of alarm.

Another thing to note about these writings is that it was often suggested that the modern crisis might be much more serious and long-lasting than those which had occurred in previous centuries. Laski wrote in *Democracy in Crisis* that the chaotic conditions which prevailed in his own times were not unlike those which appeared in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars. Furthermore, he suggested that, just as the Western world had recovered after a generation from those terrible times, it was quite possible that after a period of crisis so too would the Western world recover from its present discontents. Yet he said that there were symptoms that pointed to the onset of massive social convulsions. (Laski 1933:15) One could not simply assume that the modern crisis was merely a passing phase. That is one reason why mention of crisis was often converted into declarations about the end or collapse of civilization.

It should be stated at the outset that we are not going to search for the real causes of crisis. Nor are we going to debate the question as to whether a crisis existed as an objective reality. The focus here is entirely on perceptions as expressed in the writings of intellectuals. It is by focussing upon these that we can see how various intellectuals responded to the widespread belief, expressed by Gilbert Murray, that there was
"something wrong." He observed in the 1930s that: "There is a loss of confidence, a loss of faith, an omnipresent, haunting fear. People speak as they never spoke in the Victorian days of the possible collapse of civilization." (Harrington 1965:32)

This is not to suggest that the idea of "crisis" was only in the mind of intellectuals. The word gained widespread use in this period and many of the writings of intellectuals on this topic entered the mainstream of political life. This suggested that crisis rhetoric did manage to adequately describe the circumstances and give vent to the feelings of both English and non-English speaking peoples.

Most of all it is the vocabulary of crisis which helps unify those preoccupations. If we can show that a distinctive vocabulary was invoked frequently and with intensity in these years, then we have further grounds for imposing some unity on the writings of the period. In this case, as Wirth's comment suggests, it is the constant reiteration of words such as crisis, decline and chaos and their arrangement around particular sets of issues that lends coherence to this enterprise. To scan the titles of many of the texts published in this period is to be struck by the frequency with which the word crisis appeared. Andre Siegried's books Europe's Crisis and England's Crisis, Harold Laski's Democracy in Crisis and Edmund Husserl's The Crisis of the European Sciences are a few examples. Indeed, one

1. Michael Harrington cited Murray in The Accidental Century (1965) which itself is an example of post-war crisis literature. I should stress however, that in intellectual circles in the post-war era, the idea that there was a crisis in civilisation was not nearly as widely held as it was in the interwar years.
reviewer of Siegfied's *Europe's Crisis* wrote, "these days 'crisis' is a much overworked and sorely abused word." (Guillebaud 1935:736) Again, this is not to suggest that the use of the word crisis in order to refer to a wide range of social and intellectual problems is peculiar to this era. Yet the term did become something of a catch-cry in these years, much more so that it had in earlier times. Nevertheless, I should add that while the use of these terms does suggest that there was a linguistic identity in debates about crisis, it does not suggest that there was an actual unity of beliefs. In many cases there was agreement about the nature and the source of crisis. However, the word crisis could also be used to refer to quite different phenomena.

Randolph Starn in his essay on *Historians and 'Crisis'* would seem to support this view. In his study of the history of the term he made special mention of the crisis literature which appeared after the Great War and also developed around the Second World War. (Starn 1971:10-12) Starn detailed how a word which began life with a medical meaning in the 5th century B.C., describing that moment in time when an illness either intensifies or subsides, was extended by analogy to include momentous occasions in the conduct of political and military affairs. Starn wrote that the term was used in all of these senses several times in Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian Wars*. (Starn 1971:4-5) However, in the Roman, medieval and Renaissance eras crisis was returned to its technical medical roots. The term really did not burst forth again until the 17th century - a century
described as one of general crisis. (Starn 1971:5-6) After the 17th century it came to be applied to any number of intellectual, social, political and economic matters, obtaining particular prominence in Marxist theories of history. (Starn 1971:5-9) As Starn notes, the advantage of the term and the reasons for its popularity among historians lies with its essential ambiguity. Crisis has both technical and theatrical appeal; it can be applied to both short-run and long-term tendencies; it can serve cyclical understandings of history as well as ones which are open-ended; it can function as a warning of danger as well as a call to arms and finally it can encourage both hope and despair. (Starn 1971:4-5)

Whether a crisis was seen as terminal or transitory also depended on the sorts of metaphors with which it was described. For instance, the American historian Henry Adams appealed to the law of entropy, which insisted that there was a tendency in all creations to decay, in order to argue that civilisation was sliding towards chaos. (Shumate 1934:600-1) In addition, a growing awareness of the relative character of cultural habits and beliefs encouraged pessimism about the future of Western civilization. H.R Raven in Civilization as Divine Superman (1932) claimed that 20th century thinkers, breathing in the spirit of relativity, recognised that every civilization and the moral principles it upheld would in the end descend into an "anarchic barbarism out of which a new rejuvenated culture would emerge." (Raven 1932:225)

Thus, the use of certain quasi-scientific metaphors could
give a logical force to claims about the inevitability of social decline. Perhaps the most notorious example of this genre was Oswald Spengler's two volume work *The Decline of the West*, which first appeared in 1918 and which put forward an "organismic" interpretation of crisis. (Ogg 1942:4) Crisis, according to Spengler's biological interpretation, was a cyclical phenomenon. As he argued later in *Man and Technics*, the ongoing cycle of life decreed that every creation, every thought and every deed was foredoomed to decay and oblivion. (Spengler 1932:14) The appearance of civilization, Spengler wrote, marked a culture's highest stage yet also sounded its death-knell. Thus, whether it was called crisis, decline or collapse, what Western man was witnessing in the interwar years was the "death agony of Western Culture" for which there was no cure. (Sorokin 1941:16)

In announcing the death of Western civilization Spengler was carrying on the task of "sceptical unmasking" that Nietzsche had begun. (Spengler 1926:xiv) In *The Decline of the West* he attempted to show that the very concepts of mankind (which he termed "an empty word") and Western civilization were illusions. (Spengler 1926:21) It did not take the onset of the Great War to suggest this to him. Spengler saw himself as a prophet of decline and not just its observer. He wrote in the preface to the first edition of *The Decline of the West* that he had conceived of the title in 1912. (Spengler 1922:xv) Nevertheless, the Great War very much permeated this work. He conceded that he had extensively rewritten the text in the midst of the "storm and stress" of those years. (Spengler 1926:xiii-xv)
While Spengler's specific claims about the state of Western civilisation now seem somewhat operatic in scope, *The Decline of the West* did cause an "unprecedented sensation" in Germany on its release. It encapsulated the "dreary mood of pessimism" which had so absorbed the German people in the aftermath of the Great War. (Liebert 1933:34) Indeed, Spengler wrote in the preface to the revised edition in 1922 that the "misery and disgust" of the post-war period had provided additional confirmation of his earlier diagnosis. (Spengler 1922:xiv)

While Spengler and before him Nietzsche made early predictions of crisis, a more general preoccupation with the notion that Western civilization was in a state of collapse began to emerge with the closing chapters of the Great War. Interest in the putative death of Western civilization was by no means a peculiarly German concern. We find that fears about the collapse of Western civilization were frequently articulated in the English-speaking world. While no doubt partly inspired and confirmed by the war against Germany, the sources of these fears often resided in developments which bore no direct relation to German political affairs.

For example, concerns were expressed about the growing materialistic ethos in Western societies and the consequent diminution of Christian belief. In 1928, writing in the *Australasian Journal of Psychology and Philosophy*, the Reverend H. K. Archdall argued that because people had become solely concerned with material advancement they were now living "under
the sign of the collapse of Civilisation." (Archdall 1928:15) R.H Tawney had earlier expressed the same view. He wrote in the **The Acquisitive Society** (1920) that what made the modern era distinctive was that religion was seen to be irrelevant to the "habitual conduct and organisation of society". (Tawney 1920:234) What made modern life distinctive also made it more precarious because only Christianity, with its absolute standards of right and wrong, had stood between civilization and the "rule of the sword." (Tawney 1920:234-5) Modern crises were bound to be much worse than in the past, as man had no religious beliefs to hold onto and no ultimate confirmation that men should be free and equal.

This was a consistent theme in crisis literature and one which was related to such problems as the encroachment of technology, the rise of the masses and growing intellectual scepticism, all of which were seen as unique to modern times and as causes of modern anxiety. Lippmann wrote in 1927 that three of the things that made the modern experience unique were the impersonal character of the modern metropolis, the fact that knowledge was in a constant state of flux and the lack of any authoritative body of morals to which man could appeal. (Lippmann 1946:174) As a result, the modern experience was "uprooted", "incoherent"; modern man was lost. (Lippmann 1946:69) The word modern, while still suggestive of things that were perfect and new, also came to take on rather negative connotations:--The word modern, in many respects, came to stand for uncertainty, confusion and even crisis.
2. The Collapse of Utopia

Reinterpretations of the significance of modern life flourished after the Great War. We find in the post-war literature that 1914 was frequently used to mark the beginnings of modern man's fall. Contrasts were sharply drawn between the temper of intellectual and social life in the pre and post-war eras. While 1913 was described as an "age of security", 1931 was described as an "age of dreadful insecurity"; an "age of fear" which had begotten tyranny. (Portus 1939:95)

If we are to believe the comments of some writers, the sense of disappointment after the conclusion of the Great War was so strong because a period of great optimism and confidence had preceded it. Optimism in particular was expressed about the possibility of social reform and the gradual elimination of violent or military solutions to political conflicts. The Australian writer F.W. Gisborne noted that up to 1914 optimists had insisted that war between nations was impossible, because of the "advance of civilisation" (manifest in the spread of culture, education, commerce and democracy) and an "assumed growth of a feeling of fellowship among all the world's races". (Gisborne 1925:77)

While the depiction of the pre-War era as one of confidence and security may have been to some a myth created by those who wished to depict their own times as particularly dark and dangerous, it did have a historical basis. In the years before
the Great War, many people did look forward to a new enlightened age in the conduct of domestic and international affairs. The American historian Samuel Morison notes that President Wilson had declared in *The New Freedom* that: "This is nothing short of a new social age, a new era of human relationships, a new stage-setting for the drama of life." (Morison 1965:812) Morison further adds that even the "chronically pessimistic" Henry Adams had written in his *Education* that following the settling of the Russo-Japanese War it seemed that "for the first time in 1500 years a true Roman Pax was in sight." (Morison 1965:841)

Perhaps if pre-war progressives or world improvers, as they were called, had not exhibited such confidence in their schemes, their ideas may not have been branded as "failures" following "that fateful year" of 1914. (Gisborne 1925:77) As Gisborne wrote, all the confident anticipations of the new era of peace were "falsified by events." (Gisborne 1925:77) Wilson's "New Freedom" turned out to be nothing more than a hollow hope. Laski wrote that the Great War had dealt a deadly blow to the foundations of religious belief and this criticism of religious foundations had been extended to civilization as a whole. (Laski 1933:16-17) Such views were also being expressed in Europe. Paul Valery wrote his article *The Crisis of Mind* just after the Great War. He wrote in 1931 of the sentiments he had been trying to express when he penned that it:

*The Crisis of Mind, which I wrote immediately after the peace, contains merely a development of the thoughts that came to me almost twenty years earlier. The immediate result of the Great War was, as it could not avoid being, to emphasize and precipitate the declining trend of*
Europe...that crisis, which had been prepared long in advance by all sorts of illusions, and which has left in its wake so many problems, enigmas, and fears, a more uncertain situation, more troubled minds, a more gloomy future, than ever existed in 1913. (Valery 1951:27)

Perhaps the most shattering effect of the Great War, at least for many intellectuals, was the destruction of the Victorian confidence in the progress of Western civilization. Laski wrote that it was against the background of this growing scepticism of foundations in the West that challenges to colonial rule were taking place in India and China took place. With the undermining of this belief there was no answer to the demands of the colonies for independence, except that of force. (Laski 1933:18) Armed conflict was perceived to be as much a part of the modern world as it was of the old. In fact, modern warfare seemed much more devastating.

A Western scepticism of foundations was something that characterised the interwar period. Elton Mayo, writing at the end of the Second World War, described how in a matter of thirty years all the grand plans for reform of the Victorian era had been reduced to chaos. (Mayo 1945:3) He described this as a "Greek tragedy" on an unprecedented scale. (Mayo 1945:3) As the allusion to classical tragedy suggests, there was a degree of hubris involved here. For the confidence of the Victorian era also contained within it the seeds of its own destruction. Mayo wrote that it was because of the blind belief that he could master his fate that man had called "down upon himself the wrath of the gods." (Mayo 1945:3) References to the arrogance of 20th century man had been made since the end of the Great War.
Archdall wrote in 1928 that humanity had entered the "20th century with an unshakable conceit" in itself; it was even doubtful, he wrote, whether "the worst war in history" had shaken it out of its "self-complacency." (Archdall 1928:15) But as suggested above, such warnings were not always heeded. The fact that there was a delayed recognition of these warnings on the part of politicians and the public only served to fuel intellectual perceptions of crisis.

One reason for pointing to a crisis in social or intellectual affairs is to aid in the manipulation of priorities. Alerting others to perceived dangers may be a way of promoting one's own desired solutions. For instance, to insist that there is a crisis in social or intellectual life may be a backdoor way of calling for a return to past customs or ways of thinking. It may lead to a reassertion of the importance of "real morality and the fundamental virtues" - the true foundations of society. (Hunter 1929a:50) Indeed, we can find in the literature of the period frequent calls for spiritual renewal and moral regeneration.

It should be easy to see why talk of crisis gave way to talk of foundations, involving claims and counter-claims about the "real" nature and source of a civilized existence. We should also note that the insistence that there was a crisis in Western civilization gave rise to reflections on the role of the intellectual in relation to the rest of society. The claim that Western spiritual life was in a state of decay and that this was the cause of political turmoil was often attached to arguments in
favour of the paramount importance of contemplative activity and the pre-eminence of philosophical modes of thought. Only philosophy could show the way to true morality because only philosophy took notice of those imponderable things such as love, justice and brotherhood. It was claimed that only philosophical understanding of these higher truths could secure the well-being of the social order. Archdall wrote that unless social life was underpinned by a commitment to such atemporal values, then it would be "soured at the source" and would slide from "disunion to anarchy" and to the "methods of the jungle." (Archdall 1928:23)

While the symptoms of crisis were largely agreed upon - colonial revolts, the rise of dictators, economic depression and class antagonisms - differences arose over the inner significance of these symptoms. We should note in this context that the word foundations is also ambiguous. Foundations need not always be located in the atemporal sphere; they may be time-bound - the products of human design and manufacture - and may require rebuilding now and again. Thus, distinct from those who saw the true meaning of crisis and the true foundations of society in religious terms is the British scholar E.H Carr, who saw both crisis and foundations as essentially political phenomena. Indeed, crisis for Carr stemmed largely from the nature of political life itself. In particular, in his famous text first published in 1939 and called The Twenty Years' Crisis (spanning the years 1919 to 1939), Carr focussed upon conflicts in the international arena and the failure of the League of Nations to
Carr noted that periods of "crisis" had been common in history, but he said that the crisis of the interwar years had its own characteristic feature. For Carr, this was the "abrupt descent from the visionary hopes of the first decade to the grim despair of the second." (Carr 1946:224) During the "mirage of the twenties" politicians continued to express confidence about the prospects for future world peace. (Carr 1946:224) According to Carr, the extent to which they were deluding themselves only became evident during the Manchurian crisis of 1931. But crisis stood for more than an end to the illusions and optimism of the twenties. Carr thought the "inner meaning" of the crisis was the "collapse", after a century and a half, of the utopian belief in the "harmony of interests". (Carr 1946:226:62) Totalitarian dictatorships were but the symptoms of this more fundamental disease. (Carr 1946:226)

One could also describe Carr's work as an attempt at "sceptical unmasking" of cherished 19th century ideals about the progress of international affairs. For in *The Twenty Years Crisis* Carr argued that the concept of a "coherent 'Western' civilization whose conflicts could be harmonised" lacked any substance. (Carr 1946:224) Behind all the solemnities about Western civilization and the brotherhood of mankind, and the attempts to "moralise international relations", lay vested interests. (Carr 1946:225) This only became obvious in the 20th century because in the 18th and 19th centuries wars had been
conducted by the "civilised" against the "uncivilised" and so for
many the persistence of conflict went unnoticed. Now however, it
was the civilised world that was tearing itself apart and thus
crisis had become a stark and palpable reality. (Carr 1946:225)

Furthermore, the crisis revealed that utopian ideals of
harmony and rationality were not only inappropriate but were also
dangerous when applied too rigorously to political life. The
political conflicts of the 1930s made it clear that institutions
like the League, based on the optimistic assumption that the good
of each lay with the good of all, were unable to cope with or
control those who sought to change the status quo.

The disappointment that followed the discovery that
interests of the civilized do not always harmonize and that
conflict would remain an often sordid reality saw a sharp swing
away from optimism towards pessimism. The interwar years showed
that disorder was not simply due to stupidity or wickedness which
could be eliminated through scientific or moral education. (Carr
1946:39-40) The years of crisis demonstrated that what Carr
called political "realism" - defined as the pursuit of self-
interest - was the dominant force in political life and that this
could never be overcome. (1) It was not the failure to properly
implement utopian programmes that was the problem, it was the
fact that all such programmes were falsely based.

1. Machiavelli, Marx and Freud were said to show "typical
realism" in drawing attention to the links between opinions and
interests. (Fox 1938:193)
It was the fatalism which was consequent upon the breakdown of utopian beliefs that was both tragic and dangerous. Carr wrote that "the men of the nineteen-thirties returned shocked and bewildered to the world of nature." (Carr 1946:225) (1) In the years dating from 1919 to 1939 civilization had shifted its embrace from a utopia which paid little attention to reality, to a reality which had erased every element of utopia. (Carr 1946:224)

While Carr certainly did not embrace the Spenglerian nightmare, believing that the foundations of a new international order could be built afresh, (Carr 1946:226) he nevertheless rejected the idea of a society run in accord with either high principles of justice or scientific rules of behaviour. For Carr, the crisis in international affairs exemplified the fundamental problem of political life. This being the continuing and never-ending struggle between realism and utopianism. It was in international affairs that this struggle was most rawly displayed. Nevertheless, Carr's analysis suggested that crisis is incipient wherever politics appears.

3. Crisis and the Significance of Time.

Talk of crisis can lead one to pursue an infinite regress of causes. Even where we speak of it as the result of moral or intellectual illnesses, these themselves can be seen as symptoms

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1. R.G Collingwood also noted that the conflicts of the times seemed to give credence to the Hobbesian truth that war was the natural condition of mankind. (Collingwood 1942:iv)
of something else. Social pessimism could be seen as one particular response to a more general sense of unease about the pace and processes of modern industrial civilization. If the British scholar Graham Wallas was right, a sense of historical rupture and feeling of inability to control human destiny were also apparent in intellectual and political circles. He wrote in 1920 that one could detect in the political and literary life of the twentieth century a fear that "the civilization which we have adopted so rapidly" would bring with it neither harmony or stability. (Wallas 1920:14)

Henry Adams put it more strongly. He had written in 1918 that the course of twentieth century science and industry had seen an "avalanche of unknown forces" fall upon the world. (Adams 1918:461) Robert V. Shumate, in an article called "The Philosophy of Henry Adams" in The American Political Science Review, noted Adams' observation that the very tempo with which these had been absorbed by modern societies had "merely accelerated the pace at which we are moving toward our ultimate doom." (Shumate 1934:603) It was this association between modernity and mechanization, the latter being seen as a pathology rather than panacea, that Adams saw as a source of anxiety. The new and the novel were not always a cause for celebration. Furthermore, the disruptive effects of these new forces rendered the modern experience of time a particularly discordant one. Adams wrote that the "convulsions" of modern technology had not only seen the time process quickened; they had also seen it fractured. Evolution had been "warped" and "broken by freaks of
One perceived effect of this feeling that modern life was all pressure and speed was a philosophical preoccupation with the question of time. This was because time awareness is at its most sharp where there is a strong sense of discontinuity between past and present. This sense of discontinuity is also a characteristic feature of periods of crisis. The concept of time and the concept of crisis are ambiguous in similar ways. Nicholas Berdyaev wrote in *The Meaning of History* (1923) that time had a "dual significance" for humanity. (Berdyaev 1949:98) While it is the mark of "creative activity" it is also associated with "fear and anxiety", because as time moves on it can leave death and destruction in its wake. (Berdyaev 1949:98) This equivocal nature of our understanding of time is paralleled in our understanding of crisis. For, as Lewis Mumford noted, the Chinese symbol for crisis signifies both danger and opportunity. (Mumford 1944:394) As Starn's analysis suggested, this is one of the keys to the term's rhetorical power.

Discussions of the significance of time become more intense where there is a heightened awareness or even fear of change. An examination of the philosophical journals of the early years of the interwar period reveals a strong interest in time and its significance for humanity. The French philosopher Henri Bergson, credited with being one of the most outstanding contributors to modern ideas about the creative aspects of time, wrote in *Duration and Simultaneity* (1922) that while no question had been so neglected by philosophy, all philosophers now agreed that it
was of "capital importance...The key to the most difficult philosophical problem lies there." (Bergson 1965:6) As we shall see in chapter three, Bergson frequently likened time to the perpetual and indeterminate flow of life. The importance of this conception for Bergson was that it denied all notions of finality and hence gave rein to human freedom.

Yet where Bergson saw freedom others saw chaos. Writing in *Mind* Radhakrishnan argued that the universe Bergson disclosed was utterly unintelligible, capricious and arbitrary. (Radhakrishnan 1919:276) In it there existed nothing but flux. Where there are no laws, no ends nor even any moments of rest and stability, Radhakrishnan wrote, "Chaos is God." (Radhakrishnan 1919:276) This view of Bergson's philosophy of time could be related to those aspects of contemporary city life which Adams and others had remarked upon. Radhakrishnan wrote that Bergson's philosophy was a "mirror of the twentieth century soul, who lives in an atmosphere of constant hustle and excitement, in a perennial maelstrom of events." (Radhakrishnan 1919:276)

For Berdiaev, intellectual and moral nihilism along with the emptiness of modern city life really derived from the rejection of the religious attitude in favour of an immersion in time and human existence. (Berdyaev 1935:39) The whole point of human existence, for Berdiaev, was to seek to transcend time and history. For him, time and history really marked the failure of humanity and of culture as well as the collapse of human plans.
Time, he wrote, is "eternity collapsed in ruins." (Berdyaev 1949:207) (1)

For this reason, Berdyaev attacked many trends in modern science and philosophy which, whatever else they advocated, had in common a denial of the higher purpose of man and his special relation to God. He wrote that contemporary philosophy had "dissolved man", (Berdyaev 1935:33) that Existentialism was a "philosophy of despair", and that Freudian metaphysics offered only "death and nothingness". (Berdyaev 1935:36:39)

4. Intellectual Causes of Crisis

One could therefore find both the causes and symptoms of crisis in modern intellectual life. Intellectual ferment was manifest in disputes over the foundations of scientific and philosophical knowledge, the place of values in intellectual inquiry and the nature and significance of the real. That there were disputes over these issues was at times taken as a sign of a crisis in knowledge.

In the early 1920s when physicists presented rather new images of the macroscopic and microscopic physical universes, there was seen to have developed a "crisis in science". This was

1. Nicholas Berdyaev, although attaching a different significance to the concept of time that Bergson, noted that it remained the "fundamental problem of human existence", adding that it was "no accident that Bergson and Heidegger, the two most considerable philosophers of present-day Europe" had centred their philosophies on this problem. (Berdyaev 1949:97)
because the new physics upset the traditional Newtonian foundations of scientific belief—something which was said to have implications for all concepts and systems of knowledge. (Nichols 1923:390) Dewey noted in 1930 that it had become commonplace to speak of a "crisis" in thought caused by the growing divorce between science and ethics, where the former was said to have no moral or spiritual basis. (Dewey 1930:40)

Outside of the scientific realm, the adoption of sceptical, agnostic or nihilistic outlooks was taken as evidence of a "general pathology in philosophy." (Melekian 1932:410) And in the areas of political and social theory, where there was a newfound emphasis on the role of change and novelty, it was said that the "chaos of irrationalism reigned". (Curtis 1925:495)

While these apparent crises in the intellectual field were often seen as mere expressions of the uncertainties of the age, they could also be presented as the real source of social evils. "Pathological" strains in science and philosophy were seen to be directly implicated in the eruption of political violence. The American philosopher Ralph Barton Perry wrote in the introduction to The Present Conflict of Ideals (1918) that the Great War could be regarded not just as a clash between nations but more fundamentally as a clash between philosophies and the ways of life that they encouraged. (1) (Perry 1918:2) Perry wrote that:

1. Note that C.T. Harley Walker wrote in a review of Perry's The Present Conflict of Ideals that it was common to view the war as a result of the philosophical tendencies current in the countries taking part. Walker, in Mind, Vol. XXVIII, No. 112, 1919, p.483
We must see this war as *The Great War* - not in the numbers of nations and men engaged, not in its volume of death and destruction, but in the greatness of the issues which are at stake. (Perry 1918:2)

Not surprisingly, Perry saw the conflict as one between the American, British and French ideal of freedom and the German desire for domination. (Perry 1918:398f) We should note that the conflict was also described as a "Euro-Nietschean" war. (Schiller 1919:107)

This same analysis was also applied to the emergence of the Nazi regime. Hermann Rauschning wrote in *The Revolution of Nihilism*, (1940) that the political success of the Nazi movement in Germany could not simply be traced back to economic depression, defeat in war or an imperialistic temper. Its roots lay in deep "moral and intellectual processes", that is in moral and intellectual nihilism. (Rauschning 1940:vii) Again, this focus on nihilism suggested that crisis was a general rather than specific problem and one which overflowed national boundaries. Louis Wirth wrote in 1936:

The intellectual problems which at one time were considered as the peculiar preoccupation of German writers have enveloped virtually the whole world. What was once regarded at the esoteric concern of a few intellectuals in a single country has become the common plight of the modern man. (Mannheim 1936:xiii)

Stressing the philosophical or spiritual causes of crisis meant that the dangers which beset the world were more ineffable than war or economic depression. It was suggested that the
problems humanity faced were perhaps more permanent and underlying than the dangers that the passing storms of political life threw up. While one could speak of an economic or military crisis, one could also convey the sense that underneath these happenings lay profound difficulties that could be intimated but not easily articulated because they were associated with the life of the mind or spirit. Paul Valery wrote in *The Crisis of Mind* that unlike military and economic crises, "the intellectual crisis being more subtle and, by its nature, assuming the most deceptive appearances...will hardly allow us to grasp its true extent, its phase." (Valery 1963:25)

It should be evident then that part of the attraction of the term crisis was its very lack of specificity. Terms such as crisis and chaos which are rich in allusion and evocation made it possible to generalise from specific problems and treat them as symptoms of larger or veiled disorders. They enabled a shift from reflecting on the particularities of war or depression to raising questions about the nature and purpose of the human race. It became possible to ask as Lovejoy did, "What's the matter with man?" (Lovejoy 1940:8-9)

5. Philosophy and the Crisis of the Sciences.

As we have mentioned, there was talk of a crisis in science. For some writers, developments in science in relation to the theory of relativity and quantum physics symbolised the confusion and uncertainties of the times. Certainly Laski saw the discoveries of modern science as further evidence that the
Western way of life was a "melting pot." (Laski 1923:18)

The foundations of science dissolved when its laws, once thought of as necessary and given, were treated as mere rules of convenience. Thus, where once science had promised to rationalize the whole cosmos - providing an accurate description of the structure of the whole as well as accurate predictions of the workings of its parts - it now embraced a metaphysics of chance. (Drucker 1939:53-54) Peter Drucker wrote that science, the most wondrous child of the rationalist order:

...has already taken the decisive step toward the destruction of its own basis of rationality. Whatever the physicists may mean by their denial of causation and its replacement by Chance, they imply that they have reached and even overstepped the limits of a mechanical conception of the world. (Drucker 1939:55)

It seemed as though faith in science, as a symbolic replacement for a loss of faith in a supreme spiritual being, might be short-lived. Having already adopted a neutral stand in relation to questions of value, science could now no longer even offer a rational and coherent interpretation of the world. Laski wrote that modern science was "so void of purpose as to represent nothing so much as the omnipresent anarchy of values." (Laski 1933:18) While able to offer "material comfort" it could not provide any formula for "spiritual satisfaction." (Laski 1933:18)

If we want to really understand the depth of the causes of this crisis in science then we must turn to the arguments put forward by Edmund Husserl in *The Crisis of the European Sciences*. It was an argument that Husserl originally presented as a lecture
on May 7, 1935, at the University of Prague. (Lauer 1965:6-7) In this lecture Husserl gave expression to sentiments that were also apparent in the English-speaking world. He said that positive science had "decapitated" philosophy. In treating of rationalism solely in accord with "naturalistic" or "objectivist" criteria and being sceptical about the "possibility of metaphysics", positive science had presided over not only the "collapse of the belief" in the idea of a "universal philosophy", but also over the collapse of the belief in "reason" itself. (Husserl 1970:12-13) Reason which is not grounded in the ideal of truth or accorded some spiritual purpose is doomed to collapse. This was an argument which was constantly repeated by intellectuals concerned about the direction of both science and philosophy in the modern world. Philosophers like John Dewey were concerned that increasingly hostile reactions to the narrow intellectualism which characterised positive science would lead to a wholesale rejection of the scientific enterprise itself.

Husserl's particular concern was with philosophy and the fact that many younger European philosophers were turning away from the philosophical quest for truth, and were in danger of succumbing to a "skeptical deluge." (Husserl 1970:14) Renewed interest in occultism, spiritualism, and paganism as well the promotion of Nazi beliefs were all evidence of this sceptical tide. Most importantly, irrationalist philosophies had become prevalent, as evident in the increasing fashion for existentialism. (Husserl 1970:xxvi-xxvii) The flowering of such philosophies confirmed the point that a dry and dessicated brand
of rationalism would only unleash a romantic or irrationalist philosophical and then political reaction. David Carr writes in his introduction to *The Crisis* that Heidegger's defection to the Nazis only confirmed for Husserl the link between irrationalist philosophies and irrational political creeds. (Husserl 1970:xxvii)

The true struggles that were taking place in the world, therefore, were the struggles taking place between philosophies. For Husserl, this was the essence of the crisis. As he stated in his *Vienna Lecture*, this crisis was neither an "obscure fate" nor an "impenetrable destiny"; when placed against the background of the "teleology of European history", it became quite transparent. According to Husserl Europe was more than a geographical or political expression; the concept of Europe also suggested a spiritual mission and a belief in the rule of reason. It was in the 18th and 19th centuries that the spiritual purpose which imbued European reason and rationality was diluted and thereby Europe slowly slipped into crisis. (Husserl 1970:299)

The crisis of the sciences then was really an expression of the "radical life-crisis" of European humanity. (Husserl 1970:xvi) Husserl wrote that the "extinction" of philosophy, in the sense of a way of thinking which insisted on the indivisibility of reason and the good, inexorably led to the destruction of a Europe which was "founded on the spirit of truth." The "crisis of the sciences" then had political as well as intellectual ramifications. Without a continuing commitment to the quest for truth and the idea of a universal philosophy,
international solidarity could not be achieved. (Husserl 1970:xxvii)

If we accept this relation between philosophical nihilism and political chaos, then it would follow that reconstructing the world must involve reconstructing systems of reason and value. That intellectuals should hold this view was understandable given that it is they above all who tend to privilege the role of conceptual work in destabilising or stabilising other spheres of activity.

In particular, the assertion of a causal relation between spiritual decline or scientific scepticism and social chaos was intended to focus attention on the role and status of philosophy at a time when more and more realms of experience were being broken up and colonized by the positive sciences. The advantages of philosophy in regard to this seemed obvious. Only philosophy, in the classical sense, could offer a synoptic view.

Without an ultimate viewpoint it was feared that social life would sink into a purposeless materialism. It was this fear that drove philosophers and religious thinkers to stress the importance of the realm of value. Insofar as philosophy was chiefly concerned with this realm only it could provide the real basis for a civilized existence. Although events in Germany gave this argument added importance, it was an idea that that predated the advent of the Nazis. Archdall warned in 1928 that the modern academy's renunciation of the very idea of a universitas of knowledge threatened humanity's "hold on real civilization." (Archdall 1928: 22, 16)
In addition to this, it could be argued that dividing up intellectual life into tightly bound boxes presented an artificial picture of contemplative activity. Arthur Lovejoy argued that while specialization was in many respects indispensable it also tended to efface the continuity between our ideas. Ideas, Lovejoy wrote, are "most migratory"; thought does not "run in enclosed channels" tracing the lines which formally separate university departments. (Lovejoy 1940:4) That the term crisis roamed so freely across various disciplines would seem to confirm Lovejoy's point.

Yet perhaps it was words rather than ideas that migrated most successfully across intellectual boundaries. That discussion of crisis was often at cross-purposes shows that the common concern with crisis was often more apparent than real. Nevertheless, while the rhetoric of crisis pointed to the absence of a universal vocabulary or set of meanings, it also revealed a strong impulse towards universality. Insofar as the effect of the erection of disciplinary borders was to inhibit the flow and exchange of ideas, Lovejoy's statements about the nature of thought could have been aimed at persuading intellectuals to break down academic fences and to recover that common language or pool of meanings which they had lost. In fact, Lovejoy said this was happening as the result of the study of the history of ideas. Again the significance of this goes beyond the attainment of intellectual satisfaction. Lovejoy argued that it was only by
studying the history of ideas and the linkages between them that man could obtain the sort of knowledge which was most urgently needed at that time — that is, knowledge of man himself. In addition to this, he wrote that a study of the history of ideas could also lead to a re-appraisal of the role of rationality and logic in human affairs, both of which had been severely undermined by a contemporary fascination with the role of the irrational. (Lovejoy 1940:16-17)

This impulse to universality cannot be detached from concerns about the conduct of political debate in the interwar years. The absence of shared meanings was most depressingly apparent in political life. Thus, one of the points behind calling for an end to intellectual divisions and for an ultimate point of view was in order to address those social divisions which existing modes of political discourse had failed to heal.

The interwar years were seen as characterised by the breakdown of that "open-minded" mode of argumentation that characterised diplomacy and parliamentary activity. (Penton 1942:140) With the erosion of tolerance, social antagonisms deepened and people became subject to manipulation by a new breed of demagogic orators. Rauschning said that political debate had come to be characterised by the "magic of extremism", in the presence of which "argument" had become "completely impossible." (Rauschning 1940:36) From this point onwards the descent into violence seemed assured. Demagogues often called for direct or pure action which lacked any rational motivation or ideal content. The breakdown of tolerant forms of discourse blurred
the distinction between rhetoric and violence. The demand for an inclusive vocabulary was very urgent. Not only was it necessary to find a common language in order to unite people, it was also necessary to counter the savage speeches of dangerous visionaries.


One of the sub-themes of the crisis literature was a concern about the deleterious effects of a mass society on civilized values. In the past it had been hoped that democratic reform would see the growth of an enlightened and educated citizenry. Instead, however, the extension of democratic rights was seen as leading to the entry into political life of great numbers of people who had little sense of political obligation or identity. When such types were massed together they became a crowd governed by emotion rather than reason.

The crowd was seen as a product of congested city life. Analyses of the danger that crowds could pose to an ordered public life were increasingly made after the outbreak of the Great War. The eruption of nationalist fervour during that conflict had focussed attention on mob behaviour and assisted in the growth and development of what was called social psychology. (1) Increasing industrial conflict, and most especially the Bolshevik revolution, aroused further debate about

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the actual mental and physical qualities of the lower orders. Lothrop Stoddard's *The Revolt Against Civilization* claimed to explain revolutionary unrest in psychological and biological terms. (Stoddard 1922:v)

Similar responses were made to the rise of fascism and Nazism. Drucker rejected pseudo-scientific analyses which held that the masses "fall easy prey to any superior salesman, whatever his goods". (Drucker 1939:8) He also criticised those who practised what he called a "fake aristocratism" which bemoaned the decline of liberty yet (echoing Ortega Y Gasset) feared the "revolt of the masses." (Drucker 1939:8) For him, the popularity of the "ideology of fascism" was to be found in the despair of the masses following the collapse of the spiritual and social order of Europe. In particular, Drucker argued that with the death of the belief that economic values reigned supreme in society, something which he said occurred between the end of the Great War and the year of Hitler's accession to power, man could no longer provide a rational explanation of his function in society. It was because they had no creed to adhere to, not because of any inherited degeneracy of character, that the masses asked for miracles from magicians who promised "to make the impossible possible." (Drucker 1939:21)

Ideas regarding the operation of the primitive and instinctive in modern social life were also treated in terms of rather occult themes relating to the age-old struggle between good and evil and the principles of life and death. Drucker wrote
that the emergence of tyrants revealed "that existence in this society is governed not by rational and sensible, by blind, irrational and demonic forces." (Drucker 1939:56) The success of the "fascist ideology," he wrote, marked the "return of the daemons" - the irrational forces of death and dismay. Thus, while in one sense the modern experience was unique, in another sense it only marked a reawakening of underlying impulses. (1) This idea was well entrenched before the appearance of fascists and Nazis. R.G Collingwood would later pursue this theme in The New Leviathan published in 1942. He wrote in that book that it was in 1919, on completing his war services, that he "realized, dimly and incompletely, what the situation was that had been confronting us: namely what I should now describe as a new form of barbarism." (Collingwood 1942:v)

We must also remember that Nazi publicists quite deliberately exulted in and manipulated the imagery of barbarism, celebrating in the struggle for existence and calling upon their followers to "think with their blood." (Collingwood 1942:377) Mumford said this "Ideology of Barbarism" was also evident in the works of Nietzsche, Sorel, Pareto and Spengler. (Mumford 1944:365-366) All of these writers, he argued, had debased the "function of intellect before the power of 'blood.'" (Mumford 1944:365) Spengler provided ample examples for Mumford to draw

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1. Drucker also saw the "fascist ideology" as more than a European phenomenon. It was he said, manifest in such things as "new nationalism" in the Near East, "the old feudalism" in Asia, "coupes d'état and 'racial awakenings'" in Latin America as well as in religious revolts in Asia and Africa. (Drucker 1939:3)
upon. In *Man and Technics* he wrote that it was only the delusion of the idealist and theologian to take seriously the notion that man was anything more than a "beast of prey." (Spengler 1932:19)

For Mumford, the exponents of the barbarist ideology bore responsibility for helping to create the intellectual or cultural climate in which Nazi beliefs could flourish. This was a common perception at the time and the reason why the "charlatan dogmatism" of Spengler, as one reviewer described it, did not receive a warm welcome in the English-speaking world in the 1920s and 1930s. (Catlin 1935:589) It was in response to the pessimism propagated by writers like Spengler that the American scholar Charles A. Beard edited a collection entitled *Whither Mankind: A Panorama of Modern Civilization* (1928). Beard's intention was to substitute a more optimistic appraisal of the future of civilization for "visions of despair." (Beard 1928:v)

This should not lead us to neglect the fact that there were significant parallels between Spengler and those who had a religious perspective on crisis. *The Decline of the West* foretold the steady erosion of all ideals and spiritual beliefs in the rationalist and utility maximising West and how this would eventually lead to the return of barbarism. Spengler wrote that modern plutocrats would be forced to shed their liberal and democratic guise, because where once these principles had facilitated the free movement of finance they now hindered it. In the midst of this final act of unmasking, Caesars would arise who would assert the power of blood over money - a battle which blood would win. (Spengler 1922:506-7) Repetitions of this reading of
modern history can be found in Tawney and then later in Drucker. However, unlike Spengler who regarded the coming battle as part of an inevitable world-historical process, Christian thinkers saw it as a tragic result of the utilitarian turn taken by Western societies in the 18th and 19th centuries. Hence their urgent calls for a return to spiritual values. The argument was that any philosophy which was sceptical of ideals, no matter how moderately this scepticism was expressed, would contribute to a decline into barbarism. This argument could apply to philosophies which were widely held in the English-speaking world, including positivism and pragmatism.

7. The Dangers of Scientific Reason

Another sub-theme in the crisis literature was the fear of modern science and technology. In addition to being seen as a source of confusion and disorientation, some authors saw science and technology as the modern Leviathan - a new means of enslavement and brutality. In this context, they spoke of the "terror of the advancing machine." (Ross 1933:39) There was no little irony in this assessment of the value of this product of human reason. The irony lay in the fact that the very technological and scientific means by which man sought to achieve freedom and control of his surroundings now threatened to become "a new bondage." (Burgmann 1937:13)

This fear of enslavement by technology must also be seen against the background of military conflicts. Poison gas, which had been used in the Great War, became a potent symbol of the
dangers of scientific and technological advance undisciplined by moral codes. (1)

Some found this union between the passions of war-fever and rationalist science somewhat paradoxical. For example, the Nazi movement could be seen as a direct challenge to rationalism and the economic creeds deduced from it. (Drucker 1939:xii) Yet if we accept the argument that rationalism breeds irrationalism then the relationship becomes quite understandable. Indeed, this argument was used to explain why the Germans turned to Nazism in the 1930s. It was argued that the Germans "embraced Fascism" so readily, not because they were backward, but because they were the "most scientifically advanced" and indeed adored science. (Penton 1942:139) Similarly, Rauschning thought the "total nihilism" of Stalin was the inevitable logical and historical outcome of Lenin's "unshaken belief in human reason." (Rauschning 1940:56) Though other writers such as Stoddard considered that the Bolshevik revolution sprang from primitive urges rather than from the dictates of reason.

This however does not complete the philosophical cum political cycle we are tracing. For just as we have pointed to the paradox of rationalism breeding irrationalism, we must also point to the paradoxical fact that this revolution of nihilism in

1. In this context, we should note Spengler's claim that science and technology were not the creations of mankind's rationality but were really created in order to "satisfy its rapacity." (Liebert 1933:34)
turn had bred a "very authoritarian" age. (Berdyaev 1935:19) The same processes that saw the emergence of irrationalism out of the ashes of rationalism also dictated that nihilism, which is predicated upon a rejection of all doctrines and standards, "must develop of necessity by its own logic into an absolute despotism." (Rauschning 1940:56) Berdyaev wrote that in the face of extreme social and intellectual confusion men found the only way to avoid "final chaos" was "obligatory organisation." (Berdyaev 1935:18) Indeed, Drucker argued that the "abracadabra" of fascism was precisely this substitution of compulsion and organisation for a rationally founded order and creed. (Drucker 1939:48) Thus, the celebration of such virtues as rigour and discipline by authoritarian leaders of the time was only a formal restriction on what was in essence a frenzied gospel of hate.

We see this same paradox when we come to examine what was called the philosophy of nihilism. Rauschning pointed out that the only rule that the nihilist abided by was the rule of the sword. (Rauschning 1940:xii) However, he also noted that nihilism was still able to be given the appearance of intellectual order and system. He wrote, for example, that the barbarism that was at the heart of the Nazi way of thinking was wrapped up in "an absolutely binding, more or less rationally argued, 'philosophy', elevated to the status of religion. (Rauschning 1940:56)

As we have constantly stressed, moral and intellectual nihilism was seen by some intellectuals as a Western rather than specifically German problem. It was argued that its real cause
lay in the "inner moral decay" of an impersonal "mechanised" society. (Kraushaar 1942:421)

But such concerns were swamped by the need to shore up Western ideals in the years immediately prior to and after the onset the Second World War. The rhetoric of crisis in the public sphere was thus subject to a considerable transformation and clarification. All the doubts expressed about the project called Western civilization in the wake of the bloodshed of the Great War, and then in the midst of a crippling depression, were muted if not silenced. Despite the frequent assertions of the demise of Western civilization as a unified concept, we find that on the eve of another great war, as an ideal to be upheld this notion gained added force. In the midst of the Second World War there was little room for ambiguity.

Thus the war became attached to much larger themes about the future of humanity, the advance of Armageddon and the centuries old struggle between civilization and barbarism. (Ogg 1942:3)

In the early years of the war President Roosevelt described the Nazi onslaught on Europe as part of a "World Revolution" aimed at the subjugation of the world's people. (Brooks 1941:2-3)

These descriptions provided ways of framing and understanding conflicts in Europe, Asia and Africa and establishing a continuity between them. Furthermore, these themes allowed the war to be seen as not just a raw political struggle over territory or resources but as a war over fundamental values and conceptions. Thus, during the war years
Carr's reading of the claims of the defenders of the existing international order as the claims of the merely politically satisfied could in no way be publicly accepted.

But the moral overtones of this rhetoric had implications beyond galvanizing support in the struggle against the enemy. To speak of the war effort as the struggle of civilization against barbarism suggested that it was not enough to simply defeat the enemies of democracy and reason on the battlefield. Otto Kraushaar argued in a review of Lewis Mumford's *Faith for Living* that if the allies were to "meet the challenge of fascism successfully and permanently", then they had to undergo a shift in values. (Kraushaar 1942:420-1) Similarly, Richard Robinson wrote in *The Philosophical Review* that if peace were to be lasting then it was crucial that the United Nations were fighting for what was right and not merely for what they approved. (Robinson 1942:420) It was in this context, as we shall discuss later, that the allied war-effort also came to be linked to the promise of a better world after the war. Statesmen began to speak of a post-war world order that was free, not just from military conflict, but also from poverty.

Crisis rhetoric did not end with the defeat of the Axis powers. In the post-war period concerns continued to be expressed about Western civilization and its frantic pursuit of material satisfaction. Harrington's book *The Accidental Century*, is testimony to the continuation of this concern with the disappearance of the spiritual dimension of Western civilization.
The writings of the Frankfurt School provide other pertinent examples. Some intellectuals of the post-war era saw their concerns as of a piece with those expressed ever since the Great War had, in Franz Kafka's words, opened the "flood gates of chaos." (Harrington 1965:32) Harrington introduced his thesis with the remark that the Western world had for more than fifty years "haunted itself with rumours of its own death". (Harrington 1965:13) However, unlike the years surrounding the Second World War, outside of the academy fewer people appeared to be listening.

8. The Rhetoric of Crisis

The rhetoric of crisis in academic discourse during the interwar years may give the impression that there was a clear focus of attention on a specific problem, with a purposive, unified and coherent exchange taking place across a number of different fields of interests and specializations. Yet this was not the case. Despite the possession of a common vocabulary, the continuity in this rhetoric was sometimes more apparent than real. There were different understandings over the root causes and the symptoms of crisis. In many respects, the vocabulary of crisis travelled freely and lightly across varying intellectual contexts, as well as across the boundaries which divided the political from the intellectual domain, creating an illusion of discussion where there was only conversation.

The invocation of crisis was a way of specifying particular sets of moral, political and philosophical priorities. Much of
the rhetoric of crisis that we have highlighted focussed on what was seen as the moral decadence of the modern era - in particular the failure of Western civilization to maintain its Christian faith. That is why so many of the responses to crisis we have identified called on people to re-embrace the spiritual and to put the growth of human personality, rather than material wealth, at the centre of social action.

Nevertheless, this chapter did isolate strong threads in interwar debates about crisis. This typically involved the orchestration of a number of themes on which I have touched in due order. For instance, I have shown that crisis leads to a preoccupation with ideas; with foundations and with time. Ideas are important where it is assumed that the philosophical tone set by intellectuals ultimately determines the course of social affairs. Foundations are important because when they seem to be in decline bursts of irrationalism are said to be the result. The discussion of time is important because where one loses the sense of one's of place in time, where people feel swallowed up change, society appears much more fragile. We should also note that a number of manifestations of crisis were consistently identified. Such things as the urban crowd and the fear of enslavement by technology were seen as typical expressions of the modern condition.

It should be noted here that despite the repeated insistence on the part of intellectuals that pessimism was one of the dominant features of the time, the views of Spengler and the like were not widely embraced by intellectuals in the English-speaking
world. Indeed, insisting that Western societies were characterised by a profound sense of despair was often a prelude to recommending solutions to crisis. As we have seen, some thought the crisis could only be cured by moral or spiritual renovation and that this could only be achieved by the quiet contemplation of the eternal or by acceptance of the existence of certain ethical ideals. Others however, as I will discuss in the next chapter, thought the times required greater application of scientific methods to social problems.

Both of these approaches are comparable to the extent that they were characterised by a quest for certainty: a desire to escape time and contingency and to found existence on solid foundations. But an alternative was offered. This alternative was the philosophy of pragmatism. As we shall see, the pragmatist claimed that the crisis in Western civilisation was not solely due to an absence moral feeling nor solely due to the failure to apply reason to human affairs. For the pragmatist, the crisis in civilisation was in fact the gap which existed between morality and science. What the pragmatist claimed to do then, was to chart a middle course in attempting to reconcile what he saw as a series of related cleavages in Western civilisation: between science and morality; between philosophy and science and contemplative and practical activity. Yet as we shall also see, whilst attempting to reconcile these opposed categories, the pragmatist was also being accused of deepening the crisis in Western civilisation.
Chapter 2: Salvation Through Science

1. The Presence of Optimism

So far I have argued that one common feature of political and intellectual debates in the interwar years was the notion of crisis. In addition, I argued that this sense of crisis was often attributed to the fragility of man's hold on those virtues which form the basis of a civilized existence. Here intellectuals were especially implicated. They were accused of immersing themselves in specialist studies or resigning themselves to philosophical scepticism. In either case, intellectuals were failing in their duty to contemplate and promote those moral codes which were crucial for the well-being of the whole community.

As I have suggested, not all the writings which appeared between the wars were drenched with fear and pessimism. The American academic William Kay Wallace wrote in The Passing of Politics in 1924 that, while a "prevailing pessimism" was evident in the work of many writers, he saw "faith in the possibility of social regeneration" as one of the outstanding features of the times. Never before, he wrote, had the world seen such a "galaxy of inventive genius" come to the fore and put itself in the service of mankind. (Wallace 1924:277) Not all intellectuals saw worldly difficulties as caused only by an absence of virtue. Faith in social reconstruction was frequently aligned to a faith in the power of science and its growing ability to solve social problems.
Hence, the aim of this chapter is to draw attention to a strain of thought which was somewhat opposed to the one which I examined above. I will show, again by examining the writings of intellectuals, that there were many who attributed social difficulties to a lack of scientific knowledge, rather than to too great an emphasis upon it. The argument was that it was ignorance of the principles which governed social development, something which only science could reveal, which was hindering social progress. Too often, those charged with prescribing, analyzing and implementing social policy were ignorant of the laws of human behaviour. Furthermore, a lack of scientific training meant that policy makers were often inclined to let emotional attachments and intuitions get in the way of their assessments of appropriate social techniques.

I do not mean to suggest that those who sought to put policy-making on a scientific footing were totally uninterested or contemptuous of moral evaluations. To present the ideas of social planners of the interwar years as devoid of such things would be to caricature them. Many of those who argued in favour of social reconstruction along scientific lines expressed the hope that their plans would result in a better life for all. Indeed, when decrying the interference of emotions or intuitions in decision-making, they were attacking not a passion for justice or equality but the attributes of greed and selfishness. Yet expressions of social compassion were often overwhelmed by strident declarations attesting to the wonders that science could achieve when applied to social life.
This suggests that in those years arguments which appealed to science were seen to be more effective than those which relied on moral suasion. Thus, whereas the arguments for social reform put by new liberals in the late 19th and early 20th century had only rejected the hedonistic tenets of classical liberalism on moral and spiritual grounds, science could now show that classical liberalism was not only unjust but was also inefficient.

But science was seen as more than simply efficient. Scientific description was also deemed persuasive because it was seen as disclosing the true nature of things. Just as there was a large body of writings that saw social problems as a direct result of the cultivation of the scientific attitude at the expense of the higher feelings, there was also a large body of writings which expressed the view that the foundations of society could only begin to be secured with the adoption of precisely that attitude.

The belief that it is with science that we can find a basis for the social order is not unique to the modern era. The American scholar Harry Elmer Barnes wrote how the French philosopher Auguste Comte (following Francis Bacon) had developed the idea of a positive commonwealth grounded in scientific understanding and governed by "highly trained sociological priests" devoted to social betterment. (Barnes 1925:148) (1)

1. Barnes added that: "Perhaps the most effective statement however, which has been made of the necessity for trained and unprejudiced fact-finding bodies and for adequate avenues of dissemination to the public is that contained in Lippmann's Public Opinion." (Barnes 1925:148)
This was a notion which gained added force in the interwar years. In addition, we can say that the belief that science can provide the key to social order was in fact borne of a sense of crisis. The idea of crisis and the hope placed in scientific rationality went hand in hand when crisis was seen as a result of assaults on society by irrational forces.

It should be stressed that this idea that science could be applied to all aspects of social life and provide the foundations of order was not the only version of modernity that was current at that time. As I will show in following chapters, paralleling and sometimes overlapping with the view presented herein were sceptical philosophies and pluralist political theories which rejected both the nostrums of scientism and the associated theories of state centralized planning. One should not interpret all of the writers included in this chapter as speaking solely with one voice or one particular version of modernity in mind, as in many cases they embraced elements of scientism and state centralism as well as elements of scepticism and pluralism.

2. Science and Philosophy.

The attack on the play of feelings in public and intellectual life was often an attack on the play of egoism and prejudice rather than on the intrusion of social sympathies. Yet, because of the strong association between egoism or prejudice and feeling or emotion, these latter terms had acquired negative connotations and were counterposed to the purity of the scientific ideal. Even where certain sentiments could be admired
for their nobility, their cultivation could be regarded as secondary to the need to acquire and apply scientific knowledge.

The question marks which were placed against the role of feelings should be seen against the background of ongoing intellectual debates about the relative worth of science over and against philosophy. Such things as sentiment, feelings or emotion were counterposed to science. At the same time they were frequently identified with philosophy. In this context, philosophy could be presented as unnecessarily fussy or rather too clever and seductive depending on what sort of feelings it was intended to evoke. Philosophy then could be presented as an old-fashioned irrelevancy or a dangerous siren song. In either case it was now a luxury or indulgence that a world beset with difficulties could no longer afford.

This idea came to the fore when philosophical knowledge was compared with scientific knowledge. Against the austere contours of scientific thought, philosophy could be seen as too rich in meaning. When held up against the solidity of the discoveries made by science, the philosopher's "truths" could appear as dreams, phantasms and ornamental ideas. Where philosophy spun imaginative tapestries, science employed reason and not imagination. Differences of opinion concerning whether it was science or philosophy which could disclose the true nature of the universe had been in evidence since the late 19th century. Karl Pearson argued in 1892 in *The Grammar of Science* that metaphysical claims, because they could not be tested in accordance with scientific methods of observation, could not be
seen as constituting knowledge. (Pearson 1937:18f) It was only science, he suggested, that could interpret the universe:

There is no short cut to truth, no way to gain a knowledge of the universe except through the gateway of scientific method. The hard and stony path of classifying facts and reasoning upon them is the only way to ascertain truth. It is the reason and not the imagination which must ultimately be appealed to. (Pearson 1937:20)

Pearson's view of the respective values of science and metaphysics was upheld and further developed in the 20th century. Indeed, it was sometimes promoted by philosophers themselves keen to redirect philosophical inquiries towards more practical concerns. (1) While some intellectuals saw the foundations of knowledge and the world collapse as a result of the extraction of science from the universe of value, others valued the new role bestowed upon science. Rather than seeking to reinsert science within the philosophical domain, they thought the place of philosophy was now taken by science. J.E. Turner wrote in an article entitled "The Essential Distinction between Science and Philosophy" in *The Philosophical Review* that the claims of philosophy to "universality" were increasingly untenable. (Turner 1929:42) It was science and not philosophy which now approached an "ever fuller and...more absolute certainty."

(Turner 1929:49)

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1. For example, the British pragmatist philosopher F.C.S. Schiller wrote of metaphysics: "...it will be recognized that the scientist has not as such any need for any metaphysics, which are all of the nature of poems in which the philosophers may indulge, according to the measure of his personal idiosyncrasy, in order to round off and harmonize his cosmic survey - after he has acquainted himself with the solid knowledge the sciences have garnered." (Schiller 1932b:247)
But as we have seen with Husserl, the decline in the status of philosophy cannot entirely be laid at the door of the positive sciences. The Australian philosopher John Passmore later wrote that the reason for the triumph of the scientific or "physicalist" outlook (which he described as the idea that anything that can be "intelligibly said can be said in the language of physics" [Passmore 1939:196]) was a division in the ranks of philosophers themselves. He railed against those among the ranks of philosophy who had weakened and diminished its status because they had come to lack intellectual discipline, or had not been "militant against sophistry." (Passmore 1939:193) Due to this lack of discipline philosophy had splintered into an array of private languages. Many philosophers had rejected that one true mode of reasoning which their predecessors had originally discovered but which science now claimed as its own, albeit in a truncated form. (1)

The attempt to render all knowledge in terms of physics can also be viewed as an attempt to change the whole vocabulary of intellectual discourse. It was viewed as an attempt to eliminate the suggestiveness and indefiniteness of metaphorical modes of description and replace them with scientific sentences that would be clear and sharp.

This concern with the role of language and the desire to make the language of science as precise as possible had also been

1. Passmore cited Max Black as saying that philosophy had become a "disgraceful muddle of mutually intolerant opinions." (Passmore 1939:196)
a preoccupation of advocates of the scientific method since the late 19th century. It was for the purposes of eliminating obscurity, and any suggestion of metaphysics, from the language of physics that Pearson wrote his Grammar. Pearson saw this move as urgent especially because the vocabulary of the physicist was being employed by biologists and sociologists. (Pearson 1937:3)

It is important to stress that Pearson, along with the German scientist Ernst Mach, was an empiricist. (1) That is, he believed that science must begin with the study of immediate sensations or phenomena; these were the ultimate source of the facts of science. Whether these sense-impressions were produced by an external reality composed of things was something that the empiricists could not verify. (Pearson 1937:60-2) The empiricist position was countered by the new realists who, while also believing in the cultivation of scientific methods and their application to philosophical issues, argued in their 1912 manifesto The New Realism that there was an objective realm of facts. Thus, one should not assume that there was absolute unanimity about what science meant. This was a debate which continued through-out the interwar years and in particular, was spurred on by the development of the theory of relativity as well as quantum theory. These are topics that I discuss in the next chapter.

For the moment, we should just note that both the empiricists and new realists agreed that scientists had to be careful in choosing words because they had a distracting "rhetorical effect owing to their associations" and so hindered the pursuit of real knowledge. (1) (Holt 1912:18) The contrast drawn between the language of philosophy became particularly sharp during the interwar years. As a certain scientist E.G. Biaggini later argued, science had a "special language"; one which had a "single term for each single thing and each single relation between things which will fit perfectly what is being described." (Biaggini 1941:39) As we shall see, the desire to be scientific, outside of the immediate domain of the physical sciences meant imitating this way of speaking and avoiding the semantic cloudiness of the speculative arts.

3. The Social Sciences.

It is among social scientists that we can see a great enthusiasm for the idea of science and along with that a great deal of disdain for philosophy, especially in its metaphysical guises. Social scientists in particular took to praising science for its objective nature and for the social uses to which it could be put. This could be contrasted with the relative uselessness of tradition philosophy in an age of modern machinery and industry. Where speculative philosophers had offered either

1. Words, the new realists had determined, were only useful to the extent that they were "self-effacing." A good word, presumably as one expects of a good servant, should "retire after introducing an object" and not call attention to itself. (Holt 1912:18)
melodrama of social struggle or unrealizable ideals, social scientists could offer theories designed to immediately improve the human estate. Furthermore, as a result of the claims made by figures such as Pearson, it was beginning to be claimed that scientific method was universal in its scope whether the objects under investigation were "electrons or earthworms or ethics." (Portus 1927:30)

We should remember that modern science was presented in quite a different light to the science of previous centuries with its alleged emphasis, under the influence of philosophy, on deductive modes of reasoning. The idea of cartesian rigour was associated with an antique form of science; an a priorist science full of empty tautologies and remote from the real world. Modern science however, was described not as a body of deductive conclusions but as a body of factual knowledge.

The opposition between science and philosophy was then also seen in terms of the opposition between the empirical and the a priori. For the social scientist in particular, the emphasis on fact and application, on the hardness, rather than the abstract nature of scientific knowledge, became very important. We should stress here however, that the understandings that those who advocated the application of scientific methods to society exhibited little awareness of the complex epistemological debates that were taking place about the meaning of science. As I pointed out, the empiricists were very careful to distinguish between claims about sense-impressions and claims about reality.
Nevertheless, such fine distinctions were often erased in the course of more general intellectual debates. Sometimes, being scientific meant no more than, as a certain William Anderson put it in an article called "Psycho-Biology and Democracy" in the *Australasian Journal of Philosophy and Psychology*, "facing the facts"; this he added, was the proper "attitude for modern men. Everybody who is anybody is doing it." (Anderson 1926:41) (1)

I would also argue that the odium which surrounded philosophy could have had something to do with its identification with metaphysics, and in turn the identification of that with the economic system of laissez-faire. The liberal economic system was said to be based on the "metaphysics of providential guidance." (Greenwood 1933:80) The policy of laissez-faire was seen as resting on on sterile, intellectualist principles and it was these which hampered progress in the area of social reconstruction. (Bland 1934:68) The dismissal of metaphysics and abstraction was used in particular to attack arguments against the intervention of the state in the economic system. Planning and control of social development was testimony to the "power of

1. In this context, see also an article by E. Govan entitled "A Scientific Approach to Social Service", *Public Administration: Journal of Australian Regional Groups*, Vol. iv, No. 7, Sept., pp. 311-23. In this article, the author uses Pearson (a revised edition of his *Grammar* having been issued in 1937) in order to argue the case for the application of scientific methods to the administration of social services. However, the author does not show any awareness of the epistemological implications of Pearson's argument although admittedly, Pearson himself combines advocacy of strict empiricist procedures with ebullient claims about the scope of scientific method.
man" and should replace blind faith in tired metaphysical principles. (Greenwood 1933:80)

In conjunction with this we see a great change in the way academic economics was described. The modern scientific economists rejected the emptiness of "deductive narration", instead favouring the application of statistical methods to the fact-world. (Janes 1930:306) Economists were called upon to acknowledge that their discipline was in truth an empirical science. Furthermore, one can also witness in the interwar years, especially during the 1930s, a growing tendency to promote the idea that the economic sciences could be successfully harnessed to serve large social goals.

The marriage of positive science and economics was considered one of the most solid foundations of a new order. If the aim were to achieve the same kind of "proved facts" in the social sciences as in the natural sciences, it is not surprising that economists in particular, with their relatively unambiguous instruments of measurement and classification, were seen as advancing the task of providing a scientific framework for social reform. The economic world's amenability to quantitative approaches meant that economists could provide exactly the sort of "hard", measurable data that was seen as one of the hallmarks of modern science. Economic science could provide graphic representations of current problems and chart the course of alternative policies. Herbert Von Beckerath wrote in The Philosophical Review that "measurement; classification; averaging and tabular and graphical presentation, that is, statistical
technique" were the hallmarks of the "positivistic attitude" in economics. (Von Beckerath 1937:581)

We should add again here that this positivistic attitude was expressed on behalf of all the social sciences. Writers spoke of the need for a positive science of administration, a science of politics as well as economics, all of which would be independent of value judgements. Yet at the same time a strong social imperative lay behind this push towards an expanded role for the social sciences. Economists viewed their science as becoming both more rigorous - evident in their use of quantitative methods - and more humane as these methods were used to measure and promote welfare. (Janes 1930:306) Barbara Wootton wrote that the "scientific study of social institutions", using the technique of verification, was the "most potent instrument of human betterment." (Wootton 1933:153)

These definitions suggested that science was only instrumental and concerned with means rather than ends, and therefore that planners should be seen as scientists rather than socialists. (Parkinson 1934:96) The role of the scientist in this context was simply to tell us how to achieve the good life. Yet one senses that this response was not entirely satisfactory. Scientific advocacy of certain means too easily became scientific advocacy of desired ends. Of course, this could be dressed up as the ambitious claim that science was able to tell society not just how to achieve the good life but what the good might be. That is, there was a sense in which the way to "the good life"
could only be revealed by the application of scientific method to the facts of life.

We see these views of the potential scope of science continuing to be expressed in the early 1940s. Such claims must also be seen against the background of the preceding years of economic depression and the development plans for post-war reconstruction. Hence, R.N Robertson wrote in The Australian Journal of Science that science could not just solve technical problems "such as the correct amount of vitamins to have in our bread", but it could also tell us what things are valuable and what things are not. (Robertson 1942:163) To that extent, it could be argued that any emphasis on the moral guarantees of science was superfluous. If one applied scientific method then good order would follow. (1) But such claims to social or moral neutrality when advocating certain ends were difficult to sustain. This was especially so where behind such claims that the social sciences must become more scientific and address the "elaborate problems of society" lay grave political concerns. (Robertson 1942:164)

1. This attitude towards post-war planning was said to be very much in the "spirit of Fabian socialists". (Plimso11 1941:104) The Fabian attitude to the application of scientific method to social reform is reflected in the following statements of the Webbs. Collectivism was described as a "business like way of transacting the business of society...no reasonable person who knows the facts can fail to become a Socialist." (Durbin 1985:21) Meanwhile, Beatrice Webb had earlier spoken of a steadily increasing sphere of policy-making in which decision would be reached largely by "common consent" based on the "cogency of accurately ascertained and authoritatively reported facts." (Letwin 1965:373)

We find a self-styled humane economics coming to the fore during the depression years and entering the mainstream of policy circles during the course of the Second World War. Plans for post-war reconstruction were laced with the language of positive economics. Yet we can trace this belief in the ability of scientific methods to address the problems of the real world back further than that. For the glow of optimism which surrounded economics in the Second World War years was but a particular expression of the more general belief in the positive social role that science could play, which had been around since the period of reconstruction after the Great War. The progressive movement associated with this belief was known as the "new rationalism" or the rationalization movement. Robert Brady, an American scholar (and author of a detailed study called *Rationalization in German Industry* [1933]) wrote in an article on the same topic in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics* that the rationalization movement was "secular", "egalitarian", "cosmopolitan" and "naively optimistic." (Brady 1930:534) (1)

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1. Brady wrote in his survey of the rationalization literature that: "A German term had been fittingly used to characterize this process, Entzauberung der Welt ("world disenchantment", "disillusionment", "secularization", "sobering"). In common with its cultural antecedent - the age of the Aufklärung - the "rationalization era" has been essentially rationalistic, egalitarian, secular, and naively optimistic. Its problems have found theoretical formulation at the hands of economists, engineers, and scientists who, though thoroughly steeped in the current scientific preconceptions appropriate to their respective disciplines, have been forced to grapple with its involved technical and organizational issues under the stress of the post-war reconstruction period." (Brady 1930:534)
This so-called "new rationalism", while a species of rationalism in general insofar as it held that reason should have a commanding role in social life, was sharply distinguished from earlier forms of rationalism. Brady wrote that in contrast to the "old" seventeenth and nineteenth century rationalisms, which were concerned mainly with "matters of personal, social, and economic freedom and equality", the new rationalism was concerned with the "application of scientific method" to all problems associated with all aspects of production, consumption and distribution. (Brady 1930:533n)

This new rationalism most often appeared in the form of the rationalization movement in industry, which involved integration in secondary industry and the introduction of scientific principles of management. While not always bound up with the idea of centralized state direction and control, it certainly did come to be associated with corporatist forms of social organisation. The idea of rationalization gradually became linked to the idea that the state should direct the whole industrial sector so that it would serve the scientifically ascertained needs of the community. Brady thought this approach was characteristically German insofar as the Germans took science very seriously. Furthermore, he noted that laissez-faire capitalism had never had a strong foothold in Germany; industrialists were thus more willing to accept governmental regulations. Nevertheless, Brady regarded the rationalization movement as an internationalist movement that would break down the barriers between states. He suggested that the extreme nationalist sentiments expressed by
the young supporters of Hitler was passing phase that would disappear when the rationalization movement gathered pace. (Brady 1933:401-413)

D.H. Macgregor also wrote of the German origins of the rationalization movement. He wrote in a review of Brady's book in the *Economic Journal* that the word rationalization was originally used to refer to a period of "cleaning up" and "rationing" in Germany after the Great War, and later came to mean the "positive and futuristic reorganisation" of society. (Macgregor 1934:714) Of course, the exact direction which the rationalization movement took depended on the particular country and political traditions in which it developed. Thus in the 1920s it came to be associated with ideas of scientific management and integration in the tertiary sector in the United States, whilst becoming much more associated with state direction of the industrial sector in Germany.

By the 1930s, Brady wrote, the meaning of the word was to be "found in its broader social implications." (Brady 1934:714) He pointed out that by then the scope of the rationalization movement had been broadened to include not just industry but all aspects of life, extending from "the reaches of philosophy to the subject of shoe-blacking." (Brady 1930:534) Rationalization was thus said to be "coterminous" with intellectualization of both the natural and social realms. The new rationalism, like positive science, was contrasted with sentiment, habit and custom. (Brady 1930:533) Rationalization was a victory of
"conscious effort, reason, and creative striving" over the "raw caprice of nature." (Brady 1930:532) That is, it implied the gradual elimination of all the mysteries and inexplicable things that confronted man in his encounters with the social and natural worlds.

Social crisis was mysterious. It seemed to defy accurate description and understanding. But on the scientific view, the cause of social crisis was not something strange or obscure, it was quite simply ignorance. Aided by scientific methods one could pare away the cataclysmic and emotive resonances of crises and exposed their real character as maladjustments or dysfunctions in the social machine. This was a complete reversal of the position of Husserl, who had sought to render the crisis transparent by examining its philosophical causes. Here it was argued that it was positive science and not philosophy that could bring crises into the light. Crises were scientific problems requiring scientific solutions and were amenable to complete and rational explanation. To believe that crises were due to chance, accident or fate was nothing but superstition.

The laissez-faire economic system was also depicted as possessing all the elements of the irrational, the capricious and the mysterious which the rationalization movement opposed. It was argued that according to classical political economy, the calculated movement of isolated atoms would result in the enhanced welfare and order of the whole. As a self-governing system, and one in which perfect information was available, the market economy did not require "any administrative intervention
or direct guidance." (Von Beckerath 1937:574) But the information conveyed in the market-place through prices was imperfect and partial. The prices which served as "signals to producers" did not work very efficiently due to the operations of monopolies and other factors which disturbed the workings of the system. (Fisher 1932:94) Hence, the collectivity of atoms did not always move and come to rest in a state of timeless simultaneity. Indeed, in times of uncertainty irrationality permeated this system and as a result prices were set at danger-level - the effect of this being economic contraction.

Quite clearly the ideal equilibrium could not be guaranteed by the government of individual reason. Rather than being a picture of elegance or harmony, this economic system was rather more like the strange and dangerous realm of nature. The rationalist project was to bring more and more of those unruly elements that existed outside the bounds of the rationalized cosmos into its domain. Only the steady hand of science could smooth out the contradictory, mysterious and paradoxical elements in social life; such elements were seen as involving humanity in chaos.

Thus, the coincidence of private interest and public virtues, which had been the lynch-pin of the system of laissez-faire, was now said to be achievable only with external guidance and adjustment by the scientific-state. Perfect information and conditions of certainty could be delivered by the state under the stewardship of scientific experts. Only the rationalization
of society could establish an identity between the particular and the universal. This was to be achieved by a central intelligence rather than mutually self-adjusting forces. Thus, as an expression of the rationalization movement's drive to eliminate uncertainty, the planned economy also demonstrated the "superiority of conscious reason over blind instinct", which supposedly characterized the system of laissez-faire (Durbin 1936:690)

One of the key oppositions put forward in these recommendations for the rationalization of society was that between the sense of common discipline embodied in the state and the evidence of "competitive excesses" in the market-place. (Mauldon 1931:253) The disparate nature of the unregulated market could be presented as wasteful and excessive, as compared with the efficiency and discipline of a "socially controlled integration and coordination of industries". (Mauldon 1933:92-100) It would be the state, rather than the market, which would become the "executioner" of those redundant or excess units because of its commanding view of the whole of society. (Mauldon 1931:254) When brought under the sway of a "voluntarily accepted discipline", whole industries would come to function most efficiently in the national interest. (Mauldon 1931:247-251) (1)

We can see the impact of these ideas if we look at changes to the existing political vocabulary in the English-speaking

1. The Australian student of administration F.A. Bland suggested that public ownership and control of industry might in some cases prove "more efficient and economic than private" control. (Bland 1934:71)
world, where a new terminology had emerged. In the 20th century the focus of political discourse was said to have shifted from adventure to security, progress to order, freedom to discipline and competition to control. (Brigden 1935:236) More specifically, terms such as "balanced production", "orderly marketing", "credit control", "economic planning", and "a five year plan" had become central to administrative debates. These terms that would have been unheard of or "unintelligible" prior to the 20th century. (Mauldon 1933:92)

But what did a society designed around new rationalist principles look like? State and society would function something like the stream-lined mass-production process of the scientifically managed firm. The state was conceived of as a "single great mechanism" comprised of smaller organisations and units, all of which dovetailed "into the whole." (Mauldon 1931:256) The unity of the state could be seen to stand against the excess and disorder of unregulated economic life. Where crisis had implied a loss of grounding, government by scientific diktat through the command of the economic system would provide the new grounds, the new centre for social activity. The state would be the "unifying centre" which would "consciously shape the purposes of the economic system." (Greenwood 1933:80)

But what also emerges from this, is an ambiguous theory of the state. In contrast to the old rationalism, the new rationalism held that "Rational purposes" received "their highest expression in the activities of the state." (Greenwood 1933:80) This state could, on the one hand, be depicted as a
purely functional centre devoid of autonomous will. On the other hand, it could be depicted as something which stands above the complex of social action, directing, guiding and co-ordinating it. The state could therefore be described as either a neutral mechanism or a supreme will securing the rationality of the social order. The problems associated with this dual depiction of the nature of the rationalist state will become evident in later discussions of the nature of the state under fascism.

In summary then, the new rationalism oversaw the introduction of scientific research in the pure and applied sciences; the standardization and simplification of commercial processes and linguistic signs and symbols; the establishment of national planning commissions; the horizontal and vertical integration of social structures and, most importantly, the scientific management of men and materials for the purposes of the State.

5. The Role of Politics

As we have seen, far from standing for a frictionless method of social adjustment, the system of laissez-faire was seen as chaotic and vulnerable to capture by sectional interests. The unregulated economic system was seen as the apotheosis of greed and selfishness. To that extent it was seen not as a creature of economic science but of politics.

More fundamentally, laissez-faire could be seen as the effect of an uncontrolled, metaphysical will. In opposition to
this, the growing strength of the physical sciences was seen as a denial or an attempt to suppress such metaphysical forces. The physical sciences embraced concrete realities and material forces. (Wallace 1924:282ff) This suppression of will by the physical sciences was also a suppression of politics insofar as the will to power lay behind all political conflicts. Thus, the laissez-faire economic system and the economic conflicts it gave rise to was but one example of the dangers of political will.

Another example was war. The social disruptions caused by war were seen as the ill-effects of the free-play of political will. Of course, we should remember the historical context of these denunciations of politics and its identification with the evils of war. One cannot divorce the distaste for politics and the search for a new and disinterested way of administering domestic and international society from the bloodshed caused by the Great War. For the war was seen as an expression of that "spirit of egoism" which found its most effective vehicle in the form of the nation-state. The spirit of egoism was the sole cause of the waste and loss of war. (Knibbs 1923:171) (1)

This weariness with and even contempt for politics also grew from an understanding of it as largely consisting of parliamentary debates over which policy or party would prevail. Such debates seemed rather petty in the light of the problems which were appearing in Europe from the 1920s onwards. This became a popular refrain. It was clearly a popular refrain to

1. This is partly why, as we shall discuss in chapter five, there was a strong trend towards political pluralism after the war.
see in science the answer to social problems. A Westminster Gazette editorial in 1926 put it that the only way to prevent Government from hurting the public was by supplying it with "an adequate scientific apparatus and placing it beyond the play of party politics." (Westminster Gazette 1926:1)

As with war, politics was considered "wasteful". It was seen as an "expensive luxury" and a "parasite"; the methods which it employed being "reckless" and "haphazard." (Wallace 1924:277) Politics was the realm of "traditions, emotions and vested interests". (Portus 1927:31) Political judgements, because of their essential narrowness, were the direct cause of "industrial waste" and idle resources. (Greenwood 1933:82) Many were optimistic that politics, like war itself, was becoming extinct in an age of science. Already new techniques and methods for social organisation were emerging that would render politics superfluous and which would use science to establish "artificial or tellic control" over society. (Barnes 1925:117) For Wallace, the complexity of social life, and the increasing importance of scientific argument in the conduct of social affairs, showed that "political methods [had] risen to the top like a light and frothy scum, beneath which the new technique" was making itself ready. (Wallace 1924:277)

The state did not have to become a vehicle for the political will. The new techniques which were emerging were centred around the idea of a bureaucracy which would be trained in scientific methods, and which would be "removed as far as possible from the
undue pressure of party politics." (Belshaw 1929:364) The Australian administrative theorist F. A. Bland wrote that the growing limitation on politics was not something to be regretted, for the greatest danger to modern society was the tinkerings of "political amateurs upon the body politic". (Bland 1934:76-7) In addition, it was not possible for the political executive to deal with the increasing complexity of social life, or to administer all the services that the modern public service state was called upon to provide. (1)

This identification of politics with irrational forces, and the belief that technical decision-making could overcome the political problem, was also taken up by Karl Mannheim. Mannheim wrote that politics was only possible to the extent that the "sphere of the irrational" persisted in social life. (Mannheim 1936:170) But, with the development of the "exact" sciences, he was confident that the sphere of the "rationally controllable" was growing while the sphere of the irrational was in decline. (Mannheim 1936:170-1) In particular, for Mannheim, the eruption of conflicts was largely caused by economic inequalities. Hence, the way to reduce disturbances was the manipulation of the trade-cycle by a professional bureaucracy attuned to the real needs of society. As a result of this he wrote, in the future many issues currently deemed as political would simply become matters

1. A sign of this transition from the personified nation-state to the state as a neutral mechanism was the change in the description of it, from a "police state" to a "public service state". (McMahon Ball 1932:173)
of science and technique rather than opinion. At this point, politics would gradually disappear and administration would take its place. (Mannheim 1936:170) (1)

Thus, it was not the state itself that was the problem in relation to conflicts of wills. It was the presence of politics at the centre of the state and not the institution of the state itself that was the problem. A scientific state, unlike a politically driven state, would be a self-less state, according to those who were described as the new rationalists. (2)


It was argued that the sceptre of sovereignty must be shared between politics and specialised agencies. (Bland 1934:76-7) This was obviously a problem in relation to principles of democracy. Whatever the egalitarian thrust of the new rationalism in the economic sphere, it exhibited little interest in democratic modes of organisation. As we noted earlier, its interest was in the

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1. An Australian scholar P. H. Partridge wrote that when scholars stated that the "rational society of the future" would exclude politics they meant they would exclude the "exercise of force" and prejudice and replace it with the "conscientious study of society." (Partridge 1941:252)

2. We can find many calls for society to be disciplined by scientific experts rather than political amateurs through-out the 1930s and 1940s. The modern state was said to need "fact-gathering and fact interpreting bureaux". (Ross 1934:242) Social planning was said to be based on social research of all the relevant facts and the substitution of the "properly equipped" for the "well-intentioned and devoted." (Kewley 1942:321) Reform was said to require the erection of dykes to stop "the flood waters of partisan politics, from engulfing the fields of administration" as Morriam put it. (Renwick 1944:81)
rational ordering of society in the national interest, rather than in matters of personal freedom. This was what distinguished it from the old rationalism. A strong association was made between the ideal of democracy and the ideal of economic freedom. The chaos of democracy could be seen to complement the chaos of laissez-faire.

Furthermore, when there was talk of the failure of politics it was the failure of democracy that was often being pointed to. For democracy, like politics itself, was also deemed to have failed as evident in the threats being posed to it all over Europe. Social scientists were rather sceptical of the wayward workings of democracy. As William Anderson had written, modern social scientists tended to "disparage democracy on the score of efficiency", and for this reason he believed that the democratic legislature was on its way to being superceded. (Anderson 1926:48) For those planners who viewed themselves as akin to scientists, democracy could be seen as something which should be judged in terms of whether it could produce the greatest happiness rather than being seen as an end in itself. Dyason wrote that economists:

May fairly welcome that decline of democratic faith which, though it reduces democracy from an inspiration to an instrument, nevertheless makes society free to experiment and gives the economist liberty to pursue his inquiries. (Dyason 1932:172)

To this extent, political democracy became quite secondary to the pursuit of a rational social order, where political clashes between economic and social groups were eliminated by subjecting each group to "the dictates of a rational concept of
general national and social welfare." (Greenwood 1933:83) This idea was repeated time and again and was given full expression in the fashion for overhead planning of the economic realm, which Walter Lippmann described as the "dominant dogma of the age." (Bowen 1938:711) (1)

As we noted in the last chapter, one could also link democracy with the rise of irrational impulses. Mannheim wrote that democracy also witnessed the "flash of emotions and group valuations." (Mannheim 1940:360) Mannheim said the paradox of modern society was that it facilitated the growth of bureaucratic organisation and increasing interdependence of state agencies (leading to a heightened degree of rationality in society) yet also threatened that rationality because it allowed rule by the mob. He wrote that "mass emotions" could "sweep away all traces of foresight and calculation", and "mob emotions" could have "disastrous" effects where they interfered with the work of government. (Mannheim 1940:359-60) While democracy required the input of the people, their input should only serve as an indication to the government as to what course to take and should not be accepted in its "crude state." (Mannheim 1940:359-60)

There was also, it seemed, an intimate link between democracy and dictatorship which could only be severed by the expertise of the planners. Walter Shephard wrote in an article

1. It was said that even the Americans were sacrificing "their individualistic gods" for the sake of Roosevelt's "national planning." (Wood 1933:45)
called "Democracy in Transition" in The American Political Science Review that where democracy simply became an outlet for popular "sentiment, caprice and passion", it could be "reduced" by self-serving politicians to a set of "techniques by which the uninstructed masses may be swayed, controlled and used". (Shephard 1935:358) (1) Whereas in earlier times the important question was how to give effect to public opinion, now the question was how to control it. And to the extent that democracy embodied all unleashed popular passions which hindered scientific progress, it was said that scientists no longer believed that "the voice of the people is the voice of God." (Shephard 1935:7)

7. The Role of the Intellectual.

These ideas about the failure of democracy and the importance of science to public administration obviously enhanced the role of social scientists in public life. As one writer put it, in a "period of expertocracy" where the "democratic movement" was seen to be exhausted, the scientist who knew how to manage things should take the place of the "untrained mass." (Jones 1928:285) Not only did the wall between state and society come tumbling down under the doctrine of new rationalism, so did the

1. Shephard wrote that H.G Wells was right in arguing that "we want the world ruled not by everybody but by a public-minded organization open, with proper safeguards, to everybody." Such an organization, however, had to be "immune to the pressure of propaganda and to the seduction of special interests." (Shephard 1935:19)
wall between academic and non-academic life. There was no part of the social universe that could not be amenable to study and manipulation by experts. The concept of the scientific commonwealth seemed to deny the private sphere of activity any place, just as it denied any role to accident, chance or fate.

For instance, laissez-faire in reproduction could be seen as being as regressive and irrational as laissez-faire economics. And just as laissez-faire was giving way to economic planning and control, so too in the course of education it was necessary to plan the individual personality and mould it to conform with social and moral principles. In a rationalized society, "mental hygiene", eugenics and "vital statistics" (that is, the "improvement of the body politic in health, vigor and intelligence") was an important goal. (Barnes 1925:117-8) The use of scientific methods in the reconstruction of the human personality and human behaviour would, like a planned economy, eliminate intellectual waste through such things as vocational training or even the planned reproduction of humanity. Psychobiology had as its end the elimination, as far as possible, of those elements of uncertainty and danger which the non-rational can bring. Some went as far to say that democracy should only apply to an "aristocracy of worth", so that the "stupid, or those unable to exercise the rights of citizenship, will not have a voice in control." (Tait 1928:29)

If the disinterested scientist was the model for the social planner, then it seemed appropriate to characterize the social
arena as a laboratory for scientific experiment. Social scientists were now let loose in the greatest laboratory of all, claiming to be to the 20th century what Bacon was to the 18th. (Parkinson 1934:95) But again, as it was precisely the scientific detachment of the experts that entitled them to have a larger say in the running of society, it was important to maintain an air of scientific accuracy. Yet many of the disciplines emerging at that time were built on shaky empirical grounds. For this reason social planners tended to borrow their vocabulary from established fields of technical and scientific learning such as medicine, engineering and physics.

Social scientists commonly depicted themselves as like medical scientists, working in the greatest laboratory of all. Their role in this regard was to eradicate the sicknesses engendered by self-interest and the misuse of resources in order to secure hygienic social conditions. The diseases spread by evils such as laissez-faire, war and politics could be contrasted with the predictability and security of the vast social laboratory of the future, which would be guided by clear-sighted experts. Parkinson wrote that gradually, the knowledge uncovered by use of scientific methods would be:

...absorbed as established scientific truths into public utility, just as the germ theory of disease has been, and international trade relations will be controlled by a quietly functioning department, very like an international Board of Health. (Parkinson 1934:97)

What was once decided according to opinion and interest would now be decided by technique. Mannheim also used a medical
analogy, stating that the social scientist's approach should be similar to that used in treating a "hygienic or sanitary problem", which was "usually solved by non-political means", based on the "best scientific methods available." (Mannheim 1940:363) Where policy is based on such methods, he wrote, "political differences are inconceivable." (Mannheim 1940:363)

The redescription of the economic activities of the state in terms of its activities in the procurement of health and hygiene had its origins in the Victorian period. In the late 19th century, state intervention had been justified in terms of the need to secure the health and hygiene of society and to prevent "social diseases". (Whitfield 1924:565) These were due to the existence of unsanitary conditions, particularly among the poor. The state was thus intervening to secure a higher good in line with the "change of social sentiment in the direction of public hygiene and social welfare". (McPhee 1924:541) This argument for state intervention in the 19th century was used to support the further extension of state control of the economic realm in the 20th century. The provision of social security by the state could be seen as analogous to state provision of sanitary conditions. Just as the "preservation and improvement of public health" had once demanded a "union between science and administration", the preservation and improvement of the social order also demanded another sort of agency which would be charged with eliminating social illnesses. (Bland 1934:71)

These medical analogies also began to mesh with the description of society as being akin to a scientifically managed
firm. Individual citizens would need to be subject to psychological methods to indicate the specialized vocational function to which they were suited. This view of a well-ordered society as an arrangement of specialist functions overseen by expert managers was very much like the modern mass production process. Thus we find that modern mechanical, engineering and design techniques were frequently invoked in describing a state designed or engineered to serve large social purposes. The intellectualization of the world and a reduction in the realm of the unknown went hand in hand with the gradual elimination of the role of the accidental in the natural and social realms, its replacement being a world shaped by design. (1)

That the social realm was actually conceived in terms of, and not merely likened to, a feat of engineering is evident in Sir Henry Barraclough's point, that when he spoke of engineering the modern state he said he was using the phrase strictly technically and not at all as a metaphor. (Barraclough 1939b:179) As suggested by our discussion of the interest in eugenics and the planning of the human personality, it was not just institutions or the economic system that were to be designed. The new social engineers went further in making humanity the object of their

1. Sir David Rivett cited H. G Wells as saying: "Every principle of the world machine must be designed. The property and money system must play in with the system of production, with the educational system, with the organisation for the extension of science, with the transport organization, with the biological controls. These must all be proportionate to one another, interacting with one another and modifiable in relation of each other." (Rivett 1937:13)
investigation. The "vast mob" were to be "the chief material of the higher engineering." (Barraclough 1939a:187)

At one level, the promotion of science as the model for all knowledge was political only in a metaphorical sense. That is, it was part of an attempt to control and change the intellectual priorities of the academy. But it was political in a more conventional sense as well, as social scientists armed with method could also claim to possess a superior wisdom in the running of worldly affairs. What followed from this was the idea that the "social scientist is better at politics" than either the politician or the public, and can perform the functions of the political leader more "skilfully and responsibly." (Partridge 1941:251) Hence, social scientists were not just claiming the superiority of science over philosophy, they were also claiming preeminence in the control and direction of political and civil affairs.

8. The Linguistic Dimension.

Elevating the importance of scientific ways of speaking in intellectual circles was also inextricably tied to the elevation of this way of speaking in the fields of public affairs and administration. Thus, it was the vocabulary of political and not just intellectual life that was being changed. As we have suggested, social scientists propounded a form of social description which elevated method above opinion, facts above speculative thought and literal above figurative meaning.
This is precisely why the adoption of the terms of scientific debate by social scientists became so important. For it was not as easy for social as for natural scientists to establish a special language. Social scientists encountered difficulties in locating an exclusive discourse. Social scientists could not so easily avoid indulging in common speech. L.M. Fraser wrote in *Economic Thought and Language* that economists were aware of all the "inaccuracy of their linguistic equipment" when compared with the natural sciences. (Fraser 1937:vii)

This concern for an exclusively scientific language reflected a desire to find a way of speaking about political life that would transcend all other ways. It also reflected a rationalist belief that if only the social problem is described or analyzed accurately, then all shall accept the same solution. It is not surprising then that one of the features of the rationalization movement was the standardization and simplification of linguistic signs and symbols. While one does not want to make too much of this, there was a certain sense that if people all spoke the same way or at least accepted certain fundamental rational principles of argumentation, then the political problem would fade away.

That there was this concern with harmonizing beliefs or modes of speech has at least one perfectly understandable justification. The idea of one rational mode of discourse was seen as an answer to the images of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, where the popular passions were aroused by propaganda,
thus facilitating the rise of demagogues and dictators. The new sophists exploited the potent arts of propaganda, oratory and advertizing.

Those trained in scientific method became contemptuous of the linguistic dimension of politics. The oratory of the Nazi leaders - the hammering of audiences with hard, uncompromising words - blurred the lines which separate language and violence. Nazi propaganda was also suggestive of all that could be seen to be manipulative and sinister in politics and rhetoric for, as Kenneth Burke noted at the time, Hitler claimed that politics should be sold like soap. (Burke 1984:77) So the model of scientific discourse and the ideal of a universal rational audience was seen as the linguistic antithesis of Nazi black magic. In the war of words, only scientific discourse would defeat the enemies of reason. But this was because of the fidelity of science and not because it possessed its own power of magic. Furthermore, a citizenry conscious of economy of meaning and trained in rational thought, rather than one chained to arbitrary and erratic will, would not be vulnerable to inflated, seductive or inflammatory oratory.

The demand for a new model for political activity - for political discourse in particular - followed from the characterization of contemporary thought as emotional and confused. If the image of Babel, in the sense of everything that is opposed to reasoned discourse, was the dominant image of conceptual activity at that time, and if intellectual dissent posed a threat to the political order, then the intellectual
project to establish a common perspective became crucial. (Fox 1938:194)


As we have seen, democracy was seen to give way to such fevered outpourings. Where democracy was defined in too radically individualist or pluralistic terms it was could be seen as involving society in chaos; either the chaos of uncoordinated individualism or the chaos of mob rule. The fracturing of wills which was the cause of social disorder was contrasted to the unified and rational will of the ordered state. Both idealist and new rationalist accounts of civil society designated the singular, public will as the real will of society. To this extent, it could be argued (albeit rather disingenuously) that the real enemy of rationality was a discordance amongst the popular will, rather than democracy itself. Social chaos was caused by the failure of individuals to recognize their true interests - the latter being coincident with the interest of the whole. Given this, it was easy to argue that the congregation of individual wills should be further controlled by the exercise of the public will. Without control, there would be a chaos of "competing popular wills." (Bland 1934:69)

As we have seen, planning was said to be synonymous with scientific observation and social control of the populace by experts. Social stability necessitated surveillance of the population and the monitoring of its moods and emotions by means of mass-polling and mass observation. Thus, the "real problem"
facing modern democracy was precisely this need to reconcile its "fundamental basis with the growing necessity for expert control." (Gepp 1939:156)

Some saw dictatorial implications in such arguments. (Eddy 1939:284-6) However, it was countered that this did not have to mean a significant reduction in democracy. Indeed, observation and control were also necessary for the preservation of democracy. Far from facilitating authoritarian control, the monitoring of popular sentiment would allow scientists to be alert to potential clashes of will which could threaten democracy by creating crises open to exploitation by despotic leaders. (Metcalfe 1943:67)

The potential contradictions within this notion of a scientifically steered democracy, or at least one in which social disagreement was limited, were also resolved by way of the proposal to extend the scientific estate downward into the minds of the populace. As we have seen with our discussion of the rationalization of political language, only the consonance of will between the scientist and the citizenry would bridge the gap between scientific truth and human understanding. Where the "non-scientific public" was trained in the methods and language of science, tensions between the actual and real will, between expediency and scientific necessity, between representative democracy and expert control would be resolved. The popular corollary of the scientist-king was thus the citizen-scientist. The citizen-scientist was one who was able to think rather than feel, who was governed by reason rather than emotion and was able
to separate the substantial from the meretricious. (Bland 1943:69) The citizenry, equipped with training to judge on facts would not be misled by bias; mass emotions could thus be harnessed for social progress rather than social disruption. Citizens should "demand facts...and the use of experts." (Kewley 1942:313) (1)

Hence, a citizenry could be fully reconciled to the counsel of reason which was the state. Citizens who were versed in scientific argument, in a social context in which the interests had been eradicated, would not be prone to the waste of political disputation and indeed the physical and spiritual waste which came as a result of violent political clashes. If the "power of planned persuasion" were used to encourage "peaceful cooperation and understanding" rather than "stir" up strife, then "we would gladly consent to considerable interference at strategic points." (Shaw 1942:92)

10. The Ambiguity of Planning.

For those who conceived of society and knowledge as an organic unity animated by an ethical ideal, the intellectual movement of rationalization was spiritually soulless and amoral. For as suggested above, rationalization of the industrial process eventually led to, and indeed necessitated, a greater uniformity and common identity in social life. The spread of

1. Note that Pearson had also written that: "Modern Science, as training the mind to an exact and impartial analysis of facts, is an education specially fitted to promote sound citizenship." (Pearson 1937:13)
mass-production thus oversaw the spread of a mass-culture and the gradual "organisation of all interests, including those of art and science, on economic lines." (Anderson 1931b:89) This trend was universal and transcended political differences. It was a trend which was Western, urban and cosmopolitan. John Anderson wrote that attempts to model society on an industrial system, based on the standardization and quantity production of "men and things", would in the end bring both Capitalism and Bolshevism very close to each other in their final stages. (Anderson 1931b:90)

Drucker's argument that the modern world had seen the destruction of economic man may well be correct, but it is not correct to say the dominance of economic values passed away as well, for rationalization meant quintessentially the "dominance of economic values" and the test of material success. (Anderson 1931b:89) The crucial difference between the new economic world and the old was that the distribution of economic rewards in the new order was based on what were deemed to be social rather than sectional considerations.

Rational social control It would not only produce greater stability and a higher standard of life it would also, in creating an organic community, create a moral one as well. Standardization and rationalization, "wisely practised and directed", were "a beneficient agency by which the community is organised to cooperate for the common good", something which was "an essential adjunct to our civilization." (Hebblewhite 1938:69)
Furthermore, despite the contrasts drawn between rationalism and ideal liberalism, we can detect similar ideas about social interdependence and social purpose. The main difference being that the rationalists preferred mechanical or industrial analogies to organic ones. The purposiveness of the earlier evolutionary idealism was reflected in the understanding of rationalization as marking the increasing self-consciousness and self-realization of the social machine.

Further to this, we find that organic metaphors flowed into and informed the complex machine and systems metaphors taken from the scientific and technological realms. Thus, while on the hand, it was argued that the government machinery was being streamlined in order to form a more coherent structure, it was also said to be undergoing "a series of organic fusions." (Mauldon 1933:96) Brady wrote in *Rationalization and German Industry* that current scientific opinion suggested the universe was a "life-like machine", and this "functioning complex" was the model for the idea of a "functionally organized economy." (Brady 1933:9) Given this emphasis on the biological conception that the parts of an economy are functional to a "larger whole", it is not surprising that the idea of the rationalization movement, or at least the proposal for national planning, would later be seen as marking a revival of organic theory. (Wilson 1942:456,458) In this context, A.P. Elkin argued that society was entering a new period in which, instead of there being an emphasis on the individual, there was an emphasis on "social holism." (Elkin 1943:275)
But we should note that in stressing the functional interdependence of society, the advocates of planning did not necessarily mean to reduce human freedom. In attempting to refute the charge that social planning implied despotism there was a revival of those arguments put by the so-called new liberals of the late 19th century. F.A. Bland echoed T.H. Green when he wrote that the "new social order" had to develop a new understanding of "social obligations...True liberty is possible only when everybody is passionately anxious to provide conditions in which every one has the opportunity of being its best self." (Bland 1930:204) More specifically, the argument was developed that freedom - the free personality - could only develop where the state was allowed to eliminate the inequalities and injustices of the market-place. Thus, it was argued that planning and freedom were claimed to be not "merely compatible but even complementary", for the old ideal of freedom - lost in the period of laissez-faire - could only be achieved by the technique of planning. (Partridge 1941:236)

The identity established between planning and freedom reinforced similar moves to unite the concepts of democracy and bureaucracy and the concepts of science and welfare. Where the authoritarian nature of the new order was questioned, one could argue with Mannheim that the application of social techniques to the running of society was "planning for freedom" not "planning for conformity." (Mannheim 1940:263-4) Freedom, it was said, would only be facilitated by "compulsory education, by health regulations, possibly by political regulations, certainly by
economic regulations." (Shaw 1942:86) However, where this identity was difficult to establish, one could stress the need to sacrifice certain values in order to serve some universal good. Such a view was comparable to the idealist notion of the "transferring of the 'actual' into the 'real' will." (Shaw 1942:86)

Despite these overlapping tendencies, the moral ambiguity of arguments for the use of scientific method in order to enhance social welfare was not entirely resolved. The status of value - as something discovered by science or as something for which science was merely instrumental - was not clarified by those who were both believers in the neutrality and supremacy of method and at the same time concerned to promote a better world. Indeed, this ambiguity could not be resolved because the arguments in favour of planning were used in front of a variety of audiences. Attempts to resolve these tensions may well have invited criticism from one or other of these audiences.

11. The image of fascism and the militarization of discourse.

The need to establish a complementarity between planning and freedom also reflected a need to deflect charges that planning implied the same authoritarian state control which was evident in Communist Russia, Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. Planning and rational social organization were asserted to be the antithesis of the vicious conflicts which characterized political upheaval of the kind that existed in those countries. (Greenwood 1933:83) Criticisms of these regimes appealed to both moral and scientific
values. Philip Parkinson wrote in *The Australian Quarterly* that planning, as a non-revolutionary approach to social change, promised not "ruthless destruction but the slow establishment of scientific truth in social relations." (Parkinson 1934:98)

Yet despite the need to distance planning from the authoritarian political systems of Nazism, Fascism and, to a lesser extent, Bolshevism, there was also an expressed fascination with the images of national discipline and order offered by those state directed societies. I have discussed the dualistic images of Nazism and fascism. They could appear as both arbitrary and fanatical as well as being the embodiment of efficiency and order. Thus, while at one level the intellectual appraisal of political affairs pitted scientific and democratic values against the rage of Nazism and fascism, a certain ambivalence towards these movements was shown (albeit well before the war) by those who wanted state direction of liberal-democracies. It was still possible in the early 1930s to hold up the "great national plans of Germany, Italy and Russia" as models for those who saw the economic planning of the modern state as a means to go beyond political methods. (Wood 1933:45) Brady wrote that in Germany and Soviet Russia alone was there the "universal application of scientific methods and techniques and cooperative effort in all phases of investigation, production and distribution." (Brady 1933:6) Paul Einzig argued in *The Economic Foundations of Fascism* (1933) that while fascism began as a political idea, it had developed all the necessary preconditions of social cooperation for the introduction of scientific or
economic planning. (Einzig 1933:vii:9ff) (1)

The unregulated economic system containing warring atoms was in total contrast to a planned society. On this account, the concept of the totalitarian society was the ideal antithesis of laissez-faire's atomic model of society. Thus, while the anarchy of laissez-faire was presented as being inefficient, it was claimed that a rigidly controlled society gave "swifter and smoother" articulation of the forces at work in society. The totalitarian society, like science which recommends it, is disciplined and rigorous. Unguided and unplanned democracy, however, could be characterised as soft and lazy, whereas in fascist Italy the "present pressing problems" were solidly grasped. (Lovell 1933:313)

But it was the Bolsheviks' Five-Year Plan in particular which gave dramatic expression to the concept of a planned and vigorous society standing for "ambition", "vast promise and confidence." (Mauldon 1931:247) Russia was seen as the "ultimate rationalist economy" which showed the "growing unity of scientific method, which avoids the narrow practicalism of the American type." (Mauldon 1931:251) The "great energy and practical zeal" that was evident in Russia was contrasted with the "slackness" and "weakness" of democracies in times "crisis." (Abbot 1931:111) A.C. Pigou noted that Sidney and Beatrice Webb

1. For a review of Einzig's book see D.A.S. Campbell in The Australian Quarterly, 1933:122
had written in *A New Civilisation* that in the Soviet Union "no part of the material universe is left unprobed and untested." (Pigou 1936:94)

Enthusiasm for the politics of Italy and Germany was diluted in the latter part of the 1930s. By then it had become increasingly difficult to praise Fascism and Nazism as model political orders, especially when calls for the defence of democracy and freedom were at the heart of war time propaganda.

But the revelation that behind the order of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy lay rapacious urges did not discredit the role of scientific planning. In fact, fascism was seen as demonstrating the need for rationalization. For it was argued that without economic planning the "despoiled lower middle class" would become ripe for "Fascist demagogery." (Lerner 1938:116) In addition to this, the Soviet Union was still be held up as a model of order and rationality, and a state where science was taken seriously.

A contrast was drawn at least between the military discipline these new orders affected and the weakness of democracy when it came to defend its principles. (Brooks 1941:8) Democracy was thus said to be at some disadvantage with the Nazi's "'New European Order'" and the Japanese "'New Order for Eastern Asia'". The superiority of these new orders was due to their very simplicity, their blue-prints springing from "single source" and proceeding "according to a simple formula". (Brooks 1941:9) In order for democracy to survive it had to be
disciplined. (Ogg 1942:13) Democracy could not afford an attitude of complacency in the face of political and economic ferment. In the new social order individuals were called on to be "registered and indexed, reserved, drafted, called-up, man-powered, rationed...Even a democratic society must be regimented as for battle." (Elkin 1943:275)

Plans for control of the economic system were often described in military terms. Planning the peace as much as planning the war was an essential part of saving democracy. This was particularly evident amongst Australian writers during the war. Describing social policies in this way gave an added urgency to calls for social reform. The struggle against poverty at home could be seen as analogous to the struggle against the enemy without. As the most effective weapon of the state in the war against social insecurity, the concept of a controlled economy was readily translated into military and strategic terms. The problem of economic disorder could be seen as on a par with that of war. (Brigden 1935:234)

For this reason, direction of the economy could be likened to the direction of a military force in the pursuit of some objective. Both demanded the administration of a resource in order to achieve the "maximum efficiency for the purpose contemplated". (Walker 1940:2) E. Ronald Walker was an Australian academic economist and public administrator and author of numerous articles in the Economic Record during the Second World War on the administration of the war economy. He later
wrote that the military mind, like the economic, was conscious of the need to avoid waste and decay, and of the "scarcity principle" and the need to allocate available resources "in order to maximise strength"; like the economist, the military leader must count the cost of "manpower and material" and develop a rational strategy for choosing between competing alternatives. (Walker 1947:16) In this way, military strategy was asserted to be a form of economy and "the economic organization of the community for war" was "regarded as an extension of military planning into the civilian sector". (Walker 1947:16) (1)

Planning the economy in the interests of the war-effort and describing this in terms of such military values as efficiency and discipline gave further credibility to the idea of a scientific public economy. For just as "military experts" were allowed to run a war without political interference, so too in a period of economic crisis should the politicians let the experts get on with the job. (Shaw 1942:86) (1) Where Machiavelli or Clausewitz may be read as emphasising the political and temporal character of strategy, the planners appeared to view military strategy as a science - even an economic science. By governing through the economy, and enlisting the help of a strategic science, planners would be better equipped to eliminate the political - or rather the conflicts which gave rise to it.

1. F.A. Bland wrote in Planning the Modern State that the analogy between the military general staff and an economic general staff was drawn by the authors of the Liberal Industrial Report in Britain. Bland noted that "many people are convinced that the principle [of a military Intelligence Staff] has a wider application." (Bland 1934:32-4) Bland added that the personnel of such a unit could be "drawn from men scientifically trained in the work of research and investigation." (Bland 1934:34)
This chapter has examined a response to uncertainty which contrasted with the social pessimism considered in the first chapter. Scientific and related fields of technological learning provided a fund of models and metaphors with which to understand the world. These models were brought to bear upon the concepts of statecraft, sovereignty and political economy. In some cases it seemed to be suggested that, if only we could discover the laws of human behaviour, then "a rational society, in the political and economic sense, will come almost of its own accord." (Anderson 1940:66) On this and many other counts, the social planners certainly were naively optimistic.

Nevertheless, there were good reasons why this belief that scientific planning could produce a better world developed. As I have pointed out, the promise of a better world was an important element in galvanizing support for the war effort in the years 1939-45. (Partridge 1941:236) Social security, social justice and social policy were said to be "at the core" of the issues that the war would decide. (Schneider 1942:258) The new social order was originally intended to be a moral as well as a scientific order. (1)

1. We can find any number of writers attesting to this - many of them economists. Burton wrote of the "strong desire for a better, more gracious way of life" after the war. (Burton 1943:34) Giblin wrote of the hope for a "'better world' after the war." (Giblin 1943:5)
What clearly comes through is that social scientists in those years who claimed to have a special knowledge of society and the way it should be run had not theorised adequately the nature of their relation to the state and society, and the relation between the realm of science and the realm of value. Did their special knowledge qualify them to be the servant or masters of social progress? Furthermore, in this new order, what was to be the place of moral sentiments? As we noted earlier, it was not clear whether science was to be merely instrumental in achieving the good life or whether it actually could point us towards the good life itself.

As we also noted in the last chapter, the coming of the Second World War did much to dilute the pose of neutrality adopted by social scientists. Indeed, it was the very "destructive purposes" to which science had been put that stimulated scientists to warn their colleagues that they could no longer pretend to be neutral and dissociate themselves from the social application of their work. (Vonwiller 1938a:30-33) Revealing an awareness of the criticisms of the potential of science to cause harm, much was being written on the "human aspect" of science. (Vonwiller 1938b:58) (1)

1. H.G Wells was cited as calling upon scientists to create a better world by assisting in the: "...the intellectualization of man's destructive urges in the interests of mankind by the practice of science in all its branches to abolish drudgery, to conquer disease and malformation, to control and augment good supplies, to breed new and better plants and animals, to rid the world of pain and disease, to build up a sound, happy well-balanced attitude to life." (Ross 1942:85)
While traditional science and philosophy were seen as aristocratic, the new science could be seen as popular and democratic. For while social scientists claimed to be detached in their evaluations, they also claimed to be humane to the extent that their science was placed in the service of the commonweal. In this regard, it could be argued that modern science was the only intellectual movement which had the confidence to struggle successfully against the Nazis. (Robertson 1942:164) Indeed, it was where appeals were made to scientific principles in the course of the struggle against the Nazis that science's life-giving qualities were brought to the fore. Science and rationality were especially associated with the pursuit of the good life where the war effort was cast in terms of the struggle between civilization and barbarism.

These comments suggest that the contrast I have drawn between proposing science as a solution to crisis and proposing moral renovation was not very sharp. Clearly, many social planners who invoked the vocabulary of science did so partly in order to endow their arguments for social reform with intellectual authority. Nevertheless, there is also evidence of the naive belief that a society governed by the scientifically-trained would be happier and more harmonious. Indeed, it appeared to be believed that if members of society were to adopt a scientific idiom then political differences could be greatly eliminated. It was in reaction to the use of this idiom in relation to social affairs that the word rationalism, which in
Brady's account had positive connotations, began to be used in a pejorative sense. That is, it began to be used as a means of attacking those who believed that society could be administered according to formula. It should also be stressed that the scientific idiom employed by social scientists was derived from highly simplistic understandings of the nature of modern physics and the methodological debates which were taking place in that area. Indeed, as we see in the next chapter, certain philosophers were putting forward radically different views of what scientific activity actually entailed.
Chapter 3: The Metaphysics of Process

1. The Cult of Science

In the previous chapter I drew attention to some of the ways in which people wrote about the intellectual and social order in the interwar period. I suggested that in certain intellectual circles it was common practice to try and emulate modes of scientific discourse. In fact, some advocates of scientific method claimed that only science could produce true sentences about the world. Due to this, as I also noted, the relations between advocates of scientific method and philosophers (particularly those working in the area of metaphysics) became rather strained.

I should hasten to add that what was being promoted as the scientific approach was not just the result of scientists "eulogising" their own methods, as the American philosopher Ralph Barton Perry put it. (Perry 1918:45) The cult of science was also an invention of non-physical scientists. Social scientists were eager to establish for themselves an authoritative voice, and being scientific was seen as a means of achieving that. In addition to this, there were also philosophers, in particular the logical positivists, who sought to replace philosophy with what the Viennese philosopher Rudolph Carnap called the "logic of
science." (1) The logical positivists were more rigorous in their definition of what scientific method entailed than were those social scientists who merely sought to sound scientific by using words such as fact, data, observation and experiment. Yet what we have in both cases are examples of scientism - the belief that statements about the world should be presented in the language of science. Where certain forms of knowledge cannot be or could only be imperfectly expressed in this way they were regarded as having less intellectual value. Scientism is the imitation and "cult of science", and it was this, rather than science itself, that so irritated a range of philosophers, social theorists and theologians in the 1920s and 1930s. (2)

1. The philosopher John Passmore reported that the logical positivist movement emerged from discussions among members of a group formed in 1922 known as the "Vienna Circle". This group was led by Moritz Schlicht who was then Professor of Philosophy at Vienna. After 1928 it was known as the "Ernst Mach Society"; Mach being the German physicist and one who advocated that science should be strictly empirical in its approach. It should be noted that Schlicht was not sympathetic to Carnap's position that philosophy should be replaced by science. He wrote: "Some of my friends would prefer to pass as representatives of science rather than as philosophers; they attach the greatest importance to the scientific character of our thought and pretend that our doctrines derive entirely from the sciences and owe nothing to traditional philosophy. Often they mock at it and sometimes they go so far as to prohibit the use of the term 'philosophy' as a description of their own works...This attitude appears to me to rest on a complete misunderstanding." Cited by John A. Passmore, "Logical Positivism (I)", The Australasian Journal of Psychology and Philosophy, Vol. XXI, Nos 2 and 3, December, 1943, pp. 65-66.

2. Perry described this cult of science as beginning with the "cultivation" of the scientific method, to be followed by "the praise and promotion of it, or a devoted loyalty to it." (Perry 1918:47) Perry suggested that the key to understanding why science became an object of worship lies in the ambiguous nature of science itself. That is, it both "magnifies" and "belittles" man; in measuring him against the rest of nature science makes man look small and weak but because it also affords man greater power over his environment it enhances his strength. In reducing
Perry traced the cult of science back to the late 19th century when, he said, science replaced religion as man's guide in his struggle with nature. Science, he wrote, came to be seen as the measure of "progress, and as the central fact in a philosophy of history". (Perry 1918:47) Science, he added, was held to be on the side of mankind because it was based on reason, whereas religious knowledge was dismissed as superstitious and reactionary; science would push man forward where religion would hold him back. Perry suggested that it was the combination of this faith in scientific method with social idealism that encouraged an element of zealotry among scientists. And it was this, along with a dismissive attitude towards non-scientific values, that was partly responsible for the bitter conflicts between scientists and religious figures in the late 19th century. That is, Perry's argument was that the intolerance and arrogance of the scientific community encouraged intolerance on the part of the religious community. This helps explain, he claimed, the objections to Darwin's theory and new geological accounts of the earth's beginnings that were raised in the name of religion. (Perry 1918:47)

But the ironic conclusion to this account is that what began as a declaration of independence on the part of scientists soon

and enhancing man's stature at the same time, science resembles religion. Also like religion, it becomes a creed to be adhered to as well as a way of living. (Perry 1918:45) Perry made some similar observations about the promotion of scientific methods some twenty years later; however, in these later comments he expressed much more appreciation of their utility and distinctiveness. (Perry 1938:56)
saw science itself become an object of religious worship. Edouard Le Roy, who was to succeed Henri Bergson (an early opponent of scientism) to the Chair of Philosophy at the College de France in 1920, wrote in The New Philosophy of Henri Bergson (1913) that in "the religion of science we see now nothing but idolatry." (Le Roy 1913:130)

By the time Le Roy made this comment it was the conflict between philosophers and scientists, rather than scientists and religious figures, that was obtaining prominence in academic literature. (Although many philosophers also argued against scientism from a religious perspective.) Here the battle was fought not so much over what particular scientific discoveries might mean in relation to Christian doctrine but more generally over the issue of methodology. We should note that scientists had also been asserting their autonomy in relation to philosophy since the late 19th century.

The development of the positivist methodology was a manifestation of the scientists' desire to be free from metaphysics. This battle became even more pronounced in the early 20th century with the development of what was known as radical empiricism, something which was derived from Humean scepticism and which was associated with the names of Karl Pearson and Ernst Mach. The difference between positivism in this form and the positivism associated with the French philosopher Auguste Comte was, for our purposes, twofold. Firstly, as Marjorie Harris (of the Randolph Macon Women's College) noted in comparing Comtian positivism with the radical
empiricism of William James, Comte had posited a world which existed beyond our perceptions and which was inter-related and ordered. Even if this reality was ultimately unavailable to us there was at least the possibility of achieving some unity amongst the sciences. Secondly, Comte subsequently put forward the principle of humanity as a means of unifying the subject matter of the sciences. This linking of scientific knowledge to human interests may resemble the instrumentalist theory of knowledge so often associated with the radical empiricists. Yet Comte's appeals to human purposes or values sounded more metaphysical that the stricter empiricist insistence that hypotheses be experimentally successful. (Harris 1925:156-9) (1)

Because in its later development positivism did not claim to offer a new religion to humanity, one would expect that it would have been more tolerant of other intellectual pursuits. Yet, as we saw in reference to Carnap, this was far from the case. For the logical positivists it was not enough to assert the distinctiveness of scientific method - a method which insists that scientists stick to an examination of the facts and attempt by means of induction to establish relations between these facts and the laws which govern them. One also had to announce the possible demise of philosophy.

The reaction of philosophers to this was similar to that of religious leaders when told that their sort of wisdom had been

superceded. That is, in the face of claims that metaphysics was "ideological" (to the extent that it spoke of an "ultimate reality"), philosophers asserted the supreme value of their own discipline. (Loewenberg 1923:280-1) (1) Thus, the claims made by or on behalf of modern science invited indignation, hostility and even fear on the one hand and veneration on the other. That science could excite such responses is testimony to the influence of scientism at that time. (2)

1. Note the comments by the Australian philosophy W.R. Boyce Gibson in comparing the nature of science and philosophy. "Finally, from the standpoint of motive, I should suggest that whilst both Science and Philosophy share a common respect for rationality and are stimulated in their quest by a common reverence for truth, the meaning put upon these terms differs...To the philosopher the reality means ultimate reality, and rationality will to him have a corresponding wide scope of meaning, covering the rationality of fact as well as of theory, of imagination as well as of thought, of Art as well as of Science. And there will be similar extensions to the meaning given to Truth." (Gibson 1924:249) The "scientific" view was summed up by J. Loewenberg, in an article called the "Metaphysics of Modern Scepticism", Philosophical Review, Vol. 32, No.3, pp. 278-288. He noted that it had been "declared" that science "has nothing to do with metaphysics. This declaration of independence, epitomized under the word 'positivism', assigns to science a narrow but definite and autonomous sphere. Science must cleave to particular facts and, eschewing speculation concerning their ultimate nature and destiny, must confine itself to a description of their definite relations and constant laws, capable of mathematical statement and experimental proof. The whole business is relative and its adequacy is to be tested with reference to its self-imposed limitations and by its own exact methods." p.280

2. There were also examples of the scientific myth later being ridiculed especially by pragmatist philosophers who were equally as critical of metaphysics. For instance, the French thinker Jacques Barzun, in a book in praise of pragmatist philosophy, complained that: "All that people seem to have learned after a century of universal scientism is that science is the realm of 'wonders' and of absolute certainty, a belief which has merely transferred religious faith from the black-coated to the white-coated priests." (Barzun 1939:190) He also noted how the word science carried "all before it - at least with the populace." (Barzun 1939:178)
Asserting the supreme value of the truths revealed by philosophy was not the only argument used against scientism. For instance, the American economist Frank Knight argued that the aspects of life that his discipline dealt with were "so fluid" that they could not be rendered as suitable topics for "scientific discussion"; science, he wrote, demanded a "static-subject matter." (Knight 1922:456) Indeed, Knight used an argument that was reminiscent of Giambattista Vico's argument that the knowledge which comes from a more intimate association with one's subject matter, as in the case in the study of history, while it cannot offer certainty in the way that science does, is nevertheless more powerful than the distant and impersonal knowledge that science gathers. (Vico 1968:331) Knight wrote that those who thought of themselves as "tough-minded" in their attempts to emulate scientific modes of description were really weak-minded, because mere scientific description would not lead to true understanding. (Knight 1923:616)

Such arguments only worked in certain rhetorical contexts. From what we have said so far, it would seem that in most intellectual contexts, as well as in the public domain, scientific method was believed to be potentially universal in scope, to the extent that social phenomena were held to be of essentially the same nature as the natural phenomena which scientists studied. While the logical positivists may not themselves have been this ambitious, certain social scientists were, as we saw in chapter two. Furthermore, while using science
to improve society may not have been part of the logical positivists' programme, as we also saw in chapter two, this brand of scientism was quickly assimilated (albeit in a simplistic fashion) by those with ambitious plans for social reform.

This leaves us with one point to raise in completing this section. That is, given its apparent potency, how much better it would have been if the scientistic myth could have been unravelled from within science itself. How much more effective criticisms of scientism would have been if science itself were to take a sceptical or pragmatic turn or perhaps even come to endorse the intuitions and reasonings of mystics and metaphysicians. For a number of philosophers writing in the 1920s and 1930s this is exactly what happened.

2. Empiricism and the New Realism.

When I say that there was a drive to become scientific we should recall that it was a particular version of science that was being put forward. As I pointed out in the last chapter, a distinction was drawn between the approaches of classical and modern scientists. While ever since the 17th century philosophers and economists had sought to imitate the physicist's decomposition of reality into discrete items of ever smaller dimensions, classical scientists seemed more interested in general laws which governed the arrangement of these units. Classical science was thus presented as being a series of deductions from a priori principles. To this extent, it was seen as still being beholden to the methods and metaphysics of the
philosophers.

But modern science was seen as ultimately being secured along the axis of experience rather than by logic. Logic was needed in order to clarify or apply hypotheses, but deductions from these were regarded as being essentially tautological in character and therefore unable to express real knowledge. The content which actually filled out the logical structures of science could only be derived from experimental techniques, specifically, the processes of observation and verification. Einstein hailed this change in the direction of scientific activity away from first principles and towards the empirical as a "descent from the Olympus of the apriori". (Einstein 1967:2)

The English physicist Christopher G. Darwin claimed in The New Conception of Matter that the "whole beautiful structure" of the theory of relativity rested on an empiricist methodology. (Darwin 1931:81) (1)

1. The Australian philosopher Francis Anderson stated that Einstein had declared his affiliation with the empiricism of Hume and Mach. He cited him as stating in his earlier writings that the axioms of geometry "insofar as they refer to reality, are not certain, and insofar as they are certain, they have no reference to reality." (Anderson 1923a:60) Werner Heisenberg, however, later disputed that the work of Einstein and of science in general was empirical. He wrote that: "It is generally believed that our science is empirical, that we draw our concepts and our mathematical constructs from the empirical data. If this were the whole truth, we should, when entering into a new field, introduce only such quantities as can directly be observed, and formulate natural laws only by means of these quantities. When I was a young man, I believed that this was just the philosophy which Einstein had followed in his theory of relativity. Therefore I tried to take a corresponding step in quantum theory by introducing the matrices. But when I later asked Einstein about it, he answered, 'This may have been my philosophy, but it is nonsense all the same. It is never possible to introduce only
As I have suggested, this emphasis on the experimental led to a physicalism which insisted that only those things given in our sensations which could be admitted as knowledge. (1) Hence also the physicalist dictum, as expressed by Moritz Schlicht, that only that which could be “measured is real”. (2) Such a dictum obviously excluded the idea of a universe governed by invariable laws because such laws required postulates which were themselves unverifiable. (Reiser 1926:244, Wiener 1935:498) (3)

observable quantities in a theory. It is the theory which decides what can be observed.” What he meant by this remark was that, when we go from immediate observation - a black line on a photographic plate, a discharge in a counter or such like - to the phenomena we are interested in, we must make use of theory and of theoretical concepts. We cannot separate the empirical process of observation from the mathematical construct and its concepts. The most conspicuous demonstration of this thesis of Einstein’s was the later discovery of the relations of uncertainty.” (Heisenberg 1983:10f)

1. Examples of elemental things given in our sensations might include scraps of material, patches of colour, distinct sounds, and tactile presentations all of which could be expressed in form of observation statements. (Stace 1932:444)


3. This denunciation of the objective status of scientific laws was a strong feature of the logical positivist movement. See Bertrand Russell’s essay “Science” in What Is Modern Civilization? a Program of Modern Civilization, Charles A. Beard (ed.), London, 1928. Russell noted that some of the “leading authorities on the structure of the atom maintain explicitly that there are no causal laws in the physical world.” (Beard 1928:65) He also noted that some philosophers held the same view and in this context he cited Wittgenstein’s Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus in which the philosopher wrote that “In no way can an inference be made from the existence of another entirely different from it...Superstition is the belief in the causal nexus.” (5.135, 5.136) This last quotation is taken from Passmore, 1943, p. 67. Note that there seems a degree of confusion as to what extent the technique of verification qualifies as an example of empiricism or rationalism. For example, it has been seen as rationalist in nature for it is a static test which rests on principles of consistency, coherence and non-contradiction which themselves are not verifiable. (Perry 1938:50, Hsaio 1927:196-7) John Grier Hibben had made similar remarks about verification as a form of instrumentalism. That is, instrumentalists demand not only that a truthful proposition “fit into the concrete situation of actual
The logic of positivism imposed even stricter limits upon what science could or could not say. For the radical empiricist argued that one could not even speak of things or substances. The English astronomer Sir Arthur Eddington agreed. In *The Nature of the Physical World* (1928) he wrote that one had to think solely in terms of measures. But he also added that the question as to whether these measures represented anything real was one which was beyond scientific scrutiny. (Eddington 1935:7) Indeed, to insist on the "real" character of scientific facts or laws, to attempt to describe a reality beyond the immediate sensations or phenomena given in experience, was to involve oneself in metaphysics. In one stroke, the empiricist had not only denied scientific laws any existence beyond a purely functional role as means of predicting the future, but also eliminated the metaphysical belief that subjects and objects existed independently of each other and endured beyond the moment of observation. All that remained were, as a New Zealand philosopher William Anderson wrote, transient "spatio-temporal relations of sensory elements". (Anderson 1924:241)
But as Anderson asked, if this were the case how could appearances be saved? If not only laws but also scientific measures were really matters of conventions and agreement superimposed on the flux of our sensations, scientific knowledge could be seen as far less solidly based. (1) In fact, some argued that when it reached this point positivism became nothing more than a form of subjective idealism, for the idealist too spoke of immediacy or "pure sensations". (Greenwood 1922:207) And thus, positivism was inclined to self-destruction as, in passing from its simpler goal of classifying the facts and reasoning upon them to a conventionalist theory of knowledge, it had become a solipsism. (2)

Some realists or neo-realists reacted to the positivistic denial of the objective reality of science's truths. Realists such as Perry and Bertrand Russell, while at times appearing in sympathy with the logical positivists, argued for the concrete nature of reality and facts. While realists certainly wanted to instil the scientific attitude of disinterest among philosophers,

1. Marjorie Harris wrote in an article called "Comte and James" in the Philosophical Review that according to the positivist all one could speak of were "laws of similarity and succession of phenomena." (Harris 1925:156) Philip Paul Wiener made a similar observation some years later when he wrote in a review of Gaston Bachelard's Le Nouvel esprit scientifique, in the Philosophical Review that instead of the language of certainty previously applied to classical axioms and laws, the scientist had to substitute the language of postulates, consensual definitions, and statistical inferences. (Wiener 1935:498) See also Homer S Dubbs, "The Paradox of Certainty", The Philosophical Review. 1935, p.254.
2. For earlier comments on the solipsistic tendencies contained within empiricism see Russell 1906a:606ff and Russell 1906b:406ff.
they also held, unlike some of the positivists and empiricists, to the "independence of facts." (Perry 1918:365f) (1) For the realist, there was a reality beyond experience. (Wright 1924:611) And it was this reality which could objectively guarantee the propositions put forward by scientists. For this reason, as the Australian philosopher John Anderson wrote, realists rejected the idea that all knowledge is relative; the realist held that "there is something absolute, namely facts." (Anderson 1930:128) I should stress that this critique was not anti-scientific. It did not challenge the veracity of science. For it expressed even greater confidence in the truths ascertained by science than did the radical empiricists.

The popular apprehension that science was a sharply delineated field of activity in which progress was governed by

1. See also Perry, Chapter XXV, "The New Realism", 1918. One should not confuse the new realists with the Critical Realists of whom Arthur Lovejoy was a representative. Loewenberg noted that the Critical Realist analyses the "cognitive situation in terms of 'the epistemological triangle'" of "mind, data, and outer objects" and that this justified "the dictum of one of the critical realists that 'we must appreciate subjectivism and yet be realists.'" He added that the position of the Critical Realist had "affinities with, and yet must at the same time be sharply differentiated from, the pansubjectivism of Berkeleyan idealism, on the one hand, and the panobjectivism of neo-realism on the other." (Loewenberg 1923:287) In relation to this last point note Charles Morris' contrast between the position of the realist who attempts to summon up the universe "from the standpoint of the generalized other;" "the standpoint of God"; the "point of view of eternity" with that of the positivist. The view of the latter is particularistic and puts the observer "at the focus of an ongoing act", viewing the world from his own "unique corner." While the realist sought "unquestioned meanings" which were "empirically sustained," the positivists, struggling against every principle of rational faith, adopted an instrumental epistemology expecting no more than workable descriptions of particular events. (Morris 1934:563)
adherence to a single theory of knowledge was obviously mistaken. In methodological discourse at least, there were different theoretical lines of departure. Categories such as positivism, realism, idealism, empiricism and instrumentalism dominated epistemological debate. Their presence points to the existence of a wide range of orientations and commitments.

These philosophical categories were not clear-cut. They functioned as conceptual prisms able to project a range of philosophical or scientific ideas depending on the light in which they were examined. Some of these categories were so variable and multifaceted that they could be redefined to complement their notional opposites. Pragmatism (a philosophical approach which we will analyse in the next chapter) was frequently identified with a positivistic anti-realism, and with the instrumentalist theory of knowledge which often goes with that position. Yet pragmatism was also described as a form of empirical realism; something which, as we shall see, involved the projection of the contents of experience onto the cosmos. Perhaps it was such conceptual ambiguities that necessitated the prefacing of the terms positivism, empiricism and realism with qualifiers such as the "strict", the "narrow", the "radical", the "critical", the "naive" and the "new".

Thus, what was called "scientism" was really a variety of dialects rather than a universal and pure language. One could not expect it to be otherwise, especially where many of the terms used to refer to scientific methods had been used differently prior to their association with the natural sciences.
3. Bergson's Philosophical Challenge to Science

There were points of comparison between the new realists and the positivists insofar as both adhered to empirical techniques. Frank Thilly (of the Sage School of Philosophy at Cornell University) wrote in an essay on current American philosophy that both new realists and positivists were accused of breaking the world of thought into small pieces, and philosophers were called upon to put it back together again. (Thilly 1926:538)

As we have seen, the response of traditional philosophers and Christian thinkers to this was to attempt to resuscitate the quest for a universitas of knowledge. But one did not have to believe in the possibility of achieving a complete and final picture of reality in order to criticise the scientific decomposition of the world. Some philosophers thought the universe put forward by traditional idealist philosophy was as equally "dead and done for", to use William James' expression, as the closed and mechanical universe of the scientist.

Putting the world back together again could mean, as against the picture of homogenous discontinuity put forward by classical science, stressing the continuity between things. But an emphasis on continuity did not necessitate the promotion of a static picture. For a continuous whole can be something that grows and mutates.

Criticisms of science from this angle drew inspiration from the ideas of Henri Bergson. Bergson, as one of his most prolific
expositors the British philosopher J. Alexander Gunn wrote, was noted for his attempts in books such as Creative Evolution to break down the mechanistic and materialistic beliefs of the previous century in stressing the "reality of change." (Gunn 1927:283) Indeed, Gunn described him in his book Henri Bergson and his Philosophy as above all a philosopher of change — a label of which Bergson apparently approved. (Gunn 1920:16:16n)

Bergson's criticism was not confined to the classical conceptions of science. He mentioned positive science in Creative Evolution for he saw it as reflecting that same tendency evident in Newtonian science; that is, scientific activity, as A. Boyce Gibson (a philosopher at the University of Melbourne) put it, involved the "chopping and pruning" of the manifold. (Gibson 1946:86) We should note however, that Bergson's criticisms of science in Creative Evolution were being aired just when radical empiricist methodologies and the scientific developments associated with them were gathering pace. Bergson had a great deal more in common with modern science than he sometimes admitted.

In this context, one of the most outstanding things about Bergson's critique of science was that it was seen as coming from within science itself. His critique appealed to the lessons of evolution and biology and to that extent he asserted that it was empirically based. This supposed empiricism was seen as the distinguishing feature of idealistic protest against science in the early years of the twentieth century. Bergson's philosophy
demonstrated exactly why positivism was seen as being prone to self-destruct. His philosophical exposition showed how it was possible to identify the intuition of immediacy with the processes of empirical observation. Indeed, both the positivists and Bergson appeared to agree on the point that phenomena do not need support—although what Bergson meant by this was that the changing does not need support from the unchanging while the positivist simply saw the idea of support for phenomena as metaphysical.

What Bergson did was counterpose to the mechanical universe of the scientist the life process as he thought it really was; as a process which is fluid, plural, creative and dynamic. (2) In this context, what were called scientific truths were for Bergson, because they tended to freeze reality, only "temporary and partial" glimpses of the expanding, changing and living cosmos. (Bergson 1911:31)

1. On this point of convergence between Bergson and the positivists see Gibson, 1946:84.
Bergson's philosophy has often been associated with the vitalist or neo-vitalist movement which developed in reaction to mechanistic conceptions in biology of the process of natural selection and of the relation between living creatures and their environment. This movement, which is most commonly associated with the writings of Hans Adolf Driesch, upheld the idea that each individual organism was a particular expression of, although not radically different to, the vital current - small amounts of which were contained within each cell of each living thing. (Simmat 1925:108) (1) Bergson agreed with the vitalists that nature is not a mechanism and like them he appealed to a metaphysical notion of the life-force in order to avoid mechanical explanations. However, he did suggest that there were some differences between himself and the vitalists. He suggested in his Creative Evolution that the vitalists accorded each living thing its own vital principle and its own specific teleology. However, for Bergson the vital impulse bound all living things together. There was only one original impulsion behind all life. (Bergson 1911:43) Furthermore, Bergson also rejected the notion (one which he called radical finalism) that things realized a "programme previously arranged." (Bergson 1911:39) The reasons why Bergson rejected finalism are the same as the reasons why he rejected the mechanism of the scientist, for if evolution followed a pre-ordained path it would not be creative. (2) Indeed, Bergson viewed the finalism of the philosopher as only an "inverted" mechanism because it substituted "the attraction of the future for the impulsion of the past." (Bergson 1911:39) The
A number of problems or ambiguities were detected in relation to Bergson's theory of creative evolution. Bergson suggested that reality was composed of two things - life and matter and that both of these were the creations of God or what he called the Superconsciousness. Although we should note that Bergson's God was defined as pure creativity. (3) Furthermore, he believed that reality proceeded in a double movement. That is, he argued that life moved upwards towards spirituality and matter moved downwards towards materiality or death.

This mode of explanation was not always sustained. At other times Bergson suggested that matter only came into being after the creation of life. In this regard, he wrote that matter was the result of the obstruction of life in its forward movement. As suggested by Collingwood's telling image of Bergson's metaphysics of life, it was the result of the river of life being obstructed by rocks and mountains lying in its path - although we should

1. Driesch's most important text in this regard is his The Science and Philosophy of the Organism, Black, London, 1988.
2. Perry also noted Bergson's rejection of the idea that life evolved in accordance with a "higher purpose." (Perry 1918:333)
3. Bergson described God as a "creator [who] is free; who generates at once matter and life; and whose creative effort continues, on the side of life, through the evolution of species and the formation of human personalities. From all this consequently, there results the refutation of monism and of pantheism in general." This quotation was cited by A. O. Lovejoy in "Bergson and Romantic Evolutionism," University of California Chronicle, Vol. XV, No. 4, Oct. 1913, p. 482. For a discussion of similar conceptions of God see A. Eustace Haydon, "The Theological Trend of Pragmatism", The American Journal of Theology, Vol. XXIII, No. 4, Oct. 1919, pp. 401-416.
note that Collingwood considered that it is the obstruction itself which logically must constitute the material world. (Collingwood 1944:140) Again here we have to ask what can it be but matter that interrupted the life process and if this were so from where did it originate? To this extent the theory presupposed and indeed required the existence of that very thing whose coming into being it proposed to explain. (1)

I raise these points concerning Bergson's theory in order to show how difficult it is to set out in an ordered manner. Similar ambiguities plague his conception of the evolutionary process. Evolution appears to proceed through the work of that vital

1. On this point see also A. Aliotta The Idealistic Reaction Against Science, translated by Agnes McCaskill, London, 1914. Aliotta said that the basic error or confusion in Bergson's philosophy was that it was never quite clear whether practical activity and its coordinate, matter, are primitive - as with intuition and its coordinate the vital impulse - or whether they were of later origin. If the latter were the case it is impossible to explain how practical activity can be borne of intuitive consciousness and how matter can be borne of flux. "With all his metaphors Bergson fails to convince us that continuous, creative activity can give birth to practical, discontinuous activity, and this activity in its turn to the objective world with all its determinations. The pure act of will is psychological in its nature, and is of itself powerless to leave the sphere of intimate consciousness; even if it be granted that it demands a discontinuity of terms, these terms will never appear external to the consciousness but will always keep the character of inner experience." (Aliotta 1914:135) See also R. G. Collingwood, The Idea of Nature, where he also noted that Bergson's philosophy required that something inherent in life obstructed the life-force or that this obstruction was caused by something which existed outside of it. Collingwood argued that as the first possibility was ruled out by Bergson because the life-force was defined as pure activity, we are forced to rely on the second. Collingwood wrote: "This is the vicious circle of Bergson's cosmology: ostensibly he regards matter as a by-product of life, but actually he cannot explain how that or any other special by-product can arise without presupposing, alongside of
current or life-force that is sometimes equated with (and at other times seen as pouring out of) God or the Superconsciousness. Whatever is the case, it would seem that the whole evolutionary process partakes of this one impulsion. It is this current or life-giving fluid that runs through every living thing and endows it with a forward urge to life. It is through the evolution of life that the original act of creation posited by Bergson was able to keep on creating. He wrote that it "goes on for ever in virtue of an initial movement." (Bergson 1911:110)

Yet we must ask ourselves how the great variety of life-forms which one could witness on the planet emerged out of the vital fluid. Bergson's answer was to appeal to yet another

and indeed prior to life, matter itself." (Collingwood 1965:140) See also A. Boyce Gibson's discussion of Bergson's privileging of life over over matter. He wrote that Bergson was consistent in upholding the value of the dynamic, the formless, the unexpected and the spiritual against the invariant, the static, the determined and the spatial in order to discredit scientific materialism and the dualisms (between mind and matter, the real and the ideal etc.) attendant upon it. At the heart of his philosophy was an animating force, be it called a vital urge or life impulse. For Bergson, the *élan vital* was the current of life and where this "concentrated current of life" was "dissipated or frozen" as it was in science - there was a consequent "diminution of reality." (Gibson 1937:71) See also his article on Bergson, "Mystic or Pragmatist", in the *Australasian Journal of Psychology and Philosophy*, 1946, p. 85 in which he discussed the problem of the relation between life and matter in Bergson's philosophy. He argued that Bergson's account of the creation of matter was really a revival of the Heraclitean hypothesis that matter is energy degraded. (Gibson 1946:85) Gunn too argued that matter, for Bergson, was a creation of spirit which had lessened in "tension". (Gunn 1925:285) Bergson himself wrote in *Creative Evolution* that the "Consciousness or superconsciousness" shoots into the sky like a "rocket, the extinguished remains of which fall into matter." Cited in Le Roy, 1913 p.109. See also *Creative Evolution*, p. 250 where Bergson described the spirit or psychic force which underlies reality and which creates matter. "For want of a better word we have called it Consciousness. But we do not mean the narrowed consciousness that functions in each of us."
analogy. He wrote that the history of evolution is like a "shell which has burst into fragments and these have burst into more fragments." (1) The cause of these explosions was either the interruption of life by matter, or alternatively, the volatility of the elements of life and matter contained within reality. Bergson wrote that it is the need to adapt to the external environment which explains the "sinuosities in the movement of Evolution"; although for Bergson, these encounters with the material world did not explain the actual cause of evolution's movement. (Bergson 1911:284)

To sum up then, we can see that for Bergson evolution is whole to the extent that it is derived from and animated by one element which is the vital force. It is continuous or enduring as, whatever happens to its specific manifestations, the vital force itself presses on. (2) It is pluralistic because from the fluid of life there emerges a multiplicity of life-forms. In

2. Whitehead's philosophy of nature is also similar to that of Bergson insofar as he held that each "individual entity" was a particular mode in which the "general creativity" or "pure activity" was articulated and individualized. (Nankervis 1934:269) These accounts also parallel the notion of evolution as put forward by the British physiologist Sir Charles Sherrington in *Man on his Nature* (1940). This book was based on the Gifford Lectures he gave in Edinburgh 1937-8. In a review of that text H.B. Adelman also described evolution as a heterogeneous but continuous process of development; that is, while there is "unity" in the "life-principle" this unity also resolves itself into "millions of local principles" providing life with a constant stream of novelties. (Adelmann 1942:228) Also note the argument that according to evolutionary theory every "living thing, whether atom, molecule, colloidal complex, cell" or an animal compounded of cells was "surging forward" in "commerce with its surrounds." (Adelman 1942:228)
giving expression to the principles of novelty and differentiation in nature he wrote that: "Harmony is behind us rather than before: it is due to an identity of impulsion rather than a common aspiration." (Bergson 1911:54) Furthermore, it follows from his open-ended account that as well as great achievements in nature there can also be "terrible setbacks." (Gunn 1925:285) (1) Bergson suggests that one can neither predict what sort of forms shall emerge out of the evolutionary process nor, more generally, what particular course that evolution itself might follow.

4. Creative Uncertainty and Time as Movement

Of course, just because unexpected things happen it does not follow that nature is in itself chaotic or unpredictable. What Bergson in fact did was move from pointing to the existence of the novel and unexpected in nature to asserting that it has an inherently indeterministic character. (2) This move was important for Bergson. For as we shall see this element of uncertainty in nature is crucial in relation to Bergson's insistence on man's freedom of action.

In order to approach this issue we should recall that for Bergson life is a forward movement and to the extent that it is

1. On this point also see Gunn, 1936:248 where he described Bergson's view of nature as one which has it "full of unprogressive culs-de-sacs, blind alleys marking time, deviation and retrogression." (Gunn 1936:248)
expressed in individual entities they too partake in this forward push. Nevertheless, individual creatures come against all sorts of obstacles that block their path which results in the process of adaptation. In the case of plants and vegetables their development is significantly arrested; while members of the animal kingdom are forced to rely on their instincts and their bodily or sense-organs to help them on their way. Man, however, develops his intelligence. It is man above all who is best able to adapt and to break through those barriers which hold him at bay. With his intelligence he draws lines in nature — lines along which he can act. It is for this reason that Bergson claimed that intellect is originally an instrument of action. (Bergson 1911:182:299)

We are then, said Bergson, essentially tool-making animals; our intelligence being the tool of tools. And with the aid of intelligence man is able to manufacture other tools out of his environment. Indeed, it is here in the course of this practical activity, Bergson said, that one finds the crude beginnings of mathematics, science and geometry, each being empirically founded, practical in origin and based on likeness and repetition. Bergson thought human beings were only "geometricians" or thinking animals because they are first "artisans" or tool-making animals. (Bergson 1911:44)

It is because we must engage in practical activity that we lose consciousness of the vital force. It must be stressed that this was one of the major distinctions between Bergson and the
pragmatists who took up on Bergson's notion of man as *homo faber*. For Bergson there is a better alternative to the practical knowledge that our intelligence gives us and that alternative is only to found by an act of intuition. (1) Thus, in *Creative Evolution* Bergson said that matter and the intellectual modes of understanding appropriate to it are opposed to instinctive and intuitive modes of understanding, which are seen as bringing one closer to life. Thus, Bergson also embraced a dualism but of a different kind. Nevertheless, there are times when Bergson appeared to overcome dualistic modes of thinking. To the extent that intelligence can be used to aid the forward urge of life and that matter is open to adaptation by life, Bergson appeared to overcome the dualisms between life and matter and between intelligence and instinct or intuition. I shall explain how in a moment.

It would seem that in one sense Bergson did not see the oppositions between life and matter and intuition and intelligence as primordial or necessary. It is just that the course of human civilisation had increasingly seen them asserted and developed. The oppositions between mechanism and vitalism and science and poetry had grown out of the original opposition between life and matter. But it was clearly not the mere existence of these oppositions that he was objecting to. Quite obviously, he was also objecting to the valorization of one side in this chain of dualities I have just listed; that is, the side

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1. On this point see Gibson, 1946:92.
which is represented by matter, intelligence, mechanism and science. In a sense the elevation of these things has not so much come about because we are forced to engage in practical activity but because we have in fact forgotten the practical origins of intelligence and science. By practical origins I mean the notion that intelligence and science are originally instruments of life; and in this sense, they too are expressions of the vital force. However, instead of being seen in this light science - which dealt with the material world - had come to be understood as the truth about nature or life itself. Science, he wrote, had come to "pride itself" on the universal correctness of its spatial understandings. (Bergson 1911:198)

Bergson's most extreme response to this was to assert that science could never touch the heart of reality. As we have seen, other philosophers responded to the scientific outlook by asserting the supremacy of the immutable values which philosophy dealt with. Bergson's response was instead to assert the reality of change - although whether he considered this reality to be metaphysical and not just a matter of empirical observation was not always clear due to his ambivalent feelings about science. In *Creative Evolution* Bergson acknowledged the importance of spatial concepts because they are successful, useful and even necessary. While one could insist that spatiality was only an interruption of events in process, necessity demanded distortion; that is, that things be considered "one by one" instead of in their totality. (Bergson 1911:206) Nevertheless, Bergson suggested that intellect and science, in adopting an external and
spatial approach to phenomena (whether tracing linear relations or carving the world into discrete facts) provided inverted images of what he called the "true positivity" of flux, movement and becoming. (Bergson 1911:208) It is this flux which intellect hides and only intuition can apprehend. Bergson wrote that if we swept away intellect then the "material world" would "melt back into a simple flux, a continuity of flowing, a becoming." (Bergson 1911:369)

Bergson's attitude towards language was also revealing in this regard. As Le Roy pointed out, for Bergson, the use of linguistic symbols is a means of spatially dispersing thoughts. (Le Roy 1913:71) But real continuity or becoming does not fit comfortably into the "molds of language" that the intellect imposes upon it. (Bergson 1911:302) (1) Bergson seemed to be objecting not to symbolic representation as such, but to particular modes of representation and particular metaphors. In this context, we should also note his claim that it is poetry rather than the more literally-minded discourse of science that provides the most accurate descriptions of life. Bergson seemed to think that poetic figures were better able to give clearer expression to the tone and quality of life; poetry could give

1. In this context note Bergson's following comments. "The moment we reach the spiritual world, the image of it merely seeks to suggest, may give us the direct vision while the abstract term, which is spatial in origin and which claims to express, most frequently leaves us in metaphor: in these words poetry turns the tables on science with a vengeance and those who, by way of jeering, maintain that 'metaphysics is a species of poetry' are at once confirmed and confounded." (Gibson 1946:88)
literal description where science could only offer metaphor.

(2) The reason for this was that he considered poetry to be concerned with largely with living things whereas scientific discourse only described the inert. Bergson complained that even where science described living things as it did in the area of biology, it treated them as if they were mechanical and lifeless. What Bergson was doing in many respects was calling for the elimination of spatial metaphors and their replacement by metaphors which were evocative of the flow of the vital current.

Thus, Bergson stood what he saw as the standard dualisms of his time on their head. Firstly, he suggested that a true...

1. A. N. Whitehead makes a number of points in his Process and Reality and other texts which have been viewed as akin to the ideas of Bergson that we have presented here. Whitehead wrote for example, that when philosophers removed "the necessary world of relations" there lay "the vague and indeterminant and contingent." In this context he spoke of scientists like Newton (just as Bergson spoke of scientists in general) as someone who sought to "regiment flux." (Whitehead 1978:208-10) Whitehead also made comments which are similar to those of Bergson on the question of language and poetry. Whitehead complained of the misleading nature of the "language of substance." To explain this we should note Whitehead's argument that spatial concepts originated with men seizing upon and giving expression to the "permanences" in their midst, such as the "solid earth, the mountains, the stones," in order to make sense of and act upon their world. (Whitehead 1978:208) Wolfe Mays in a study of Whitehead's philosophy noted that the philosopher thought that language was designed to articulate exactly "such clear-cut concepts" which were then fitted into the subject-predicate mode of expression of observation statements. (Mays 1977:10-12) However, and despite the utilitarian origins of the language of substance and spatial concepts, he thought the degree of "linguistic trust" placed in these words and concepts allowed them to congeal into a physicalist and spatial conception of nature and knowledge. (Mays 1977:48) While Whitehead acknowledged that this provided the shortest route to a "clear-cut philosophy" because it explained concepts in a "familiar language," it also effaced the "the fluency" of life. (Whitehead 1978:209-10)
realist or empiricist sees the world in terms of flux and not in terms of spatial arrangements. (1) Secondly, he regarded poetic discourse as true whereas science rests only on analogy. And thirdly, Bergson thought that it was by acts of intuition and not intellect that man could understand reality.

On this last point it should be stressed that the act of intuition of which Bergson spoke was rather hard to achieve. According to Bergson, it began with an act of will backed by such force that one suddenly was propelled out of the domain of intellect and into the domain of intuition. Furthermore, in willing oneself to achieve a form of intuitive consciousness one was also able to discover a sense of one's connectedness with the rest of nature. At this point, Bergson argued, one achieved true spiritual understanding. (Bergson 1911:268) (2) According to Bergson, if man were to rediscover his connectedness with nature he would obtain a vision of himself as creative force rather than a passive victim of his environment. Bergson thought man would then have "more power to act and to live." (Bergson 1911:270)

We should note here that Bergson's philosophy, with its reassertion of the role of human creativity, gained great currency

1. Le Roy said Bergson's philosophy is really realism in the sense that it means "giving ourselves to reality." (Le Roy 1913:136)
2. Bergson wrote of the act of intuition: "Let us try to see, no longer with the eyes of the intellect alone, which grasps only the already made and which looks from the outside, but with the spirit. I mean with that faculty of seeing which is immanent in the faculty of acting and which springs up, somehow, by the twisting of the will on itself, when action is turned into knowledge, like heat, so to say, into light." (Bergson 1911:182:250)
both during and after the First World War in philosophical circles precisely because it provided a hopeful antidote to the belief that the war and the misery which accompanied it was the result of inexorable forces. The popularity of his philosophy is one indication of marked swing away from "rigid determinism to contingency" in philosophy and social theory. (Gibson 1923:231) Thus, Gunn wrote that Bergson's philosophy fitted in well with the atmosphere of post-war reconstruction; although I would argue that his recipe for optimism and faith was to a large degree overwhelmed by the pessimism that that conflict also engendered. Furthermore, and as a related point, I will later go on to show how Bergson's own philosophy was also seen as encouraging irrationalism and violence. (1)

There is one last issue I want to raise in relation to Bergson and that is the question of time. We have seen that for Bergson the ideas of change, indeterminism and novelty were all important. These were ideas which he saw as identical with the process of evolution. But we should note that for Bergson the possibility of change was conditional upon the existence of time or rather duration; it was not evolutionary change which created time but the other way round. Evolution is thus a creature of time as much as it is a creation of the vital current. Indeed, in Bergson's Creative Evolution time and the vital current were often presented as one and the same thing.

1. In relation to this point see Gunn's comments on the revival of philosophy after the First World War. Gunn, 1920 p.vii
The word Bergson actually used to refer to time is the French *durée*. But it did not, in his hands, mean the same thing as the English term *duration* insofar as that term merely denotes a length of time. For time above all for Bergson is not something which can be measured or spatially conceived, it is rather a particular sense or intuition of the flow of life. In this sense, the term *durée* as used by Bergson pointed to a felt quality in experience. But Bergson also reified the concept of duration. It became *la durée* and it was referred to in both the passive and active tenses; as both something to be possessed psychologically and as something that moves forward — that does things.

Thus, for Bergson, *la durée* ceased to be a mere psychological phenomenon; it merged into the vital force possessing its characteristics of continuity or indivisibility, plurality and creativity. Indeed, he seemed to view the personal experience of duration as only a result of the fact that the general duration is articulated in individual living things. In *Creative Evolution* he appeared to objectify the conception of duration, making it something that both individuals and the physical universe possess or are a part of — that is, the one unfolding, universal history. To this extent his concept of time can be related to the metaphysical or realist understandings which appeared in Samuel Alexander's *Space, Time and Deity* (1920) in the form of creative emergence (1) and in A.N. Whitehead's *The

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1. This book was based on the Gifford Lectures which Alexander gave at Glasgow 1916-18. For further comments on metaphysical understandings of time see Gunn. 1926b *Time in Modern*
Nevertheless, in a later work *Duration and Simultaneity* (1922) Bergson appeared to return to his pre-*Creative Evolution* understanding of duration as a subjective phenomenon. That is, while he agreed that time is succession or passage and that it can only move in one direction, he held that duration understood in this way is something which only consciousness can apprehend. Bergson ultimately rejected the idea of an objective time—a concept of one world history of which everything was a part—because it was a metaphysical construction which cannot be empirically ascertained. He also rejected Whitehead’s broad notion of duration in favour of the particularism of the individual consciousness. Thus Bergson wrote that “real time” is time that is “perceived and lived...Duration therefore implies consciousness; and we place consciousness at the heart of things for the very reason that we credit them with a time that endures.” (Bergson 1965:49) (1) Furthermore, aside from its

Metaphysics I”; Gunn, 1927, “Time in Modern Metaphysics II”, Gunn, 1929, *The Problem of Time*. Gunn considered Bergson’s failure to develop, as did both Alexander and Whitehead, anything beyond a psychological description of time as a weakness in his philosophy. It is interesting to note in this context that while Alexander’s concept of duration (as with Whitehead’s notion of reality as process) was described by Gunn as a form of realism and was thus contrasted with Bergson’s subjective idealism, we also find another writer E.L. Hinnan describing Alexander’s theory as an example of neo-idealism. (Gunn 1929:324 Hinnan 1926:480)

1. Bergson asserted the centrality of the notion of duration in a letter to a Danish thinker Harald Hoffding: “Any account of my views will distort them as a whole, and therefore lay them open to a crowd of objections, if it does not first of all take its stand on, and if it does not continually return to, what I consider to be the very centre of the doctrine, the intuition of duration.” cited in Gibson, 1946, p.82. Gibson also noted how Bergson’s concept of *durée* was extended in *Creative Evolution* to
metaphysical aspects, Bergson also implied that the minute one begins to objectify time, to develop on the basis of this immediate personal intuition of duration the concept of absolute time, one also begins to see time in terms of space. That is, where time is treated as universal history it comes to be represented by as a forward motion in space. Thus, while Bergson claimed to favour the idea of one physical time he warned that it is a notion based only on analogy. (Bergson 1965:46) (2)

encompass the universe so that it becomes identical with that process of "continuous but heterogeneous development" which is creative evolution. Gibson, 1946. p.85. On Bergson's introspective notion of time see Gunn, 1929:98:200.

2. Whitehead wrote in The Concept of Nature that his view of the creative advance of nature was similar to that of Bergson's idea of creative evolution. Whitehead wrote: "It is an exhibition of the process of nature that each duration happens and passes. The process of nature can also be termed the 'passage of nature'. I definitely refrain at this stage from using the word 'time', since the measurable time of science and of civilized life generally merely exhibits some aspects of the more fundamental fact of the passage of nature. I believe that in this doctrine I am in full accord with Bergson, though he uses 'time' for the fundamental fact which I call the 'passage of nature'". (Whitehead 1920:54) Cited in Bergson, 1965, p.62. Note that for Alexander there is a general duration which is an objective reality. For Alexander, the source of this is what he calls "space-time" - which is ceaselessly moving across the cosmos and, like Bergson's vital current, generating individual entities and things along the way. Thus, Alexander wrote that "the world of finites arises out of the mere restlessnes of Space-Time." (Gunn 1929:253) For a further discussion of Alexander's ideas on time see Gunn, 1926, pp. 258-267 and Gunn 1927, pp. 10-12. For further comparisons between the ideas of Bergson and Whitehead see Milic Capek, The Philosophical Impact of Contemporary Physics, 1961, p.220 where he stated that Bergson's notion of extensive becoming "is more or less synonymous with Whitehead's creative advance of nature. Such extensive becoming, in contradistinction to mathematical purely linear time, has a certain transversal extent or width: it exists amidst the relations of co-presence (Whitehead) or simultaneity of fluxes (Bergson)." However, I think that an examination of Bergson's text shows that flows or fluxes only become simultaneous where they each enter into our consciousness, thus the comparison between Whitehead and Bergson may not be as appropriate as it may seem on the surface. Bergson wrote: "We therefore call two external flows that occupy
The concept of time was central to some of the criticisms of science made by philosophers. The concept of time and the metaphysical and psychological interpretations of it was also a crucial element in the responses of philosophers to the theory of relativity. Some as we shall see, saw the theory as supporting metaphysical views while others saw it as supporting subjectivist approaches. Bergson himself would criticise the theory for merely being a different way of rendering time as space. But before I go on to discuss this I should say something about Bergson's view of time in relation to the natural sciences.

In this context, Bergson's charge was that scientists had eliminated the time element because they had conceived of it in mechanical terms. That is, what science had done was to resolve into groups all those elementary facts which repeated the same causes and the same effects. Indeed, each of these groups could be neatly fitted into a larger mechanism so that the universe could be seen as operating under one reversible time-line. Instead of the flow of time, the mechanical universe of the physicist was characterised by an eternal repetition of unalterable sequences. Insofar as each sequence moved in rhythm with the whole the universe went like clock-work. But as I suggested, for Bergson a mere repetition of sequences, the eternal turning of wheels upon wheels, was not real time. Where all was

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the same duration "simultaneous" because they both depend upon the duration of a like third, our own; this duration is ours only when our consciousness is concerned with us alone, but it becomes equally theirs when our attention embraces the three flows in a single indivisible act." (Bergson 1965:52)
predictable, there could be no real time, as for real time to exist the present had to be open-ended. But in the mechanical universe what were called past and future were really only "calculable functions" of the present. (Bergson 1911:37) It was precisely because this particular physical concept of time was not open-ended that Bergson objected to it in a way in which he did not object to the partially physical understanding of time as the unfolding of world history. Alexander's idea of universal history moves in space but it is open-ended — it flows on forward — just like Bergson's psychological concept of time, as that intuition of flux or passage. Hence Alexander likened his conception of space-time to the human being; time is the mind which pushes it along while the space is the body which carries it forward. (Alexander 1920:38-45)

Bergson himself described time in Creative Evolution in terms of movement. But the movement was not a mechanical one, by which he meant homogeneous but discontinuous units rearranged periodically in accordance with unalterable laws. Real time whether it was conceived as the onward movement of history or in terms of psychological experiences flowed on without interruption. Real time, he wrote, was a "continuous progress of the past which gnaws into the future and swells as it advances."

(Bergson 1911:11,5) Or as C. O. Weber put it in an article

1. Dewey later made the same point in welcoming the principle of indeterminacy. He wrote that the principle defied the "Laplacian" picture of a mechanical universe governed by laws of motion in which "at any one time its whole future could be predicted — or deduced." (Dewey 1930:202) Note also that a Harvard scholar, Ralph W. Eaton cited, the American philosopher C.S. Peirce as saying that the laws of evolution, contained an "element of indeterminacy and spontaneity" and were "not to be obeyed exactly." (Eaton 1921a:295)
called "The Reality of Time and the Autonomy of History", which appeared in the Monist, even if the clock were to "suddenly reverse its movements" real time would continue to "go forward." (Weber 1927:530) Bergson also later wrote in Duration and Simultaneity that real time considered introspectively was succession - a before and after - and this process was irreversible. (Bergson 1965:65)

We should note that both mental time and metaphysical time were crucial to Bergson's argument in favour of human freedom. The subjective feeling of time is important in terms of our capacity to make choices and have anticipations. (Gunn 1929:328-9) But this sense of time being open-ended must be more than a mere intuition if freedom is to be realized; there must be in it an element of real surprise and a suggestion that it is open to modification. In this context, we should note another significant criticism of the timeless mechanical depictions of the universe. In such a universe nothing new could ever occur. An American scholar Oliver L. Reiser wrote in an article called "The Problem of Time in Science and Philosophy" that all that happened in the mechanical universe was the periodic redistribution of mass particles in space. (Reiser 1926:238) Bergson argued that there could be no "unforeseeable form" in a science that was really nothing but a "new arrangement" of old or given elements. (Bergson 1911:30) Only a universe which does not obey exact laws can produce real surprises and can allow for human intervention in it. Thus, Bergson's notion of freedom implied that both the human personality and the vital force run parallel to each other;
both grow and develop but follow no predestined path. Both are creative and dynamic; and both, as Gunn put it, are a continuous stream because memory holds all our experiences together just as the life force unites all the living. (Gunn 1920:66,78)

5. Science and Contingency

Bergson's criticisms of the existing model of science, while ridiculed in some quarters, were complemented by developments within science itself. (1) At least, new ideas in science were often read as supporting Bergson's views. With the coming of 20th century physics, science had apparently ceased to look like "itself". A certain Mattoon M. Curtis wrote in the Philosophical Review that a leading physicist of the day had declared that the sole concept of modern physics was energy, and as this had been discovered to be immaterial then science was now left without any material means of support. This discovery was seen as further evidence that the 20th century was a "century of bewilderment." (Curtis 1925:491)

For many predisposed to see an objective science as the answer to the "crisis" in knowledge, this change would have been discomforting. In ceasing to look like itself science was in fact becoming part of the problem that was the collapse of Western thought. It was taken as representative of an irrationalist zeitgeist, something which was seen to envelop the realms of

1. Bertrand Russell said intuition was the property of "bats, bees and Bergson." (Bergson 1911:xxxv)
art, literature and philosophy. Many of those who analysed crisis, such as Laski and Russell, mentioned of the "anarchic" character of modern science. (Laski 1933:18, Beard 1928:65)

But the efforts of modern scientists were not just seen as part of a work of destruction. For some, whether pragmatists, metaphysicians or subjective idealists, new scientific developments meant opportunities to reconstruct knowledge; opportunities to reconcile, however tentatively, the realm of fact with the realm of value, quality with quantity and reason with intuition. They also provided opportunities for thinkers marginalised by the cult of science to reassert the authenticity of their own views of reality. Thus, we find that alongside demands in the 1920s and 1930s that intellectuals become more scientific, there were those who were actively dismantling the established image of science.

What were these scientific developments which challenged the traditional basis of science? Henry Adams argued that physics had begun its descent into chaos in the late 19th century following such events as Roentgen's discovery of x-rays 1893 or the Curies' discovery of radium in 1898. (Adams 1918:457) Adams added however, alluding to the conventionalist theories of knowledge that had been put forward by Henri Poincaré and Karl Pearson in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, that:

...in 1904, Arthur Balfour announced on the part of British science that the human race without exception had lived and died in a world of illusion until the last year of the century. The date was convenient, and convenience was truth. (Adams 1918:457)
But more commonly used to symbolise the emergence of modern physics was the theory of relativity and quantum physics. It was the work of Albert Einstein along with the work of Max Planck, Louis de Broglie, Niels Bohr, Erwin Shrodinger and Werner Heisenberg that was seen as giving expression to what the French scientist Gaston Bachelard would call the new scientific spirit. What Bachelard appeared to mean by this description was that science was developing its own distinctive philosophy - one that made it autonomous from the traditional philosophical world. (1) However, as I suggested at the earlier, it was also argued that these developments also brought science and philosophy together - although as we shall see, this reconciliation could take a number of different forms.

By the 1920s, the theory of relativity was firmly entrenched in the popular and intellectual consciousness. I would argue that the word relativity itself helped gain the theory publicity in this regard. A word with both philosophical and popular nuances, it gave a mathematical theory, incomprehensible to most, a familiar and accessible air. As an American scholar Jesse S. Reeves noted of the theory, a "popular stereotype" which stated that "everything is relative" was not long in the making. (Reeves 1929:7) One wonders whether it would have excited such an enthusiastic and controversial reception outside of science if it

1. On the distinctive nature of the philosophy of science see Bachelard, 1984, Ch. 1, esp. p. 16.
had been called something which had far less resonance. Indeed, one of the major problems relating to misinterpretations of physical theories is the fact that their names and the terms employed to explain the theory are so highly suggestive. But it is not the popular (in the sense of non-academic) reception of the theory which I want to discuss. My focus is largely on the reception it received in philosophical circles. More specifically, part of the intention of this discussion (along with an account of the impact of quantum theory) is to reveal something about the web of metaphorical connotation that was suspended between science and philosophy at that time.

Although the Special Theory of Relativity was first articulated by Einstein in 1905, to be followed by the General Theory in 1917, it only really began to make its presence felt in philosophical journals in the 1920s. (1) In those years there appeared a flurry of articles in English language journals such as Mind, The Monist, The Philosophical Review and The Australasian Journal of Psychology and Philosophy on the significance of the theory for philosophy. (There were also, it should be noted, many articles on the mathematical and physical importance of the theory.) A number of philosophical texts addressing the supposedly wider implications of the theory also appeared.

The two most important aspects of the relativity theory that

concerned philosophers were its apparent support for the notion that the world is wholly or in part a product of mind and its apparent support for idea that nature is essentially process. Gunn wrote in his 1920 study of Bergson's philosophy that the theory leant support to subjective idealism as well as to the philosophy of change — although he would renounce this view in later years. (Gunn 1920:x:21)

Both of these notions were related to the theories relativising the concept of time. As I have argued, philosophers had complained that the Newtonian universe was a timeless one. As Gunn noted in his Problem of Time (a historical study of both philosophical and scientific understandings of time), scientific interest in time had grown since the 1880s following the Michelson-Morely experiments which tested for the speed of light. (Gunn 1929:186) Einstein's importance was that he showed, as Horace S. Fries wrote in the Monist, in analysing the concept of simultaneity that "...time enters in a very intimate manner into all observations." (Fries 1921:383) (1) But the word time did

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1. Fries makes clear that Einstein was talking about time as measured. His description of the relativity theory continued as follows: "We must try to grasp that all matter has extension in time as well as in space; that it is not sufficient to locate an object two squares ahead, three to the right, ten stories up, i.e., along three space axes, but we must also specify the point along our 'time-axis' when the observation is made, if we are to correlate the object in question with anything else in the world. In the 'absolute' world which we must picture to ourselves, 'objects' must be replaced with 'events' because when my eye measures the length, width and breadth of an object these measurements consist of a series of events radiating from the object and experienced by my eye in a string of happenings lined up in time and, similarly, any and everything that happens to, in and around the object takes time, and is strung out in time, so that its 'real' place cannot be described without adding time as a 'fourth dimension.'" (Fries 1921:383)
not mean the same thing to the philosopher as it did to the physicist. As we shall see, this was also true of many of the other words used in order to describe physical theories.

Yet we should note that Einstein did begin with a definition of simultaneity with which Bergson could agree, because it relates to a psychological apprehension of time. He wrote that simultaneity occurred when two events are "for a given observer...perceived or seen at the same time by that observer while he is equidistant from both." (1) But for Einstein this was not the end of the matter. For it is the very fact that actual simultaneity is limited to such contexts that necessitates the development of ways of calculating its occurrence in relation to events which happen "at distance". (Gunn 1929:180) Thus, the "qualitative problem" of simultaneity comes to depend on the "quantitative problem of the measurement of time" and this in itself depends on the calculation of other things such as velocity and gravitation. (Gunn 1929:180) In this context, the importance of Einstein's work was to show that simultaneity or rather time as measured was relative. Gunn wrote that Einstein showed "that two events which for a given observer take place at the same time, do not take place at the same time for any other observer in a state of motion relatively to the first observer." (Gunn 1929:197) Hence, if motion is relative so too must simultaneity relative or rather, it must be dislocated in time. (Gunn 1929:205)

But one should stress again that the words time, simultaneity and relativity as used in these contexts had very different meanings to the way in which they were by philosophers. We should note at the outset that relativity theory was couched in physical and mathematical terms and its focus upon time as measured. (Gunn 1927:186n) While it showed the concept of simultaneity to be subjective or relative, it should be remembered that the subjective or relative character of an observation statement referred not to a psychological state but only to "physical subjectivity" — that is, the position or relative motion of an observer. (Gunn 1927:186n)

Nevertheless, a number of philosophers saw in the theory of relativity confirmation of their own intellectual beliefs. In relation to this last point two philosophers stand out. H. Wildon Carr and Viscount Haldane in particular. Their work prompted a considerable degree of interest. That Haldane's major work on the topic, The Reign of Relativity (1921), sold out in the first week of publication suggests a strong desire to grasp the wider implications of the theory. But the idea that the theory had implications beyond the field of physics was also something that was promoted by these philosophers themselves.

Perhaps implications is too mild a word to be used in this context. This is because the theory was seen as marking a revolution in the world of thought as far-reaching in its effects as the work of Newton. With the appearance of the theory of relativity, it was suggested, the world would never be the same
again; it marked a point of no return. For instance, H. Wildon Carr claimed that the theory constituted a crisis in the history of ideas, one which falsified and rendered "useless" all the old ways of thinking about and arranging practical, scientific, social, political and religious affairs. (Carr 1926:65) This view was reflected in Haldane's text which traversed the fields of philosophy, science and politics. But as I have stressed, it was the bearing the theory had on the nature and role of philosophy that seemed to most concern Carr and Haldane. Carr wrote that it was the duty of philosophers was to help humanity in its struggle to "adapt its mind" to this new way of viewing the universe. (Carr 1926:65)

Carr and Haldane also attempted to relate the theory to traditional and current philosophical tendencies such as neo-idealism and process metaphysics. For example, Carr in his *A Theory of Monads: Outlines of the Philosophy of the Principle of Relativity* (1922) and his The *Scientific Approach to Philosophy* (1924) blended the work of Leibniz, Bergson and Einstein. (1)

Both Carr and Haldane believed that the theory of relativity had rendered the distinction between science and philosophy superfluous. Indeed, they argued that the problems Einstein raised were ultimately philosophical problems as they were

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concerned with the role that mind played in creating the world around it. The theory of relativity, wrote Carr, was a triumph for philosophy. (Hinman 1926:479-80, Northrop 1925:3, Carr 1924:22f:182)

As I suggested above, the theory of relativity was taken to be crucial in settling the dispute between realist and idealists; the theory of relativity, according to Carr, favoured the latter group. (Carr 1921:465) According to Carr, relativity theory had expelled things, substances and forms from reality and left in its wake nothing but events which were at least in part projections of what idealist philosophers referred to as "psychic activity" or "spirit itself". (Carr 1921:464f, Smith 1921:505, Creighton, 1922:289-290) It is not surprising then, that in a review of H. Wildon Carr's *The Scientific Approach to Philosophy*, E. L. Hinman wrote that Carr had made relativity "talk Bergsonianism." (Hinman 1926:478) Indeed, it was argued that the theory's new approach towards nature was one that many philosophers, including Bergson, had already adopted. (Creighton 1922:288, Smart 1925:511) (1)

It was believed that the theory of relativity implied the view that the world was in part a creation of mind. However,

1. Gunn wrote that the "researches of Einstein, culminating in the formation of his general Theory of Relativity and his special theory of Gravitation, which are arousing such interest at the present time, threaten very seriously the older static views of the universe and seem to frustrate any efforts to find and denote stability therein. In the light of these discoveries, Bergson's views on the reality of Change seem less paradoxical than they might have formerly appeared." (Gunn 1920:21)
neither Carr nor Haldane believed that this entailed a strict positivist concern with pure immediacy. Both of these scholars described something called reality. It was just that the reality which they referred to was seen as essentially spiritual in nature. (Ainsough 1922:495) Indeed, Carr described the texture of this reality, although it was a texture quite unlike the hard surface commonly associated with neo-realism. For Carr thought that the world was fundamentally composed of mind-energy arranged in a monadic pattern. (Carr 1924:95:187) Thus, this particular metaphysical view attempted to overcome the subject-object dualisms of idealism and realism. Carr wrote in a review of Haldane's *Reign of Relativity* that the only "concrete reality" was the immanent activity of the interpenetrating subject-object. (Carr 1921:466)

Carr called this phenomenon duality in unity. (Carr 1922:3) We are not talking here of a synthesis of opposites. Haldane said that according to the philosophy of relativity it is not so much that idealism triumphed over realism (or that they simply dissolved into each other) but that the "difference" between idealism and realism "disappears" when it is absorbed into a "larger outlook that embraces the difference itself." (Haldane 1921:141) Relativity theory therefore suggested more than a subjective idealism; it suggested, as J.E. Creighton put it, a philosophy in which the "conception and the conceived" embrace each other "within a greater and foundational actuality." (Creighton 1922:289)
We should note in this context that Carr's and Haldane's theories were also likened to the "actual idealism" of the Italian philosopher Giovanni Gentile in his 1922 work *The Theory of Mind as Pure Act*. (Turner 1922:339) Gentile too sought to reconcile the mystics' embrace of an absolute identity with the practical necessity of recognising that identity has different and finite expressions. (Gentile 1922:266-7)

There was a further reason for associating Bergson with these interpretations of the theory of relativity beyond asserting his identity with a form of subjective idealism. If these theories pushed beyond subjective idealism towards a description of reality, then Bergson too could be seen in that light. For he too, in some respects, sought to break down the oppositions between certain principles. In his case, as we saw, he sought to breakdown the opposition between life and matter by similarly founding these terms in some sort of superconsciousness or underlying energy. He too can be seen as treating finites as expressions of one single impulsion. Indeed, I think a natural conceptual progression was being followed here; one which began with subjective idealism and then proceeded to insist that the

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1. This text was translated from the Italian into English by H. Wildon Carr. For a review of this text, see Warner Fite who described it as a synthesis of Leibniz, Hegel, Bergson and Einstein see *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. XXXII, No. 5, 1923. pp. 544-548. In addition to Bergson and Gentile, E. L. Hinman wrote in a review of Carr's *The Scientific Approach to Philosophy* in *The Philosophical Review* that there were affinities between Carr and the neo-idealism of Croce and Alexander. (Hinman 1926:478)
world itself is mind-energy and that individual minds are articulations of this.

This same logic can also be seen in the development of positivism. Indeed, the conceptual path that Carr, Haldane and others followed in their discussions of relativity theory further demonstrates my earlier point about the plasticity of epistemological categories such as positivism. This path illustrates how positivism could be construed in ways that saw it end up as the very thing that it set out to eliminate - that is metaphysics. Furthermore, metaphysically speaking, positivism could be shaped into two different forms. The epistemological reduction that leads us to concentrate on the immediate data of consciousness can be rendered as a form of subjective idealism. The given becomes immediacy and is apprehended by intuition, implying the subordination of reason, discourse and conceptual analysis to image, emotion and feeling. At the same time, I have also demonstrated that positivism can bloom into a metaphysics of process of which individual minds are the terminal expressions.

It was argued that the very the fact that positivism has no hard ground to fasten onto meant that it wound up in relativism. (Loewenberg 1923:278) However, it is precisely this which also made positivism a hospitable base on which many different sorts of concepts could be placed. Perry wrote that the "metaphysical limbo" which positivism occupied was easily filled with all sorts of substances which can take the place of God, be they the concepts of energy, force or ether. (Perry 1918:57) The British scientists Sir Arthur Eddington in *The Nature of the Physical*
World (1928) and Sir James Jeans saw the theory of relativity as lending support to a form of idealism - one in which mind played some sort of role in constructing a deeper spiritual realm which existed behind appearances. (Eddington 1935:324f, Jeans 1933:307)

6. Time and Duration

The other major focus of interest in relation to Einstein's theory was on the question of time. As indicated by our comments in relation to Bergson, some saw the theory of relativity as supporting the view that the world was immersed in duration. Here, the notion of relativity was translated into the Heraclitian notion that reality is flux. In this context, both Haldane and the American philosopher William Kay Wallace claimed that the principle of relativity had originated in ancient Greece as it reflected the view of life as a ceaseless becoming. (Haldane 1921:33, Wallace 1924:290) To this extent it could be argued that what appeared to be a new scientific discovery was in fact as old as philosophy itself. (1)

But while often seen in these terms the theory was also criticised for failing to come to grips with the real meanings of time. In some cases it was assumed that the word relativity meant exactly the same thing for the philosopher as it did for the physicists - and indeed, that Einstein was really only

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1. Another philosopher George A. Wilson commented in an article entitled "Philosophy over against Science", (The Philosophical Review Vol. XXXI, No.3, May 1922, pp. 257-68) that "on a scientific basis" one could not "say even as much as Heraclitus, that the law of change abides." (Wilson 1922:259)
restating what philosophers had always known. Some scientists objected to this misinterpretation because it confused physical with psychological or metaphysical concepts. But philosophers like Gunn also rejected the conflation of relativity theory with such notions as duration or general creativity. Gunn was well aware that Einstein's interest in time as measured was qualitatively different to Bergson's understanding of time as *la durée*, which as I have noted is time as we live it and not time as measured. But it is interesting to note that even where the differences in approach were recognised the argument was that physicists should somehow be able to be reconciled with Bergson's idea of time; that is, it was believed that Einstein should have approached the the question of time in its deeper and more fundamental metaphysical reality. This is evident in a comment made by Francis Anderson that while Bergson had attacked the "ultimate problems" relating to the question of time in *Creative Evolution*, Einstein had not dealt with these "in a systematic way." (Anderson 1923a:1962)

Bergson himself compared his own theory of time with that of Einstein's in *Duration and Simultaneity* - a book written in order to demonstrate the limitations of the physicists' concept of time, compared to his own understanding of *la durée* as time that is lived and experienced. (1) He argued in this text that the

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1. Gunn noted: "He [Bergson] laid aside for a time in 1920, his preoccupation with Einstein's work in order to examine the relationship between the theory of Relativity and his own doctrines of Time which date from 1889. The fruit of these labours was a remarkable little volume, issued in 1922 (and now in several subsequent revised editions) *Durée et Simultanéité à propos de la théorie d'Einstein*. (Gunn 1925:280) See also Gunn's "Bergson and Einstein", 1926a, pp. 215-8 for further comparisons of the psychological and physical concepts of time.
plurality of times - which involve expansions in time-lengths and "broken-up simultaneities" - offered up by the special theory of relativity - do not constitute different "times" at all, because they are really "light-lines." (Bergson 1965:159) Thus, for Bergson Einstein had in some respects only rearranged the old mechanical universe so that instead of being under the governance of one reversible time-line it was now under the sway of multiple reversible time-lines. (1) The times of relativity theory still remained mathematical fictions based on a false analogy between time and space. Bergson wrote that the use of "space to measure and symbolize time" confused duration which is the "order of quality" with "pure quantity." (Bergson 1965:6,160) For Bergson, the relative times or simultaneities imputed or inferred by an observer-scientists were not things which anyone could experience or verify; the minute one entered one of these time-frames its relativity was extinguished. (Bergson 1965:158-9)

Bergson further argued that the multiple times of the special theory not only do not eliminate "the oneness of time" but are actually predicated upon it. (Bergson 1965:159) For there was one time contained within the theory which was time as lived.

1. On this point see Gilles Deleuze in his study Bergsonism where he writes that instead of an "inseparably hyphenated" space-time, Einstein had merely treated time as a "a fourth dimension of space." Deleuze says that according to Bergson, Einstein had "merely invented a new way of spatializing time." (Deleuze 1988:79:85) He had produced a non-Euclidean universe in which the multiple times had "different speeds of flow" but were "all real, each one peculiar to a system of reference." (Deleuze. 1988:79) But in the Bergsonian universe, Deleuze argued, there is only one time...although there is an infinity of actual fluxes...that necessarily participate in the same virtual whole." (Deleuze 1988:82)
This was the time which the physicist inhabited before and after he began his calculations—all of which are "auxiliary" to and dependent upon this lived time. For without a sense of the simultaneity of flows, Bergson argued, it was impossible to conceive of a simultaneity of instants. (Bergson 1965:159) (1)

Some metaphysicians did attempt to reconcile the numerical and discontinuous space-times of relativity theory with their own ideas about general duration and universal history. For example, W. Shimer wrote in an article entitled "The Evolution of Relativity" appearing in the *Monist* that Einstein's concept of space-time did not falsify real time, since space-time was also a "constituent of the real." As such, it was subject to the evolutionary process; that is, the relativities of physical time themselves evolved, became and changed. (Shimer 1927:541) (1)

In many respects Einstein and Bergson were in agreement with each other. Einstein accepted Bergson's intuitive understanding

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1. Bergson wrote that: "Expanded and broken-up times are therefore auxiliary times, intercalated by the physicist's mind between the start of his calculations, which is real time, and its finish, which is the same real time. In the latter we have made the measurements with which we operate; to the latter do the operation's results apply. The others are intermediary between the statement and the solution of the problem." (Bergson 1965:159) Gunn appeared to agree with Bergson on this point. He wrote that the intuitive sense of simultaneity was crucial for without it clocks could not be read. That is "clocks are compared in order to ascertain the time at which events occur, and the relation of the event to the hands of the clock gives us that absolute simultaneity which is intuitive, experienced, sensed, lived. The physicists themselves (Einstein among them) are obliged to note this primary absolute sense of the term, for it is but that identity in time which enables them to note the time of any event at all. The setting of clocks, for instance, involves noting the time of the departure of the light-signal, then the time of its arrival, and finally the time of its return." (Gunn 1929:190)
of simultaneity as the only absolute form of simultaneity without which it would be impossible to measure or take note of time. (Bergson 1965:xxxvi) Bergson also clearly accepted the veracity of Einstein's theory of relativity as a physical theory and was cautious when it came to the more metaphysical notions of time. Thus, we must ask why this debate, concerning the meaning of time, between Bergson and Einstein arose. We should note that it was a debate which many metaphysicians joined, weighing in on the side of Bergson to the extent that like him they rejected the notion that time could be reduced to measures. (It is a debate which Einstein is deemed to have won.)

One sticking point appears to be the insistence of philosophers that their definitions of time denoted real time whether construed in psychological or metaphysical terms as opposed to the "artificial" time of the physicist. (1)

In this context, we should note that an interesting exchange took place between Bergson and Einstein (as recorded in Bergson's Melanges) at a meeting of the Société de Philosophie in Paris in 6 April 1922. At this meeting Einstein appeared to reject the notion that there was a special philosophical definition of time. There was he said no time for philosophers, there was only physical and psychological time. (Bergson

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1. For further comments critical of the physicist's concept of time see Hans Joas, 1985:169. Joas wrote of George Herbert Mead's objection to the theory of relativity. He wrote that for Mead "the concept of a four-dimensional space-time-world" implied that time was a "subjective phenomenon" and not an "inherent feature of the physical world itself." (Joas 1985:169)
Einstein's response to the philosophers is worth quoting at length. For what it reveals to us is that this debate was essentially a debate about definitions; that is, about how \textit{real time} was to be defined. Bergson's argument was that there is only one real time (\textit{la durée}), the time of minds not that of clocks. Whereas Einstein's argument appears to be that there is no real time at all. (1) He stated:

The question is posed thus: is time for a philosopher the same as it is for a physicist? I believe that time for a philosopher is both psychological and physical at the same time; well, physical time can be derived from conscious time. Primitively, individuals have the notion of simultaneous perception; they are able to understand each other and to agree on something they perceive; this was a first step towards objective reality. But there are objective events independent of individuals, and, from simultaneous perception, we can pass on to the events themselves. And, in fact, this simultaneity has not, for a long time, led to any contradiction because of the great speed of light. So the concept of simultaneity has been able to permit the perception of objects. From that we can deduce a temporal order in events...But nothing in our consciousness permits us to conclude that there is a simultaneity of events, because these are nothing but mental constructions, logical beings. So there is not time for philosophers. There is only a psychological time which is different from a physicists time. (Bergson 1972:1345-6)

7. The Response of the Scientists

We should note that Einstein was forthright in his denunciations of the interpretations that were applied to relativity theory - especially the notion that it implied that

1. This exchange was recorded in French in Bergson's \textit{Melanges}. It is not clear from the text whether Einstein actually spoke at this meeting in French or German. For various interpretations of Einstein's position as regards this exchange see Capek, 1961, p.160.
all things are relative and that there are no absolutes in the world. (Although some argued that Einstein had simply failed to grasp the philosophical implications of his theory. [1]) Philosophers of a realist persuasion also objected to subjectivist or relativist interpretations of the theory. A certain Thomas Greenwood for instance, argued that the subjectivism the theory was seen to support was in fact an anathema to all those scientists who saw it as their job to eliminate the singular and the partial and to create the universal. (Greenwood 1922:207) Far from justifying idealism, Greenwood wrote, relativity theory supported the opposite conclusion as it reflected an:

...absolute reality, independent of the mind and even of the motion of the observers, absolute in its objectivity although relative in its expressions by various observers. 'The laws of nature,' says the principle, 'remain unaltered whatever be the motion of the observers.' (Greenwood 1922:206)

There were a number of other scholars making similar observations. For instance, J. E. Turner (whose views on the superiority of science over philosophy were cited in the last chapter) concluded in an article called "Relativity without Paradox" appearing in the *Monist* that to interpret the theory to

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1. This observation was noted by the Australian philosopher Francis Anderson. He thought it a wrong observation because of Einstein's own admission of his epistemological "filiation" with the radical empiricism of Hume and Mach. He wrote that Einstein had a much stronger grip on the philosophical implications of this work that his critics were willing to admit. Although we should note that Einstein's argument that there were absolute laws of nature is hardly consistent with the position of the radical empiricists. (Anderson 1923a:62)
mean that reality was mind-dependent was "fatal" to science. (Turner 1930:2) (1)

As we have seen, the theory of relativity provided no justification for subjectivism, just as it provided no justification for the view that the world conceals a deeper spiritual force. Yet it seemed that such distortions of the theory continued to circulate.

It was this fact that resulted in a very interesting book by Philipp Frank (a professor at the German University of Prague and adherent of the positivism of Carnap and Wittgenstein) called Interpretations and Misinterpretations of Modern Physics (1938). In this text, Frank began by noting that every new physical theory is immediately examined to see what use it has for settling philosophical disputes. (Frank 1938:3) Or, as he later noted, metaphysicians scan physical theories for evidence for what "man has always known without the benefit of science." (Frank 1938:83) A good example of this was the claim of the Australian philosopher Francis Anderson that Einstein's theory of relativity was not new to philosophers who had been long aware of "the relativity of things, not only to each other, but to the

1. Note also, as evidence of the way the word relativism had begun to circulate outside of science, John Anderson's article, "Realism Versus Relativism in Ethics", The Australasian Journal of Psychology and Philosophy, March, 1933, Vol., XI, No. 1., p. 1 where he wrote: "It is a condition of progress in any science that relativist confusions should be removed..." Anderson claimed that relativism is inevitable prior to the development of theory in any particular field."
mind that perceives them”. (Anderson 1931a:1) (1) I have cited other similar claims - such as the idea that science had arrived at a theory of nature that had already been elaborated by Bergson.

Frank attributed the fact that science can be used and interpreted in this way to two things. Firstly, the presence of the verbal similarities between the language of science and the language of philosophy. This would certainly seem to be the case, as I have demonstrated how physical subjectivity became mental subjectivity and physical time was interpreted to mean flux or becoming. We should also note here how the notion of physical relativity was used to lend support to the idea of the relativity of knowledge and ideals. (Shimer 1927:551 Reid 1933:85) Indeed, the loose interpretations of the meanings of this word led some to speak of relativity as some unseen historical force running through modern times and evident in the work of thinkers as diverse as Bergson and Einstein.

The second thing that Frank attributed misinterpretations of physics to is what he called a lingering "anthropomorphism" among some philosophers who drew the false conclusion from modern physical theories that the universe is fundamentally spiritual in

1. See also the comment by George A. Morgan in an article on Dilthey, in which he said the first and perhaps last "lesson of history" was that of "universal relativity...All that the Greeks learned from the flux of external nature and the deceptions of the senses modern thinkers have discovered in the labyrinths of the human past." (Morgan 1933:373)
nature. (Frank 1938:3) He saw this as a move which scientists were equally guilty of making - and here Frank referred to Eddington and Jeans among others. (1)

It is important to note that the motivation for Frank's attack on these interpretations of physics was not purely intellectual. For his argument both began and ended with a warning about the political dangers posed by metaphysical interpretations of modern physics. He specifically referred to what he called organismic or spiritual interpretations of physical theories. That is, those interpretations which held that physics now demonstrated that the world was essentially an

1. He cited Jeans as asserting that the notion that electrons have both particle and wave aspects was equivalent to the "mystical" notion that reality was comprised of individual entities and the "stream of life" from which they sprang. He cited Jeans as stating: "It is only a step from this to a solution of the problem which would have commended itself to many philosophers, from Plato to Berkeley..." Once more the tendency to find within physics arguments in favor of the ever-recurrent spiritualistic ideology is quite obvious. The physical sentences are intended to provide the solution of problems formulated since Plato but expressible only in metaphysical terms." He wrote that Eddington had also arrived at a spiritualistic position "by arguing that observations cannot be predicted on the basis of mathematical formulas, wherefore there exists something spontaneous and creative in nature." (Frank 1938:18) For a review of Frank's book see John Passmore, The Australasian Journal of Psychology and Philosophy, 1940, pp. 82-4. See also L.S. Stebbing's Philosophy and the physcists, London, Methuen & Co., 1938. Another study of the idealistic interpretations of science by scientists was C.E.M. Joad's, Philosophical Aspects of Modern Science, George Allen and Unwin Limited, London, 1932. Eddington's is an interesting case for he too wrote that it was a "common mistake" to think that the theory of relativity means that everything is relative. He stated: "Actually its says: 'There are absolute things in the world but you must look deeply for them. The things that first present themselves to your notice are for the most part relative.'" (Eddington 1935:34) The trouble, according to Frank, is that Eddington's absolutes appear to possess a spiritual content.
organism or a spiritual being of which human beings were particular instances. Frank argued that the dangers of these representations of nature was that they provided the "ideological foundation of the organismic conception of society" which was used by "definite power-groups" to facilitate their rise. (Frank 1938:33) His aim in this context was to prevent popularized presentations from being used to assist "intellectual, and hence social, reaction." (Frank 1938:58) It is interesting to compare this statement with that of the Australian scholar P.H Partridge who wrote soon after that "...the deepening mysticism of certain branches of scientific theory [in the sense that it had lost any notion of general order and interconnectedness]...has weakened the resistance of science to anti-scientific moralities and philosophies." (Partridge 1940:16) (1)

Of course, Frank's argument would be that it was not science itself that was becoming mystical - rather, the mysticism arose from those who misinterpreted it. Furthermore, as a positivist, Frank would not see pervasive order and interconnectedness in science as a prerequisite for scientific rationality. Nevertheless, there is a sense in which it could be argued that scientists had themselves rendered their discipline vulnerable to mystical ideas. For instance, it was argued that physics could be construed as lending support spiritual ideas precisely because of the radical empiricist's insistence that phenomena do not need support. In the absence of such support, it could be argued that positivism was bound to either tend towards a form of subjective idealism or panpsychism. It could
become a form of personal idealism or it could give rise to a picture of the universe as a psychic melting-pot. To this extent, philosophers had only rushed through a door that had already been opened, if only a little, by scientists.

There are a number of conclusions that one can draw from these debates about the meaning of relativity theory. Firstly, I think the examination of these interpretations of modern physics demonstrates that exchanges about the meaning of relativity and about the epistemology that it favoured were often overwhelmed by the desire to raise other intellectual or spiritual concerns. Secondly, and more importantly, the winding course of the epistemological arguments I have outlined suggests that both the language of philosophy and the language of scientific description were highly equivocal. We can see this in the confused interpretations of the intentions which lay behind the use of words such as simultaneity, relativity, subjectivity and time. Thirdly, the confusions over the meanings of these terms brings into question the actual coherence of what was called the modernist movement. As we have seen, somehow the intuitionism of Bergson and the relativity of Einstein were be seen as representative of a particular zeitgeist. This zeitgeist could be

1. As we have seen organismic interpretations of physics were tied in with the work of Bergson and Whitehead. Other organismic theories current at that time included those of C. Lloyd Morgan in Emergent Evolution, 1927, Williams and Norgate, 1923. J.C. Smuts in Holism and Evolution, Macmillan, London, 1936 (Third Edition); N.O Losskii in The World as an Organic Whole, (Translated from the Russian by Natalie A. Duddington), London, OUP, 1928.
seen in as an irrationalist one or it could be seen as a sign of the new liberation of spirit that was abroad. But if some of these ideas were not what they seemed and did not stand for what they were said to stand for, how accurate was this idea of a relativist zeitgeist?

8. Quantum Physics

There were similar attempts to locate philosophical and social meanings in the area of quantum physics. Here again, suggestive terms were used to describe a theory - terms which are readily translated into both popular and philosophical idioms; terms that had a history prior to their use by physical scientists. Quantum theory is most popularly associated with what became known, after 1927, as Heisenberg's principle of uncertainty or indeterminancy.

There are actually three inter-related features in the area of quantum theory that are relevant for this discussion. The first relates to the uncertainty consequent upon the conditions under which observation of an electron is possible. That is, in casting a beam of light on an electron in order to observe it, one makes the electron "travel too fast for observation." (1)

The second feature which is important for this discussion is that electrons were described in terms of both particles and waves. The third feature is the related assertion that quantum

theory demonstrated a discontinuity in spatio-temporal and causal relations. All of these points were seized upon by philosophers in order to put forward arguments similar to those which were put in relation to the theory of relativity. I shall explain what these are in a moment, but first, I should attempt to explain further some of the features of quantum theory that I have listed.

The quantum theory stated that there are limits to the accuracy with which we can observe sub-atomic phenomena. The reason for this, according to Bohr's formulation, is that no one set of experimental techniques can both spatially locate the position of a particle as well as predict its future course. That is, as Frank put it, there is "no experimental set-up concerning corpuscular radiation in the description of which the terms 'position' and 'velocity' of an electron can both be significantly used." (Frank 1938:14) (1) We should also note how

1. Note Bohr's comment which appeared in his formulation of the theory in the Physical Review in 1935: "When an experiment is made in which electrons are produced, then it depends on the experimental set-up whether or not a 'position' or 'velocity' of the generated particles can be defined at all. It is not permissible to say that in the experiment, particles (in the sense of corpuscular mechanics) are produced, whose state is 'unknowable' or even 'undetermined'." (Frank 1938:12) D. Brown, a New Zealand physicist, cited Heisenberg as stating in 1927 that quantum theory implied that there was a "well defined limit to the accuracy with which observations" of electrons can be made thus making it impossible to acquire "sufficient data to predict" their future movements...It is theoretically possible to determine with complete accuracy either the position or the velocity of the particle, but if we select one of these quantities for exact measurement, the other becomes quite indeterminate. Or else we may decide to accept a degree of error in both determinations, which will then be governed by the Quiney cited F.C. S. Schiller as describing the problem posed by
the terms position and velocity are correlated with the terms particle and wave. An experiment which locates the position of an electron may be depicted in terms of a "particle at that position", while in an experiment in which velocity (or impulse) is definable then a "wave length may be correlated to it." (Frank 1938:15) The third generalisation that flows from this theory, according to Frank, is that there is a discontinuity between spatio-temporal and causal relations. What this means is that there is no experiment which can be conducted which can give both a spatio-temporal description of the position of an electron as well as predict its future course; one can have a "spatio-temporal description" or a "causal description" but never both. (Frank 1938:15) (2)

Philosophers seized upon this theory in order to justify three related notions. These were firstly, the conception of reality as process; secondly, the view that mind interacts with the natural world and thirdly, the pragmatic theory of truth. The American pragmatist philosopher John Dewey reported the principle plainly enough when he wrote that it showed that the action of making an electron visible at the same time displaced the theory as one where a physicist wanting to observe the behaviour of an electron and having to "first throw a beam of light on it". The problem or the element of uncertainty arises because this act makes the electron "travel too fast for observation." (Quiney 1931:272n) See also Heisenberg, The Physical Principles of the Quantum Theory, Dover, New York, 1949. 2. Note Frank's point that the "complementarity between spatio-temporal and causal description says exactly the same thing about the particle as the complementarity between position and velocity. In popular presentations, among which those of a number of physicists have to be counted, this fact is left obscure and it looks as if something more general had been said." (Frank 1938:16)
the observed object. (Dewey 1930:202-4) The most important thing for Dewey in this context was that the condition of uncertainty arose because the observer played a role in dictating what happened to the object. (Dewey 1930:202-4) The meaning given to the clause, the observer played a role, is pivotal here; for it would seem that it had a significance for philosophers that it did not have for scientists. For instance, a physicist might argue that that the failure to measure accurately was, following James Clerk Maxwell, due to the limitations of our faculties or the coarseness of our instruments of measurement. That is, the uncertainty effect was produced by optical and physical means rather than being a result of the intervention of psychological forces in nature or some degree of indeterminancy in nature itself.

This view was disputed by a number of philosophers, including a certain H. Ruhe Quiney who said that the importance of the theory to philosophy could "hardly be over-estimated." (Quiney 1931:272). He argued that uncertainty was not due to "extraneous factors" such as mechanisms of measurement. (Quiney 1931:223) The British pragmatist F.C.S Schiller argued that since the operation of knowing an electron could change its place and velocity, then scientific inquiry now had to include in any conception of reality the "human operations by which that reality" comes to be known. (Schiller 1932b:247;1929:247) Dewey also articulated this view, stating that Heisenberg's theory of indeterminancy had completely disproved the spectator theory of knowledge in giving support to the notion of mind as a
participant within reality. (Dewey 1930:204-5) We can see here how "plays a role" in a physical sense could easily be conflated with "plays a role" in a psychological sense. (1)

The next development of the quantum theory related to the assertion that nature itself is somehow irrational because it does not behave in a predictable manner. In quantum physics electrons behave both as waves with a definite velocity and as particles with a definite position, and they seemingly and unpredictably "leap" from one of these states to the other when they undergo observation. This led to the assertion that there was a discontinuity between spatio-temporal and causal relations. That is, where one could affix a position to an electron one could not predict its future movement; where one could assign it a certain velocity one could not pinpoint its position. Thus, insofar as the sub-atomic realm could be characterised by discrete and qualitatively different states in atomic behaviour, it was argued that uncertainty inhered in nature itself. Dewey

1. While viewing the Principles as support for the instrumentalist theory of knowledge Dewey did draw attention to the distinction between interactions of a physical and mental sort. He wrote that: "The particle observed does not have fixed position or velocity, for it is changing all the time because of interaction: specifically, in this case, interaction with the act of observing, or more strictly, with the conditions under which an observation is possible...[my emphasis]" (Dewey 1930:202)

Eddington wrote that the relativity theory and the quantum theory were not just new discoveries but constituted a whole new way of thinking. Furthermore, he saw quantum theory as an epistemological principle that made physics a world contemplated from within. "We ourselves, our conventions, the kinds of thing that attracts our interest, are much more concerned than we realise in any account we give of how the objects of the physical world are behaving." We can study the external world now but without the halo of reality. (Eddington 1935:145,216,221,275)
wrote that uncertainty was not just a product of mind but was truly a "trait of natural events themselves." (Dewey 1930:249)

The point of making the twin assertions that nature was in a sense irrational and that human activity could modify it was to argue the case for the instrumentalist theory of knowledge. Scientific concepts like that of velocity and position were seen only as tools which were used in order to deal with an "antecedent existence" rather than as "fixed properties of that existence." (Dewey 1930:203) (1) For Dewey the theory implied that all physical laws are of a statistical character and therefore are but "predictions of the probability of an observable event", not exact predictions as to the course that any particular electron may take. (Dewey 1930:248)

This was not to say that banishing all uniformity, continuity and substance from nature meant that all scientific laws and theories would be banished as well. The quantum theorist accommodated inconsistency in the sub-atomic realm, by using whatever theories and applying whatever laws appeared to work in particular experimental contexts. (Sheldon 1930:250) While Heisenberg's theory appeared to deny the principle of causation, Schiller argued that it would be used wherever it worked; he wrote that "no behaviour of electrons can confute it." (Schiller 1929:247) (1)

1. Marjorie Harris noted that Heisenberg himself had argued that "paradoxes" thrown up by quantum physics could only be resolved with the renunciation of such old and cherished notions as the "principle of causality" and the notion that "natural phenomena obey exact laws." (Harris 1933:511)
There are three conclusions then which were derived from quantum theory and its support for the instrumentalist theory of knowledge. The first related to intellectual life and the second to social action. Firstly, the significance of the theory should be seen in the context of the lower status that philosophy and social theory were accorded by many of those who were committed to the scientific ideal. Again, we see the same argument that was put in relation to the theory of relativity; in this case quantum theory was said to show that philosophers and social scientists should not be jealous of physical scientists. For what the theory demonstrated was that uncertainty was a condition of life which faced the ignorant and the scientifically informed alike. (Swenson 1928:437, Sheldon 1930:257) Dewey wrote that if man, by virtue of knowing, is a participant in the natural world and this is no bar to scientific understanding, then it must follow that his participation in the social world is no threat to his achieving understanding there.

Further to this, the principle was taken to imply, like relativity theory, that what was called reality was in part an invention of mind. As with relativity theory, it was argued that where the subject-object relation was indivisible, reality had to include our modes of understanding. (1) Thus, Dewey claimed that "a certain method of directed participation" in both the social and natural realms was a prior condition of "genuine understanding." (Dewey 1930:212)

1. Philip Weiner wrote that as with the Relativity Theory, the Uncertainty Principle was seen as challenging the bifurcation of the world into an objective realm of rationality and a "fixed residue" of subjective irrationality. (Wiener 1935:498)
The other conclusion, one which flows from this last point is the use of the theory in putting the case for the philosophical notion of free-will. Where traditional arguments in favour of free-will had been derived from confidence in the supposed uniformity of the physical world, modern physics suggested non-uniformity of action and so the case against determinism was reopened. Darwin wrote that the "new outlook" in science was welcomed, although Darwin himself did not approve of this, because it seemed to "remove the well-known philosophical conflict between the doctrines of free will and determinism", resolving the issue in favour of the former doctrine. (Darwin 1931:101)

Dewey argued that while he thought the choice between free-will and determinism an artificial one, he still believed that the statistical character of Heisenberg's theory had an "obvious bearing on freedom in action." (Dewey 1930:249) Dewey argued that it demonstrated that there could be no mechanically exact science of an individual thing (whether electron or human being), as each had a history unique in character. (Dewey 1930:249) (1)

1. Marjorie Harris noted that superficial comparisons between quantum theory and the discontinuity that it embraced and Bergson's ideas about freedom of action were also possible. (Harris 1933:513) However, she added that despite this one had to note the "different significances that discontinuity has for each. From discontinuity in atomic processes designated as - 'the very essence of the quantum theory' - quantum physicists inferred unpredictability. Whereas Bergson implied that the intellect can grasp discontinuity which exists in the realm of matter, and can predict there but cannot grasp the continuity of life and therefore cannot predict in the realm of life." (Harris 1933:513n) Note however, that it is not continuity itself which makes life unpredictable but the fact that the continuity we find in nature is temporal in the sense that it is the creativity from which life springs and which animates it that makes life indeterminant.
Both scientists and philosophers encouraged this view. Evidence that this interpretation gained currency can be seen in the very fact that Einstein, Darwin as well as other scientists and philosophers attempted to refute it. Einstein in particular, responded to the claims that free-will existed in nature with a mixture of incredulity and contempt. (1)

We now come to the last feature of the quantum theory that was used by philosophers. As suggested earlier, it was argued that science had lost its absolute objectivity and certainty not

1. Jeans cited Einstein as saying on this matter: "I am entirely in agreement with our friend Planck in regard to the stand which he has taken on this principle. He admits the impossibility of applying the causal principle to the inner processes of atomic physics under the present state of affairs; but he has set himself definitely against the thesis that from this Unbrauchbarkeit or inapplicability we are to conclude that the process of causation does not exist in external reality. Planck has really not taken any definite standpoint here. He has only contradicted the emphatic assertions of some quantum theorists and I agree fully with him. And when you mention people who speak of such a thing as free will in nature it is difficult for me to find a suitable reply. The idea is of course preposterous...'Honestly I cannot understand what people mean when they talk about freedom of the human will.' (Jeans 1933:284-5) See also Stace who argued: "How any one can dare to found upon the present uncertainty in physics such doctrines as free will and the spiritual nature of inner reality passes my comprehension. Philosophers have often been accused of building idle speculation upon insufficient data. But some of our men of science completely outdo the philosophers in this." (Stace 1932:384n) C.G Darwin also denied that the doctrine of free-will could be derived from modern physics. He wrote: "...I cannot see that physical theory provides any new loophole. If we are to find room for free will within the realm governed by physical science, we have to suppose that the motions of our own bodies are in some way free not to obey the inexorable commands of the older mechanics. At first sight it might appear that the Uncertainty Principle provides the necessary latitude, but this is contradicted by closer consideration. We cannot say exactly what will happen to a single electron, but we can confidently estimate the probabilities." (Darwin 1931:101-102)
only because the principle of causality appeared to have broken down but also because matter was now seen as immaterial. E. L. Hinman wrote in relation to the theory of relativity that science had destroyed the very "positivity" on which its objective character had rested. (Hinman 1926:478) Indeed, as we have seen, some were beginning to argue that the supposed discoveries of science such as energy and electricity were in part "psychical," "mental" or "spiritual" in character. (Turner 1930:13)

As we have seen, some scientists and philosophers were not comfortable with this claim. Yet in relation to the quantum theory, we can see how this conception was developed. First of all, many scientists themselves gave rise to the idea that all the basic concepts of science - such as matter, ether and electricity were being "remodelled". (Salmond 1929:2) The title of Darwin's text if not the contents, *The New Conceptions of Matter*, is evidence of this scientific bravado. Furthermore, to the degree that scientific concepts were being remodelled, we should note that this process involved a degree of metaphorical experimentation and a relaxation of rules and definitions. As a result concepts become much more permeable; more open to modification and interpretation. It is this that allowed

1. Even Bertrand Russell appeared to defend this position. He wrote that matter had become "not a persistant thing with varying states, but a system of inter-related events. The old solidity is gone, and with it the characteristics that, to the materialism, made matter seem more real than fleeting thoughts." Russell in *Outline of Philosophy*, p. 311, cited in Jeans, p.295.
philosophical and even mystical ideas to flow into science. It is why Bergson's understanding of positivity in terms of movement could, however misguidedly, be merged with modern physics.

It was on this very point that Frank criticised a number of scientists. One was Jeans, who wrote that while electrons and protons "behave as particles while they travel freely through space, and as waves when they encounter matter... both are aspects of the same reality." (Jeans 1933:166) Similarly, Darwin called these aspects "half-worlds", which each give a "partial view of the whole world" except that they are "expressed in different languages." (Darwin 1931:82) And Eddington coined the portmanteau term "wavicle" to describe these unusual energy structures. (Eddington 1935:199) The reason for Frank's objection to these depictions was the fact that what the theory demonstrated was that in certain experimental set-ups the term particle could be employed while in other set-ups the term wave could be employed, but never both. Indeed, we should recall that wave and particle pictures (pictures that Frank thought were possibly too suggestive in this context) are only another way of representing the ideas of velocity and position. (Frank 1938:15) While quantum theory asserted the complementarity between position and velocity and between particle and wave pictures, this did not mean that these terms referred to a larger "inscrutable" reality which contained both wave and particle features. (Frank 1938:11) Frank wrote that to speak of a:

...two-fold nature or a bifurcation of physical reality
would be...to slip into metaphysics. The reality is not in itself two-fold, but our traditional means of expression, designed for the description of the experiences of daily life, are always suitable only for a part of the more subtle experiences of atomic physics. The statement concerning complementarity speaks about the relation between the means of expression invented for the description of gross mechanical processes and the richer observational material of atomic physics. (Frank 1938:18)

Indeed, the complementarity principle simply implied that it is "impossible to describe living organisms by means of physical concepts so completely" that one can "formulate causal laws for them in terms of physical quantities alone." (Frank 1938:11) Thus, it was the complementary character of modern physics that necessitated the use of metaphors in the descriptions of modern physics. And it was this in turn, especially where apparently contradictory images were used in conjunction with each other, which caused some to believe that the reality disclosed by physics was more complex, mysterious and paradoxical than it had been in the past. (1)

This aside, we should note that there also emerged a tendency to privilege the wave picture — to convert this into some underlying metaphysic equivalent to the idea of becoming or process. Again, this tendency arose as a result of the allusive metaphors used by scientists. Darwin, for example, likened what

1. Weiner also wrote that recent investigations of the internal structure of the atom had “revealed a complexity” that was “opaque” to Cartesian analysis. Instead of the “simple configurations” derived by that analysis, the atom was now seen to be all at once “radio-active, undulatory, and corpuscular” in character. (Wiener 1935:498) Whitehead wrote of the “mysterious quanta” emanating from the “recesses of protons and electrons.” (Whitehead 1978:78) Andrews wrote that the atom now had a “paradoxical side” as bewildering as any other concept known to man. (Andrews 1935:11)
he called the language of the wave aspect (because it represented continuity) to the language of objective reality, and the language of the particle aspect (because it is particularistic) to the language of subjective perception. (Darwin 1931:82)

Frank also regarded these analogies between particles and subjective perception and waves and an objective reality as mistaken and giving expression to the "pet" ideas of idealists. (Frank 1938:18) Furthermore, he wrote that the wave picture as it appears in quantum physics is not like the popular and so suggestive image of a wave. Frank wrote that the wave of quantum physics was a "monochromatic wave filling homogenously the whole space." (Frank 1938:15)

The wave aspect of the electron was emphasised because it seemed to blend in with the more elusive notions of mind-energy or pure energy of some of the idealists and vitalist thinkers I have mentioned. This view of the electron was applied to matter in general. Thus, instead of matter being seen in terms of billiard balls, pellets or pills it was claimed that it was now wave-like in nature. (Salmond 1929:3, Quiney 1931:272, Gunn 1936:251) C. F. Salmond wrote that physicists had found that the solid matter upon which they had built their science had now dissolved in their hands; he wrote that matter had resolved itself into a "vibratory ebb and flow of underlying energy." (Salmon 1929:3) Similarly, Dewey wrote that the philosophical counterpart to these physical theories was a conception of the universe in which each entity was in process. (Dewey 1937:171) It is not surprising, that here again, it has been argued, we have
only come back to the philosophy of Bergson. (1)

We should note in regard to these metaphysical ideas of process that the new conceptions of matter also provided an opening for vitalist conceptions of nature. As I noted earlier, vitalist thinkers rejected the purely external approach of the scientist, viewing such things as chemical interactions of elements and compounds as having their ultimate cause not in mechanical laws, but in an original impulsion; that is, a non-material life force which resulted in endless and unpredictable transmutations and concentrations of energy. It was this vitalist view of life as booming with energy, that was held in mind when it was suggested that the atom described by the new physics was transforming into an organism. (Agar 1932:483)

I suggested at the beginning of this chapter that certain developments in modern physics were seen as a further manifestation of the crisis in knowledge. Overwhelmingly

1. Pete A. Y. Gunter argued in his introduction to the University Press of America edition of Creative Evolution that Bergson had preceded Louis de Broglie, Erwin Schroedinger, Werner Heisenberg and Niels Bohr, in his proposal in Matter and Memory that matter was nothing but "modifications, perturbations, changes of tension or of energy, and nothing else" (Matter and Memory 270). Gunter wrote that in Bergson's analysis the "billiard-ball model of matter is rejected in favour of a pulsational, quantum-like model exhibiting both wave (continuous) and particle (discontinuous) features (Matter and Memory 277-278) and fundamental indeterminacy. (Matter and Memory 331)". (Bergson 1911:xiv) Gunter also noted that this resemblance between Bergson's picture of matter and that suggested by quantum theory was recognised by Louis de Broglie. (Bergson 1911:1) See also Adelman's comment that the "stable imperishable entities" of classical physics, themselves derived from religious thinking, had given way to an "energy-system of rushing units;" an "equilibria of torrents of movement" and "continuous flux and change" from (Adelman 1942:228)
however, the evidence I have examined suggests that many philosophers welcomed these developments. Science appeared much more receptive to philosophical ideas following the appearance of the theory of relativity and developments in the area of quantum theory. Hence, pragmatist philosophers such as Dewey and Schiller argued that these developments showed that science and philosophy were not as greatly dissimilar in their scope and capacity as had been thought. However, those philosophers called neo-idealists went further, arguing that modern physics demonstrated that philosophy was the fundamental source of knowledge.

In this context, we should note that there were two main interpretations of physical theories. Firstly, it could be argued that science now denied the universality of any point of view. All that existed was a series of kaleidoscopic pictures. It followed from this that in such a non-Euclidean world, one which was fundamentally pluralistic, there could be no single way of describing the universe. Where science now only offered a multiplicity of representations of nature, there was no justification for denying the frames of reference of the poet and philosopher their equal place alongside those of the physicist.

(1)

But one could be more ambitious than this. One could make the metaphysical point (one that contradicts the understanding

1. Note that Jeans considered this possibility but rejected it. His opinion was that the book of nature is inscribed with mathematics and for that reason is available to our intellect. (Jeans 1933:302ff)
of a universe comprised of irreducible frames of reference), and argue for an objective reality that was essentially wave-like in character. It could be argued that nature was really an objective order of connections in process; an order which was only articulated in particular frames of reference, entities and occurrences. That is, we are offered a metaphysical view of reality which had it that mobility, or the wave aspect, was "anterior" and prior to immobility, or the particle aspect. (Wallace 1931:167) Could this not also be taken to suggest the priority of metaphysics over science?

Thus, the interpretations of the significance of modern physics went in two directions. For some physics now implied a radically pluralistic view of things and a purely subjectivist account of knowledge. For others however, modern physics pointed towards an objective realm of existence. It was a realm characterised by continuity but it was also one that was ever on the move. But I should stress that philosophers were only able to find philosophical meanings in physics because words such as relativity, uncertainty, discontinuity, indeterminancy and so on were open to interpretation.

But whether the meanings attached to modern physics were misinterpretations or not is not ultimately my concern. What is important is that they did have an impact on intellectual life. The view of reality as process and of knowledge as purely instrumental were important to arguments, in the area of philosophy, and in the areas of political and economic thought as well.
Chapter 4: The Philosophy of Pragmatism

1. Terminological Difficulties

Pragmatist philosophy was widely embraced in the interwar years in the English-speaking world. It also excited interest in France and Italy. But it was in America that pragmatism gained its widest audience; indeed, it was often seen as a quintessentially American philosophy and in this regard it received both praise and criticism.

One reason why pragmatism was criticised was because it was seen as being hostile to the philosophical quest for higher knowledge. This was true to the extent that pragmatists were antipathetic to philosophers who took flight from everyday reality and the realm of feelings in the pursuit of certainty. However, the avowed aim of pragmatists like William James and John Dewey was not to destroy philosophy but to save it by bringing it back down to earth. Indeed, Dewey believed that relating philosophy to the day to day world was a necessary component of all plans for social reconstruction.

The pragmatists believed that their philosophy was best able to offer intellectual and social guidance in an age of uncertainty. According to its supporters, the advantage that pragmatism had over traditional philosophies lay in its method. Pragmatists did not waste time searching for the absolute. According to the pragmatist method, truth or falsehood should be decided on the basis of what "worked" or what was useful in
resolving a specific problem. As we saw in the last chapter, it was argued in the interwar years that scientists too believed that so-called laws scientific laws were things which were useful rather than true. Hence, the pragmatists saw their own method as in keeping with scientific notion of the instrumental theory of truth. Indeed, instrumentalism became one of the defining features of pragmatism and the source of much antagonism towards it.

Once more I should stress that I am dealing with categories that are open to various interpretations. In particular, in examining these intellectual debates one is confronted by an array of isms. Such isms, whilst undoubtedly providing a convenient means of grouping together a number of philosophical ideas, could also be used to mask a multitude of intellectual sins of omission and commission. Furthermore, the particular isms that I am addressing were themselves defined in relation to other terms (including other isms), which also lacked in precise definition.

For example, positivism was defined as a form of empiricism— that is, the belief that knowledge begins with the apprehension of what is given in experience. But then, one still has to decide what nuances one should attribute to terms such as the empirical or the given. While, strictly speaking empirical could refer to phenomena or sensations—things which did not need the support of reality—it could also be taken as pointing towards something external to experience. Indeed, we often find that
reality was identified with experience. As I have suggested before, the language of appearance is highly ambiguous. (1)

One of the greatest difficulties in examining epistemological or metaphysical debates is that they are peppered with such terms. This explains why in the debates I am examining misperceptions and misinterpretations arose. We have certainly seen that this was the case in our discussion of the way in which some philosophers absorbed the supposed lessons of modern physics.

There are two other points which we should note in relation to the use of general categories in philosophical debates. Firstly, to the extent that some of these categories proved vague or slippery they were hard to attack because they could be redefined in the course of argument. By the same token, the vagueness of these categories also made them more vulnerable to attack. That is, these categories could be defined in terms of the most absurd or pernicious implications that could be derived from them. Both of these argumentative tactics appeared in the intellectual debates of the period.

This was particularly so in relation to certain categories such as positivism, pluralism, instrumentalism, monism and voluntarism. The processes of intellectual understanding were further complicated by the fact that some of these isms

functioned in distinct ways, depending on whether they were being used in the context of philosophical or political debates. Realism and idealism, for example, could mean a different thing to the philosopher than they did to the political scientist. Yet we should also note how the meanings attached to a word such as realism in an epistemological context could be run into the meanings attached to the term realism when used in a political context. Hence, a political realism which saw life as a ceaseless struggle, and a realist belief in the objective existence of facts, could be presented as mutually reinforcing ideas.

These points also underscore the difficulties with the philosophy of pragmatism, some of which I alluded to in the last chapter. Some of the conditions which I have just spelt out in relation to general philosophical debates apply with added force in the case of debates about pragmatist philosophy. For pragmatism was a many-sided philosophy and its vocabulary was renowned for being equivocal. Indeed, we should note that the pragmatist often prided himself on his semantic flexibility and on his tolerance and embrace of various forms of human understanding. William James, who along with John Dewey is most closely associated with the philosophy of pragmatism, made exactly such an assertion in his Pragmatism. (James 1907:81) Dewey also gave expression to this attitude some years later in Reconstruction in Philosophy (1920) when he wrote that the world was so "multiplex and far-reaching" that it could not be "summed up and grasped in any one formula." (Dewey 1957:61) It should also be stressed that both James and Dewey made explicit their
view that words are not verities but are man-made tools; as such, they should be regarded as tentative in their meaning, open to interpretation and flexible in their application. This view was crucial to their attempt to display the contingent and make-shift nature of what they saw as the philosophical dogmas of their time - specifically, mechanistic philosophies which had deterministic implications and most significantly the idealism of the neo-Hegelian movement.

As my previous comments suggest, the flexibility of the pragmatist in regard to matters of doctrine and the meanings of words was what made criticism of pragmatism rather difficult from an analytical perspective. That is, a requirement of systematic definition was ruled out by the pragmatist a priori. Hence, to criticise pragmatist philosophy for not being systematic could be to invite the response that the demand for clear definitions is only an arbitrary requirement, and indeed goes against the nature of those things which philosophy is seeking to describe. As we saw with Dewey, the world that the pragmatist surveyed was multi-faceted or kaleidoscopic. This may be to say no more than that the pragmatist and the logician play by a different set of discursive rules; rules that can exclude them from talking to each other on equal terms. However, as we shall see, some would argue that whatever rules or non-rules the pragmatist played by, they were not proper to philosophical inquiry.

2. The Development of Pragmatism

James wrote that pragmatism was first inserted into
philosophical discussion by the American scientist and philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce in January 1878, in an article called "How to Make Our Ideas Clear" in the *Popular Science Monthly*. (James 1907:46) In this article Peirce recommended that philosophers adopt a method similar to that of the experimental scientist. The point of suggesting this was that it would help philosophers to clarify their ideas and define issues. (Schneider 1924:333) That is, what Peirce tried to do was to relate the notion of truth to the consequences of a given test or experiment in the light of the effects that that test or experiment was intended to produce. James described Peirce's argument as follows:

Mr. Perice, after pointing out that our beliefs are really rules for action, said that, to develop a thought's meaning, we need only determine what conduct it is fitted to produce: that conduct is for us its sole significance. And the tangible fact at the root of all our thought-distinctions, however subtle, is that there is no one of them so fine as to consist in anything but a possible difference of practice. To attain perfect clearness in our thoughts of an object, then, we need only consider what conceivable effects of a practical kind the object may involve - what sensations we are to expect from it, and what reactions we must prepare. Our conception of these effects, whether immediate or remote, is then for us the whole of our conception of the object, so far as that conception has positive significance at all. (James 1907:46-5)

Thus, on James' interpretation Peirce's argument was that truth or meaning was what worked. If an idea resulted in the conduct that it was supposed to result in (in the particular context in which it was tested), then that was its meaning; the idea then became true. James went on to note, however, that after Peirce introduced the term it lay dormant for twenty years,
until James himself revived it in a paper he delivered on the topic of religion in 1898. He added that he thought the times were right for pragmatism to gain wider acceptance; and ever since that time, he wrote, the term had cropped up regularly in articles in philosophical journals. (James 1907:47) Thus, the term pragmatism, to express it in a Jamesian fashion, had arrived. More importantly for our argument, we should point to his observation that the word could be applied "conveniently to a number of tendencies that hitherto have lacked a collective name." (James 1907:47) For this comment draws attention to the point that pragmatism is a variegated philosophy.

We should note that Peirce imposed much stricter conditions on the application of his pragmatic theory of truth that did James. Hence, towards the end of his career Peirce actually changed the title of his method from pragmatism to pragmaticism in order to distinguish his position from that of James. (1) It was Dewey who was later seen to be closer in spirit to Peirce because he was a stronger advocate of scientific methods. Sidney Hook suggested in The Metaphysics of Pragmatism that Dewey's

1. Sidney Hook wrote of how Peirce, in one of his last few publications, listed the positive and negative things about pragmatism. On the positive side were there "(1) their general acceptance of the 'Pragmaticist principle' (2) their denial of 'Necessitarianism' (3) their naturalistic explanation of consciousness (4) their acknowledgement of 'Real Habits' and (5) their specific insistence upon interpreting hyostatic abstractions in terms of what they would or might come to in the 'concrete.'" On the negative side Peirce listed "(1) their disbelief in the reality of infinity, (2) their belief in the mutability of truth (3) their confusion of 'active willing with willing not to exert the will (will to believe)'." See Peirce, the Hibbert Journal, Vol. 7 (1908) p. 112. Hook added that none of these criticisms applied to Dewey. (Hook 1927:10)
philosophy should also be called pragmaticism, (or instrumentalism or experimentalism) rather than pragmatism.

(Hook 1927:9) Dewey himself conceded that there was a lack of logical rigour in the early pragmatism.

This distinction between James and Dewey was evident almost from the outset. That is, this distinction applied insofar as Dewey attempted to move beyond the pragmatic emphasis on the particular moment and develop a method of transforming sensations into hypotheses. He wrote in *Studies in Logical Theory* (1903) that:

...thought has a distinctive work to do, one which involves a qualitative transformation of (at least) the relationships of the presented matter; as fast as it accomplishes this work, the subject-matter becomes somehow thought's own. As we have just seen, the data are progressively organized to meet thought's idea of a complete whole, with its members interconnected according to a determining principle. (2)

Yet we should also note that this statement could be seen to contain a voluntaristic element as well - and indeed, the charge that Dewey's definition of truth was voluntaristic was something that would persist despite his attempts to deny and refute it. I will return to this point later. For the moment, it should be noted that the emphasis in Dewey's work on the importance of

1. John Dewey (ed.), *Studies in Logical Theory*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1903, p. 65 cited by John Grier Hibben in "The Test of Pragmatism". *The Philosophical Review*, 1908, p. 373. Note that doubt has been cast on the actual compatibility of Dewey's philosophy with that of James. W. Y. Elliot for instance, regarded it as significant that Dewey came to pragmatism via logic and argued that this helped to explain his differences with James. (Elliot 1928:27)
logical and conceptual analysis of empirical data would become more pronounced.

It should be stressed that James himself invoked experimental and instrumental techniques of verification in his discussion of pragmatism. His insistence that knowledge should begin with the study of pure sensations is a case in point. James himself stressed the importance of Mach's empirical method (along with that of Pearson, Ostwald, Duhem and others) in *Pragmatism* (James 1907:57) But as we have seen a stress on the phenomenal alone could lead to the charge that one's approach is mystical or nominalistic.

In relation to this, we should point to the association between pragmatism, empiricism and the philosophy of Bergson. These were grouped together because they all shared an interest in experience or immediacy. I suggested in the previous chapter that Bergson favoured the method of intuition over those of observation and verification as a way of handling immediacy. However, I also suggested that the lines of division between Bergson and the empiricists and the pragmatists were not always that clear-cut. This was especially so given Bergson's description of knowledge as an instrument of action. The pragmatists too, with their concentration on phenomena and their advocacy of instrumental methods, were readily associated with empirical schools of thought. Indeed, Collingwood observed that there was an "implicit" agreement between the "schools of Mach, of Bergson, of James, and of Croce" - between empiricists,
pragmatists and neo-idealists - insofar as they all agreed that science was action rather than knowledge, and was useful rather than true. (Collingwood 1922:445)

These points help explain the charge of nominalism. As to the charge of mysticism, it was suggested that James was sympathetic to the ideas of empiricists such as Mach. But it was what James actually did with the immediate contents of experience that made his philosophy seem mystical. We should also note here how the philosophy of Bergson, along with that of James and Dewey, was compared to the philosophy of Gentile - at least they were all seen as sharing common ground to the extent that all of these authors viewed thought as essentially activity. (1)

I shall discuss this point extensively in chapter six. For the moment, we should just note that James also included in his A Pluralistic Universe (1909), which was based on the Hibbert Lectures he gave at Manchester College in 1908, a chapter on Bergson, whose philosophy he felt was very close to his own.

The other important point to stress in relation to the charges of mysticism and nominalism that were being laid against pragmatism, was that in James' hands (as well as in the hands of the British philosopher F.C.S Schiller and the Italian

philosopher Giovanni Papini [1]), the pragmatic method of judging things in terms of whether they "work" or not did not only apply to what worked in an experimental sense but also to what worked in terms of human interests or even one's wishes or desires. (This also helped explain why Peirce changed the name of his own pragmatic method.) That is, while advocating certain procedures and principles associated with the empirical method of the scientists, James also wrote that: "The true'...is only the expedient in the way of our thinking, just as 'the right' is only the expedient in the way of our behaving." (James 1907:222) Such a statement, as with many other sentences in James' Pragmatism, could be interpreted to imply not just that inter-subjective notion of truth as it is applied in experimental contexts, but also a subjective definition of truth.

Dewey would later argue that this subjectivist interpretation of pragmatism was wrong; however, the fact that he attempted to redirect pragmatist thought away from its original emphasis on pure sensations and towards the development of experimental methods suggests that he felt that pragmatism was at least vulnerable to this interpretation.

1. Herbert Schneider wrote that F.C.S. Schiller attempted to rock the philosophical establishment in England, just as James, did in America. However, he was less successful. Schneider wrote that this was "due partly to the differences in the general traditions and trends of thought in America and in England, partly to personal factors... Schiller was more polemical and his humor had a sting...Schiller was interested in fighting for humanism James in defending humaneness. (Merrian 1924:333) See chapter six for a discussion of Papini's philosophy.
Pragmatism caused a storm of controversy when it was introduced onto the philosophical scene. (Haydon 1919:401) Indeed, the very style and vocabulary which James and his sympathisers employed seemed designed to provoke a strong reaction. In objecting to all those philosophies which posited a supreme value or higher realm of being James argued, drawing upon the language of commercial life, that no ideas were true or perfect in themselves but rather they should have a "cash-value" or should pay. (James 1907:53)

Indeed, some scholars responded to this suggestion in a most vehement manner. Albert Schinz (then associate-professor of French Literature in Bryn Mawr) opened his philippic Anti-Pragmatism (1909) by saying that pragmatism was only a new word with which to describe "'opportunism'" and "'sophistry'" in philosophy. (Schinz 1909:xv)

It has been argued that part of the reason for the strong reaction against pragmatism was an aristocratic European disdain for what seemed to be such a defiantly American philosophy. (1) Of course, some did regard the emphasis within the American pragmatic movement on the cultural and political values of the new-world (such as an emphasis on know-how rather than on strict reasoning, on openness and toleration rather than rigidity and hierarchy) as refreshing. However, others saw this as one of its least pleasing aspects. Schinz for instance wrote that it was a

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1. On the European response to pragmatism see also Harold Laski, The American Democracy, 1948, p. 724. He argued that for the Europeans pragmatism was the "typical and inferior product of a civilization whose deepest concern is with wealth."
philosophy designed to please the crowd. "Popular science, popular art, popular theology" he wrote "only one thing was lacking - popular philosophy" and pragmatism was it. (Schinz 1907:xv) Nevertheless, we should also note that aspects of pragmatism were also presented as being in keeping with certain European ideas or traditions of thought - ones which were associated with the names of Machiavelli, Nietzsche, Sorel, Bergson and Duguit. This point will take on greater significance when I examine the political movements associated with pragmatism. Suffice to say, that where pragmatism was associated with these thinkers it was seen as a philosophy which threatened democracy while at the same time pandering to its worst elements.

3. Pragmatism and the Empirical Tradition of Thought

The previous passages have suggested that pragmatism was not always presented in systematic terms. Indeed, for that reason pragmatists themselves often denied that it was a philosophy (albeit for different reasons than those used by the philosophy's antagonists.) Instead, of a philosophy, it was often described as a point of view, an approach, an outlook or an attitude. (Papini 1907-8:353 Sabine 1930:365 Walker 1929:118) James himself subtitled Pragmatism - A New Name For Some Old Ways of Thinking.

What were these old ways of thinking? James dedicated Pragmatism to the memory of the British philosopher John Stuart Mill and thus presumably declared an allegiance to the British
empirical and utilitarian traditions of thought. In the view of Dewey, and later George H. Sabine, the empiricism of Francis Bacon was also important. Dewey wrote that while he was not sure whether James had Bacon in mind when he penned the subtitle of his book Pragmatism, he felt that Bacon could be regarded as the "prophet of a pragmatic conception of knowledge." (Dewey 1957:32)

However, a few years later, Dewey would include Bacon among those philosophers who he viewed as participants in what he called the quest for certainty. It was a quest which he thought had fixated philosophers since the time of the ancients. While this quest had been expressed in different ways at different points of time, what all the participants in it (including Plato, Descartes, Bacon and Kant) shared was the desire to found knowledge on a basis which excluded "everything but intellect." (Dewey 1927:2) But according to Dewey this quest always ended in disappointment, for every attempt to found knowledge on an "exclusive intellectual basis" had in time faltered or had been superseded. History, he wrote, was always revealing our ideas to be either false or in need of further supplementation. (Dewey 1927:2)

On this point we should note the influence on pragmatism of another noted natural scientist - namely, Charles Darwin. Again, it was the empirical method of the scientist to which importance was attached. Sabine wrote for instance that Darwin had followed Bacon in embracing a completely empirical approach "ordering a great mass of seemingly unrelated data without the clue of
The other very important thing which Darwin's hypothesis suggested to the pragmatists was that history should not be seen in terms of stable entities or rigid categories, but should be viewed as continuous process, movement and change. (Collingwood 1922:445 Sabine 1930:866) (As we have seen, Bergson had drawn similar conclusions from evolutionary theory although Bergson was more in favour of Lamarck than Darwin.) This points to the three main aspects to pragmatism, aspects that can both contradict and complement each other. These were, as both Collingwood and Sabine suggested, empiricism, the concept of history as ongoing evolution and instrumentalism. (1)

In 1920 Dewey proposed the reconstruction of philosophy. A number of distinct yet also related intentions lay behind this proposal. First of all, Dewey was concerned that philosophy had become irrelevant to social life. This is one theme that persisted in his writings and in the writings of other scholars throughout the 1920s and into the 1930s. (It is a theme that I shall develop in the next chapter.)

1. Sabine wrote that pragmatism stands "...like a tripod upon the three supports of empiricism, evolution, and the instrumentalism of thought in human behavior. It accepts control as the end of knowledge and the test of its efficiency, and therefore makes purpose an ineradicable part of all thinking." (Sabine 1930:866) See also R.G. Collingwood, "Are History and Science Different Kinds of Knowledge," Mind, 1922, Vol. XXXI, No. 124, October, pp. 443-51. Collingwood discussed the importance of the idea of history as process and the instrumental theory of knowledge in relation to the pragmatists and to other schools of thought. (Collingwood 1922:445)
Dewey was also concerned about other developments which he saw as related to the aloofness of philosophy from the concerns of ordinary men. To explain this we should note that for Dewey, (as for James) philosophers had artificially divided the world into a superior or transcendent reality on the one hand, and an "imperfect and perishing" reality on the other. (Dewey 1957:22) This superior reality was what was deemed worthy of contemplation by philosophers, while the imperfect everyday reality where men lived and worked was seen as the province of those lesser forms of knowledge associated with the positive sciences. (Dewey 1957:22) Thus, the gap between philosophy and social life also entailed a gap between philosophy and science. Further, and this was central to the emotional appeal of his argument, this led to a gap appearing between morality on the one hand, and the empirical world and those sciences which took it as their object, on the other. That is, in turning away from the everyday world philosophers had left a spiritual vacuum behind them. Thus, the stewardship of social life was left in the hands of those who accepted the strictures of scientism. Furthermore, these types had sought to "revenge" themselves upon those who would view the study of the empirical world as a lower form of knowledge, by declaring that neutral observation and the collection of facts were the only paths to real or useful knowledge. (Dewey 1957:282-283) Hence, Dewey wrote that: "While the saints are engaged in introspection, burly sinners run the world." (Dewey 1957:196)

But while Dewey was critical of scientism he was
nevertheless an admirer of the natural sciences. First of all, as
we have seen, he suggested that the scientific approach was
salutary to the extent that it attended to everyday reality.
But we should note that given his stress on ordinary or everyday
reality Dewey was most concerned with the social sciences. (After
all, it would be hard to conflate the study of sub-atomic
phenomena with the study of everyday reality.) Indeed, Dewey
appeared to be suggesting that philosophy should become a form of
social science. That is, philosophy should centre itself around
human behaviour and should assist in the application of
scientific methods to social problems. Thus, Dewey wrote:

While we have been reasonably successful in obtaining
command of Nature by means of science, our science is not
yet such that this command is systematically and pre­
eminantly applied to the relief of the human estate...[This
is] the specific problem of philosophical reconstruction at
the present time. For it emphasises the larger social
deficiencies that require intelligent diagnosis and
projection of aims and methods. (Dewey 1957:43)

This asserted need to apply science to the organisation and
running of society suggested that one of the main reasons for
reconstructing philosophy (that is, breaking down the
philosophical distinction between higher and lower forms of being
and knowledge), was to reconstruct society. This necessitated
the introduction of a moral consciousness amongst scientists but
it also, as I suggested, required that philosophers develop an
interest in practical affairs and in scientific methods. Thus
philosophers, Dewey wrote, should turn from their studies and
adopt an "experimental intelligence" in order to "project a
better future." (Dewey 1957:96)

We can see here how Peirce's original instrumental definition of truth was being placed in yet another context. If, as we shall see, some defined it in terms of the satisfaction of a desire, Dewey appeared to be defining it in terms of the fulfillment of social needs. That is, there was an intimation of that attempt to combine science with social planning that I discussed in chapter two.

But the scientific study of society was still in its fledgling stage, as shown by the fact that social scientists were constantly asserting their scientific credentials. In this context, one can view pragmatist philosophy as a defense of the scientific status of the social sciences. This involved two things. Firstly, a reconceptualisation of what science meant and secondly, the development of a methodology appropriate to the scientific study of society.

In the case of the first requirement, as I argued in the previous chapter, developments in the area of modern physics were crucial because they appeared to undermine the absolute objectivity and certainty that was previously attributed to the natural sciences. That is, modern science dealt with probabilities rather than with exact mechanical prediction; the statistical element was uppermost and from this it was concluded that reality must be non-deterministic. On the basis of this it was argued that nature was not stable but was process. Dewey wrote that modern science showed that life could not be pared
back to a series of logical steps or crystalline forms; change rather than fixity he wrote, was what the modern scientist used to measure reality. (Dewey 1957:61) And as we have seen, some also concluded from the indeterminism of modern physics that mind penetrates every part of reality. Indeed, the reviewer of P.W. Bridgman's *The Logic of Modern Physics*, W.E. Van De Walle, wrote that modern physics provided evidence in support of the pragmatist position. While conceding that the author might not agree, he thought this book justified a pragmatism "...with the mind imposing certain characteristics - a pragmatism with a categorical element added." (Van De Walle 1928:286) Similarly, Thilly thought that in science one could only speak "as if" one reached data or "as if" there were laws. (Thilly 1926:523)

Obviously, to the extent that these interpretations were believed, there was no need for the social scientist to be apologetic about his own failure to achieve certainty or arrive at accurate predictions. There was no need to defend the charge that the social sciences could not be scientific because the material they examined did not sit still or because in the area of the social sciences feelings and emotions intervened and thus prevented disinterested analysis.

4. The Method of Instrumentalism

The second feature of the reconstruction of philosophy that I pointed to was the perceived need for the development of a methodology. In the light of my previous comments concerning assertions about the nature of modern physics, this might appear
surprising. But the very developments that were seen by some as undermining the foundations of science had also enhanced its status. Furthermore, modern science was still seen as yielding sufficiently accurate results so as to make it worthy of imitation in this regard. This made it especially important for the pragmatists to dispense with those charges of subjectivism that had been levelled against them. It was not enough to say that science was no longer absolutely objective and that its methods were instrumental. Pragmatists also wanted to be seen to be in compliance with the rules of investigation which applied in the laboratory context. Note that Dewey wrote in *Reconstruction in Philosophy* that: "Dreams, reveries, emotional idealisations" all served as a means of "escape" from "the stream of perplexity and conflict." (Dewey 1957:139) But he added that these were "short cut solutions...[which] do not get rid of the conflict and problems but only get rid of the feeling of it." (Dewey 1957:146) Real thinking of the type that is needed in order to deal with social problems he wrote, is characterised by a close examination of the facts. Although we should note, Dewey insisted that the examination of the facts is not something that is prior to the actual work of thought. Thus, Dewey wrote that intelligent thinking involves:

...facing the facts - inquiry, minute and excessive scrutinising, which is not something outside of and prior to thinking but the indispensable step of defining the problem, of taking the trouble, of forcing home a definite instead of a merely vague emotional sense...of what the problem is and where...[it is] clarifying the disturbed and confused situation so that a reasonable way of dealing with it may be suggested. (Dewey 1957:140-1)

This method of experimentation which involves the
This method of experimentation is instrumental insofar as it implied that in order to solve a problem one must understand the reason why the problem was seen as a problem in the first place. That is, in order to successfully conclude an experiment one must know the purpose which gave rise to the experiment in the first place. Dewey was not talking here however of laboratory experiments or strict scientific problems. He was referring to social experiments and social problems. Therefore, the experimental method when applied to society could only work if one knew social purposes and needs - because these were the only criteria by which to judge what actually worked. Thus, he wrote in *Essays in Experimental Logic* (1903) that philosophy and the social sciences must have an appreciation of social experience:

Unless we have a critical and assured view of the juncture in which, and with reference to which a given attitude or interest arises; unless we know the services it is thereby called upon perform, and hence the organs or methods by which it best functions in that service, our progress is impeded and irregular. ... A general logic of experience alone can do for social qualities and aims what the natural sciences after centuries of struggle are doing for activity in the physical realm. (Dewey 1953, 99, 100)

There are three points to stress here. Firstly, once again we see an attempt to amalgamate scientific observation with social planning. Secondly, we should note that when Dewey was speaking of an experimental logic being applied to the study of social life and the resolution of social problems he was only using the word logic in the metaphorical sense. That is, he did not mean logic in the sense of rules of valid inference; rather he meant a certain pattern of understanding and investigation.
Thirdly, and as a related point, Dewey appeared to be arguing that the social sciences can have their own distinctive method or logic but remain scientific nevertheless. We should stress that all of these points could be used to raise questions about the exact validity of the results that his type of social science could achieve.

In addition to his emphasis on experimental logic, Dewey also sought to place his pragmatism on an objective footing. That is, there was an attempt to endow pragmatism with a realist metaphysic as well to emphasise the importance of experimental logic. In this way, pragmatism appeared as a cross between logical positivism and neo-realism. (1)

Dewey wrote in his introduction to Hook's *Metaphysics of Pragmatism* that he rejected the suggestion that pragmatism had solipistic implications. Instead he argued that the novelty of the philosophy lay in its very objective understanding of instrumentalism:

Instrumentalism was taken to signify that thought and knowledge exist only as means of accomplishing some private advantage, some external utility. The earlier stages of criticism show that instrumentalism was even defined as the doctrine that all knowing is subordinate to satisfying organic, animal needs. The idea of action was given a similarly isolated and private interpretation. What the criticisms really proved was the nature of the conceptions which were previously current as to instruments and action. When these conceptions were read into the new view, there was no difficulty in attributing to the latter a denial of all objective and "disinterested" thought. It took time to

1. Gibson later referred to the "Carnap-Dewey synthesis of Chicago". (Gibson 1946:91)
make it clear that what was genuinely new in pragmatism was precisely a denial of these conceptions, and the substitution for them of an objective conception of tools, purpose and action. (Hook 1927:4)

Dewey appeared to be arguing that the objectivity of his pragmatism was derived from the fact that he was not talking about personal desires or actions in advocating the instrumental theory of truth; rather, he was referring to objective social needs, purposes and action. The objective status of these things is due to the fact that they are part of a wider social and natural environment. Indeed, Dewey asserted that a continuity existed between the energies that drive man and the energies of nature. That is, natural energies are "expressed in the behavior and habits of a living organism." (Dewey 1927:4) It is for this reason that Dewey asserted that there is continuity between the study of nature and the study of society and hence the possibility of disinterested knowledge. Although we should note that this knowledge is not final or absolute but is rather the most complete vision or synthesis that one can achieve at a given time.

Hook supported Dewey's claim concerning the objective basis on which pragmatism rested. Furthermore, as I suggested earlier, Hook drew a contrast between what he called Peirce's and Dewey's "social and scientific" pragmatism on the one hand, and what he called Schiller's "personal consolatory" and James' "mystical and nominalistic pragmatism" on the other. (Hook 1907:9) Hook described James' pragmatism as subjectivist because of his "warm attachment to sensations". (Hook 1927:7) This was not wholly
accurate, as I will explain in chapter six, although for somewhat different reasons than those put forward by Dewey in defence of the objective character of his pragmatism.

The sharp contrast drawn by Hook between the pragmatism of James and Dewey can be understood as a reaction against what he described as a "debasement" of the term pragmatism. (Hook 1927:6) In addition to this, the philosophy was also under considerable fire from its critics. Thus, one can see Hook's text as a response to these critics and an attempt to distance pragmatism from the charge of scepticism. This is not to say that there was no validity in the distinction which he drew between James and Dewey. As we have seen, Dewey did make "scientific" claims on behalf of his pragmatism whereas James did not. (1)

There were also epistemological reasons why Hook wanted pragmatism to reach beyond private sensations or phenomena. He perceived that in the absence of both a metaphysical base as well as a rigorous methodology, pragmatism would collapse. As we have seen this is an observation that was made on a number of occasions about positivism; that is, it would collapse into subjectivism or became mysticism. Hook wrote that if pragmatism were to avoid the fate of the positivism of Comte and the phenomenalism of Mach (both of which were anti-metaphysical) then

1. In the context of Hook's development of a more materialistic and socialised version of pragmatism we should note his own affinity with Marxism.
it had to grasp hold of an external reality. (Hook 1927:9:6)
(Although comments I cited in the previous chapter concerning the distinctions that were held to exist between Comte and the radical empiricists would perhaps partially undercut this point.)

5. The Instrumentalist Theory of Truth

The pragmatist definition of truth proved equally elusive. Dewey himself wrote that the word truth was ambiguous precisely because it had "implications dependent on our standpoints." The "truthful" depiction of the natural world by the physicist, he wrote, can differ greatly from that of the poet. (Dewey 1930:29) But if that were the case, how was the pragmatist able to secure the instrumental theory of truth?

This was obviously a problem considering the criticisms that pragmatism gave rise to scepticism or radical relativism. (Pepper 1936:126) Morris had observed of positivism that where it became instrumentalist in its leanings it would "collapse" into subjectivity. (Morris 1934:550) Hence, both the positivist and the pragmatist attempted to place the instrumentalist theory of knowledge on a more secure footing. In particular, they advocated the method of verification by way of appeal to experience. There were problems with this to the extent that modern physics was said to bring sense observation and the existence of a material world into doubt. (Dubbs 1935:254) Nevertheless, Paul Schilpp wrote that while no "finality" could be asserted for the method of verification, it was the only way
of establishing a difference between the "coherence of scientific statements and fairytales"; it would avoid, he wrote, the "dangers of an irresponsible scepticism." (Schilpp 1935:481)

In relation to this point it should be recalled that verificationist techniques were used by the laboratory scientist in much more restricted conditions than they were by the social scientist or planner. Nor, as I earlier suggested, does the social scientist deal with inert material. These are important distinctions between the natural and the social sciences that some pragmatists tended to gloss over.

In addition to this, and this is the most important difference between the pragmatist understanding of social science and the natural sciences, the more limited definition of instrumental criteria that was used in the laboratory environment was broadened by pragmatists to include social utilities. Hence, the descriptions social positivism or the social theory of truth were applied to the pragmatist concept of instrumentalism. What this meant was that ideas or plans would be tested in accordance with whether they worked in relation to society's needs or purposes.

In this context, we should note P.H. Partridge's argument that Dewey's social theory of truth was essentially voluntaristic. Partridge thought Dewey would accept this characterisation, given his arguments in favour of instrumentalism in Reconstruction in Philosophy. Patridge did, however, contrast Dewey's position with that of Hook whom he thought, as a Marxist, would be inclined to reject voluntarism.
In fact, as we have seen, both Dewey and Hook had attempted to place their pragmatism on an objective footing by conceiving purposes, actions and instruments in naturalistic terms — as functions of an objective environment. But even if social needs are understood in these terms, how is the social scientist to obtain knowledge of them?

As we have seen, the success of Dewey's approach to social problems depended on the fact that this knowledge was accessible to the social scientist. Yet as we saw in the last chapter, Dewey had also argued that the observer always played a role in determining the outcome of an experiment; if this were so, how could the social scientist know what real social needs were? Partridge wrote that verification of social truths was not possible:

...unless there are truths which must be, independently of what the predictor does himself, unless truths are recognised, instead of being realised, no verification is possible at all, and it is actually an inconsistency upon the part of the instrumentalists to utilise verification in support of the pragmatic conception of truth. (Partridge 1936:170)

Given the impossibility of the social scientist discovering what objective needs were, the social theory of truth which Dewey and Hook embraced had in the end to be voluntaristic. That is, the social theory of truth held that truths were made rather than revealed. (Partridge 1936:162) For the only way of arriving at such truths was social agreement through an act of community willing — a decision on the part of the community that such and such was the case. However, there is no guarantee that such a
decision would reflect those putatively objective purposes of which Dewey and Hook had earlier spoken.

The other point that was made in relation to the instrumental definition of truth was that, in calling on the principle of verification, the pragmatist was admitting the existence of non-instrumental criteria. That is, verification does not simply depend on the test of experience, it also assumes certain rational principles or rules such as coherence, non-contradiction and consistency which are themselves not verifiable, being mental properties. (1) As John Grier Hibben observed many years earlier in an article in The Philosophical Review called the "Test of Pragmatism", the instrumentalists demanded not only that a truthful proposition "fit into the concrete situation of actual facts in a way that can explain them satisfactorily", they also demanded that:

...it will fit into a thought situation in a like satisfactory manner, so as to do no violence to the fundamental laws of our logical nature. Verification of this kind, however, concedes in its very statement the consideration of a higher standard to which the simple pragmatic test must conform. In other words, truth's instrumental values is conditioned and determined both in nature and range by the demands of our reason for coherence and consistency." (Hibben 1908:371)

1. Note that there seemed a degree of confusion as to what extent the technique of verification qualifies as an example of empiricism or rationalism. For example, it has been seen as rationalist in nature for it is a static test which rests on principles of consistency, coherence and non-contradiction which themselves are not verifiable. (Perry 1938:50 Hsaio 1927:196-7) See also Passmore's comments about the rationalistic character of the logical positivists' method of verification. He wrote that it was rationalist insofar as it was an attempt to isolate "simple natures", insofar as logical positivists held that there was only one method by which simple entities could be verified. Passmore, 1943, p.71.
These rational criteria obviously did not sit comfortably with a social theory of truth. Of course, many pragmatists did not pretend that the test of experience was objective. It was argued that, given that the process of verification was set in train by personal interest or desire and was directed towards such ends, and furthermore that the given had always to be interpreted, the idea of impartial knowledge was excluded. (Anderson 1940b:85, Wright 1924:608, Merrington 1939:102) As we have seen, it had been argued that these factors were also now accepted by modern science - as if testing whether a certain social policy was able to work was no less methodologically uncertain than testing a scientific hypothesis in the laboratory. Nevertheless, there remained a great deal of difference between inter-subjectivity amongst scientists and social agreement. In the case of the former there is already agreement about what sort of rules should determine what constitutes verification or truth; there is usually no such agreement about rules of inference in the social arena.

Alternatively the pragmatic social scientist could claim that his methods were impartial and scientific in the more traditional sense of that term. And that therefore he could establish what the real needs of society were as a result of his experiments. But then, one would assume, pragmatists had ceased to be instrumentalists and had become rationalists. Indeed, as W.H. Sheldon observed, while social agreement and "proved verity" are not the same things, there always remained the tendency for the "former to usurp the prerogatives of the latter." Sheldon
1930:243) This is precisely why the instrumentalists among the social theorist came to be called rationalists by the early 1940s, as we shall see in chapters six and seven.

The problems with the instrumental theory when defined in social terms become obvious if we examine some comments of Schiller's. Admittedly, Schiller's pragmatism was not of the same kind as Dewey's, in the sense that he did not seek to place his philosophy on an objective footing. This is evident his objection to Bertrand Russell's concern, which I mentioned in the last chapter, about the apparent anarchy in the realms of modern scientist. But Schiller wrote that the reason why Russell was so concerned was because he still had a commitment to what Schiller called the "old 'contemplative' ideal"; that is, Russell still believed that general laws could be found which governed the totality of facts. (Schiller 1929:246) For Schiller, the fact that "enlightened physicists" no longer believed in matter and viewed "order, unity, and continuity" as "human inventions", was no "reproach to science" but was "its glory"; such views, he added, had no effect on the usefulness of science. (Schiller 1929:246) For if the point of scientific knowledge were power, he wrote, and "science as the pursuit of power becomes increasingly triumphant", then to talk of the "collapse of science" was neither justified nor relevant. Indeed, Schiller added, it was only an "obsolete sense of 'truth'" that prevented the metaphysically minded scientists and philosophers from
accepting the findings of modern science. (Schiller 1929:247) (1)

Of course, Schiller went further than many positivists and pragmatists in redefining scientific knowledge in relation to the pursuit of social power. That is, he argued that insofar as modern science adopted an instrumentalist approach and was aimed at the increasing man's power over nature, there was no good reason for excluding "wishes and endeavours" from scientific activity. (Schiller 1929:246f) One would suspect that a more aesthetically reserved positivist would have baulked at this suggestion that scientific activity should be directed by such maxims. Because firstly, admitting such things as "wishes and endeavours" into the domain of empirical science potentially blurred the boundaries between it and philosophy, opening the way for the resurrection of the very metaphysics which Schiller decried as "meaningless" and "pseudo-science." (Schiller 1929:247) Secondly, we can see how Schiller's views might have posed a problem for social scientists who sought to avoid speaking the language of values. This was precisely because many social scientists (as we saw in chapter two) identified social progress with an expansion of the disinterested scientific attitude, in contrast with the social disintegration brought about by egoism and the selfish pursuit of power.

1. Schiller made these remarks in reviewing a book called Whither Mankind, Charles Beard, (ed.), 1928 which included an essay by Russell on the direction which modern science was taking and in which he made remarks about the positivistic rejection of the belief in causality.
6. The Metaphysics of Nature

As suggested earlier, Dewey wanted pragmatism to be immune from the charge of nominalism and subjectivism. These charges were made because pragmatist philosophy appeared to centre meaning around human desires. It was within this context, that Dewey attempted to give pragmatism an objective status by inserting these private urges within the context of nature. Dewey then gave a naturalistic account of human behaviour, much as the scientist might give of other aspects of nature. Dewey thought an account of human behaviour should not be mechanistic. According to his naturalistic interpretation of man there were certain conditions within this framework which allowed for the realization of human freedom.

Both Dewey and Hook viewed man, following Bergson, as Homo Faber. Hook wrote that the description of man as a tool-making animal included his "activities" as a "sign-making animal"; an "instrument-using animal" and a "'brainy' animal". (Hook 1927:7 Dewey 1930:71) It was this tool-making capacity which helped man free himself from the bondage of nature, and also provided the explanation for industrial civilisation.

In relation to the issue of freedom, we should note here that this biological account of human development assumed that the external environment was relatively malleable so that it was open to human manipulation and control. (Dewey 1957:84) In this context, Reiser described nature as having a "semi-determinate
texture", something which suggested that while there were obviously limits as to what one could will into being, there was nevertheless room for human creativity and choice. (Reiser 1926:252) (1) Hook accounted for this conjunction of human freedom alongside an objective reality by arguing that a "metaphysics of nature" implied that human beings "freely" manufactured tools in order to achieve their goals, but that these tools were dependent upon the "character" of the tool-maker and also on his "working material" and his "environment." (Hook 1927:143) Thus, Hook endowed his instrumental theory of knowledge with both objective and voluntaristic elements.

When pragmatism was construed in this way it was seen as breaking down the oppositions between idealism and realism; subjectivism and objectivism and determinism and indeterminism. (Wright 1924:608 Morris 1928:505) It did this, R.W. Sellars wrote (in an article entitled "Epistemological Dualism vs Metaphysical Dualism" in The Philosophical Review), because it assumed that the "bearer of experience" was "in and of" the world rather than being "antithetical" to it. (Sellars 1921:483) Pragmatism demonstrated that mental activity was part of the objective environment to the extent that knowing is not merely a reproduction or translation of reality; it was a form of cognitive doing which transformed the external environment as it proceeded. It is for this reason, William Kelly Wright wrote in a

1. See also Whitehead in Process and Reality for similar observations. (Whitehead 1978:211)
review of Emmanuel Lerroux's *Le Pragmatisme américain et anglais*, that the pragmatic understanding of knowledge did not favour "determinism" but rather it demonstrated the "efficacy" of human action. (Wright 1924:611:607) (1)

But opinions varied as to whether and to what degree pragmatism in this phase of its instrumentalism fulfilled realist criteria. As Charles Morris suggested, while it could be argued that pragmatism expressed a clear anti-realism, it could also be argued that pragmatism affirmed the existence of an objective reality. (Morris 1934:551, Schilpp 1930:311, Reiser 1926:237) (1)

Similarly, opinions differed as to how much pragmatism afforded human beings freedom to act. Rudolf Eucken wrote that while pragmatists claimed to free men from their subjection to past metaphysical and theological dogmas, they had in "orienting meaning around behavior" drawn the "net tighter around human scene"; this was because judging human conduct only in terms of biological utility and economic success was a denial of any higher purpose. (Eucken 1924:4) On the other hand, Hook concluded his *Metaphysics of Pragmatism* by stating that the universe was "open...spiced with chance and alive with possibilities, a life of human freedom is not only an organized enterprise, it is a spirited adventure as well." (Hook 1927:144)

1. In this context, note the claim of the American philosopher (and former student of Dewey's), Charles Morris that James had appealed to a third category called "pure experience", which allowed for the existence of "permanently existing objects" and which insisted that radical empiricism "can include 'any element of empirical reality' independent of any particular experiment." (Morris 1934:551n)
But as Eucken's comment suggested, pragmatist methods when applied to social planning could be seen as militating against any semblance of spirited adventure.

Other confusions arose over whether and to what degree this later pragmatism understood reality in terms of stability or process. That is, even where it was accepted that pragmatism had metaphysical implications, it was not always clear what sort of metaphysics was being referred to. As we have seen, some pragmatists had embraced those scientific theories whether in the realms of biology or physics which were seen as asserting the importance of process. In this context, Walter S. Gamertsfelder wrote that pragmatism had "very definite metaphysical implications", having embraced a "conception of reality in terms of the current physical theory of events" (Gamertsfelder 1933:111)

But Charles Morris wrote in his introduction to George Herbert Mead's *Mind, Self and Society* that pragmatism had to move beyond the antithesis between being and becoming that had "proved fatal from Plato to Whitehead." (Mead 1934:xxviii) In terms that again echoed Hook, he wrote that modern empiricism would fail if it eschewed any type of formalism and spoke only of reality in terms of pure transition. Modern empiricism then, had to incorporate the factors of universality and structure as well as the factors of temporality and emergence. (Mead 1934:xxx) Morris suggested that the pragmatist was capable of doing this. He wrote that whereas the philosophies of both being and becoming
were fanatical and uncompromising, pragmatism, which viewed the "mutual principles of being and becoming" in terms of the "more or less" rather than the "all or none," was a "counsel of sanity." (Mead 1934:xxx)

These reconciliations that the pragmatist was seen to enact between opposed categories may well underscore the claim that pragmatism was a philosophy of "compromise", of flexibility and toleration. But they also reinforce my earlier point that pragmatism as a philosophy was difficult to define. It seemed at times as if it could be all things to all men, something which accounted for both its widespread popularity and the notoriety that it achieved. Pragmatists were both radical empiricists and empirical realists; they both denied and embraced a metaphysics of nature; they were both voluntarists and determinists. Charles Morris, unwittingly perhaps, gave expression to this ambiguous character of pragmatism when he described it as an "enchanted half-way isle" between a metaphysical realism and a positivisic idealism; enchanted, because as an approach, it proved "to be neither one nor the other." (Morris 1934:564:556) (1)

7. Problems with Pragmatist Ethics

Despite the attempts to anchor the instrumentalist theory to such things as social agreement or verification, the charges of subjectivism or voluntarism came back to haunt it. The problem

1. Also note Carr's comment that Dewey was "poised between the materialism of an extended reality" and the "spiritualism of internal activity", and thus "haunted" by the "shadow of realism and the spectre of idealism." (Carr 1926:65)
with the instrumentalist theory of truth, according to its critics, was that far from eliminating the danger of scepticism it removed every epistemological objection to it. But pragmatism was criticised on moral as well as intellectual grounds. As pointed out earlier, it was seen as defining human wants solely in terms of a set of biological or economic impulses. In this sense it was seen as inimical to any notion of a spiritual or moral life. Furthermore this, in conjunction with the pragmatists interest in control of the future, was seen as a recipe for a programme of social engineering. We should note that both of these objections would be developed in relation to the perceived political implications of pragmatism.

In relation to these points pragmatism was lampooned in a number of different ways. Morris wrote that it was described as the "philosophy of the business man;'" and "'the reductio ad absurdum of empiricism'". With pragmatism, it was said, true philosophy had "vanished;" philosophy was now brought to the "brink of comedy, if not downright charlatanism." (Morris 1928:495) John Anderson caricatured Dewey as someone "hailed by all the Women's clubs as a prophet of Fordism, vocationalism and bureaucracy." (Anderson 1930:494)

Those philosophers sympathetic to pragmatism responded to these charges. Frank Thilly, William Kelly Wright and Paul Crissman all argued in defence of pragmatism. One of the central points that they made was that in pragmatist philosophy the words practical or utility included moral and spiritual values. (Wright
Furthermore, insofar as the pragmatist saw knowledge as a form of biological adaptation, this adaptation was both to the "social milieu, and to the realization of ideals." (Wright 1924:608)

Defenders of Dewey argued first of all that his naturalism was tempered by his sincere social idealism, his religious attitude and his optimism. (Thilly 1926:532, Crissman 1928:616)

Indeed, we should note that the idea of nature in Dewey's philosophy implied more than animals striving to fulfill their basic urges and doing battle with matter. Dewey had written years earlier that the idea of nature was also continuous with man's moral and intellectual life. In a 1911 article entitled "Maeterlinck's Philosophy of Life" in the The Hibbert Journal, Dewey wrote that both Emerson and Maeterlinck had realized that the idea of nature implied the principles of democracy, equality and toleration. (Dewey 1911:778) For nature, as the natural sciences had shown, was "uniform and equable in all its diversities". (Dewey 1911:778) Dewey raised this point in order to object to Nietzsche's "traditional ethics" of force and domination. (Dewey 1911:777)

Thus, there was no doubt an ethical impulse underlying pragmatist philosophy and its proposals for social reconstruction. There is also no doubt that Dewey saw in nature much more than an ethics of survival. However, as pragmatism developed and its experimentalist and instrumentalist aspects were emphasized, this moral component slipped into the background.
Indeed, it was argued that insofar as pragmatism meant experimentalism and instrumentalism, it was incompatible with the pursuit of ideals. It was argued that its methods and modes of evaluation would vitiate or even subvert attempts to achieve ideal ends. This was precisely because pragmatism as experimentalism and instrumentalism regarded ideals, ethical principles or moral laws as adaptable — as things with which were open to experimentation. The pragmatist also regarded ethical norms as instruments or tools which were appropriate to particular situations. (Crissman 1928:597) Critics of pragmatism argued that experimental or instrumental ethics were not true ethics. This is because statements of moral principle are by nature complete rather than open-ended; they are general rather than particular. They are not things that can be judged on whether they succeed or fail in particular situations. (Anschutz 1924:182) Therefore, the pragmatic approach would undermine its own ethical principles to the extent that it led to the view that these could be adapted in accordance with the needs of the hour or regarded as useful rather than true. The argument was that the pragmatic method denies or subverts the pragmatist pursuit of ideal ends. We shall see, in chapter six, that this argument was put much more strongly in relation to the influence of pragmatist philosophy on politics. (1)

8. The Pragmatic Conception of Civilization

I suggested earlier that the pragmatists and Bergson were at one in the sense that they agreed that the intellect was an instrument of action. However, there was an important difference. For Bergson, while certainly regarding the human intellect as an efficacious thing, did not always regard it as a means of achieving freedom. For him, the intuition of the life-force was the real means to achieve freedom. Indeed, Bergson regarded his civilization's preoccupation with science, industry and material goods as inimical to human creativity. Pragmatists on the other hand, were fascinated with industrial civilisation and with the power that man had been able to gain over nature. While they agreed that science and industry had been used to serve unjust causes, their hope was that the power of science and industry could be used for human ends. Thus, Hook wrote that: "Although instruments have often been the means of man's enslavement, construed as they appear in their social setting they breathe a promise that they will make him free." (Hook 1927:61) Hook's point applied to economic instrumentalities or institutions as much as it did to machines.

We should recall at this point the groundswell of hostility to technology and science that had emerged after the First World War and which continued into the 1930s. (Irvine 1933:287) Hook, Dewey and Schiller were concerned to counter those who would dismiss science and technology as evil. Thus, one of the aims of the pragmatists was to restore the reputation of science and
technology. In order to do this they argued that scientific instruments and machinery (like words and moral laws) should be regarded as tools or instruments. If they were regarded in this light, then the problem of reconciling oneself to modern civilization would disappear. Indeed, Schiller argued that "a humanism which flees from science as an enemy denies [man] the means by which a liberal humanism might become a reality." (Schiller 1932a:132)

Dewey put a similar case. It was a case which resembled Bergson's account of creative evolution as well as his argument that it was by pushing himself (by means of intuition) back inside the life-force that man obtained a greater power to act. Dewey also noted how it was necessity which compelled men to "invent art" and to "turn the powers of nature to account;" that is, he wrote of how man had built a "fortress out of the very conditions and forces" that threatened him. (Dewey 1930:3) It was from the safety of this fortress he was able to transform the wilderness by damming rivers, building bridges and erecting electricity lines. (Dewey 1930:85) But he added, such scenes of transformation became so familiar to men's eyes that they began to overlook "their meaning" and forget "that the inherent power of life is illustrated in them." (Dewey 1930:85)

One of the ironies of human history for the pragmatists was that man who had dreamt of conquering nature, had come to adopt a submissive posture in front of the very intellectual and physical machinery he had devised with this end in mind. Dewey argued that once these machines are seen as works of the creative
imagination, then the disjunction between mechanism and life can be overcome. Thus, the pragmatists with their humanistic instrumentalism were attempting to resolve that dichotomy which Bergson had largely failed to resolve because of the emphasis he placed on intuition rather than on intellect and science.

But Dewey, like Bergson, was calling for a shift in the way in which reality was conceptualised. That is, he argued that if nature were seen as "relatively malleable and plastic", then it would become available to be used for social or ideal ends. (Dewey 1957:70) This leads us back to a point that I made earlier. For Dewey, the question of how to bridge the gap between science and morality and between the ideal and the real was the "deepest problem of modern life." (Dewey 1930:255) Thus, in attempting to make philosophy more scientific Dewey was attempting to bridge all the other gaps which he saw as existing in civilisation. P.F. Irvine wrote that Dewey hoped that with the continuing revelation of the "interdependence of all knowledge" (that is, the unity of all the sciences), people would also begin to feel the "interdependence of all men." (Irvine 1933:433)

Whether Dewey was successful in his attempt to fill the breaches he thought existed in civilisation remained a matter of dispute. For while some found in pragmatist philosophy the weapons with which to tear down stale orthodoxies and to argue for a more practical attitude to be taken to the running of social affairs, others would continue to insist, as Schinz had,
that pragmatism gave a philosophical blessing to opportunism. The 1920s and 1930s witnessed continued debates about the meaning and significance of pragmatist philosophy. In particular, the issue and influence of pragmatism became a matter of controversy in relation to politics. It also excited interest in the areas of jurisprudence and economics. It is the impact of pragmatism on these areas of thought that I shall examine in the next three chapters.
Chapter 5: The Politics of Pluralism

1. The Background to Pluralism

In the last two chapters I examined the philosophical notions that were said to be implied or given justification by the new physics. In particular, I focussed on the cosmological and epistemological meanings that were attributed to the ideas of modern physicists.

I showed that scientific and philosophical exchanges in the 1920s were partly a deliberate process and partly a result of accident. There were certainly considered attempts to transfer new scientific ideas to the philosophical realm, yet it is also evident that the linguistic identity of scientific and philosophical terms, like relativity, uncertainty and indeterminacy (as well as some of the conceptual resemblances between physical and philosophical theories), gave credence to the assumption that physics and philosophy shared a core of metaphysical beliefs.

A related point has been made by Arthur Goldhammer in a recent translation of Gaston Bachelard's The New Scientific Spirit. Goldhammer writes that 1930s editions of the French philosophical journal La Revue de Metaphysique et de Morale include a number of articles by well-known scientists and mathematicians suggesting a degree of interaction between these scholars and philosophers on metaphysical issues. He argues that this interaction is evidence that scholars believed that the
gulf between science and metaphysics was "not unbreachable." (Bachelard 1984:xviii) Goldhammer writes that "Husserl's Crisis," which as I have mentioned involved a critique of science and the civilisation which gave rise to it, "had not yet come to France." (Bachelard 1984:xviii) (1)

Perhaps this was to some extent the case in France. As we have seen it was not the case in the English-speaking world after World War One. But even in France we find early glimmers of the more strident assault on science that was to come. Several years before the war Bergson had engaged in criticism of the scientific world view. Part of the success of his criticism derived from the fact that he confronted scientists on their own terrain, i.e. biology. (Perry 1918:349f) Another French intellectual Georges Sorel, appealed to the authority of that philosopher in his own 1911 anti-enlightenment tract The Illusions of Progress. (Sorel 1969:135f)

Neither Bergson's nor Sorel's critique of the idea of progress amounted to a declaration of a crisis in Western civilisation. Sorel later made such a claim in the concluding

1. This point can also be made in relation to French intellectual life during the Great War. A. Lalande, (of the Universite De Paris) in an article appearing in The Philosophical Review in 1916 and entitled "Philosophy in France in 1915," makes particular mention of an address given by Emile Boutroux (a close friend of William James and author of On the Contingency of the Laws of Nature published in 1874 [Perry 1935:560]) to the Congress of Mathematical Philosophy of Paris some months before the war but only published in 1915 in La Revue de Metaphysique et de Morale. He noted: "It is sad and touching to reread to-day the conclusions as to the value and the international duties of science - conclusions firm and true despite the crisis through which we are now passing." (Lalande 1916:525)
chapter to the 1920 edition of Illusions. But Bergson's philosophy was seen, notably by the Christian philosopher Berdyaev, as similar to science in threatening the fate of humankind. Berdyaev thought the moral nihilism that went under the banner of modernism (Freudian theory, Marxism, existentialism and positivism) provided the real clue to what would become Husserl's Crisis.

The question then becomes, how are we to reconcile the existence of these critiques of science with the evidence of intellectual exchange between philosophers and scientists? One answer would be that despite warnings of danger about the growing breach between science and philosophy, there was also a degree of optimism in the 1920s and 1930s about the possibility of reconciling the claims of philosophers, scientists and theologians.

One can then say that the exchanges which began to take place between philosophers and scientists signalled a kind of rapprochement between these fields of endeavour. These connections had begun to be established well before then in the work of Bergson and those who followed him [1]. Science suddenly looked less cold and impenetrable to those whom I have referred to as pragmatists and metaphysicians of process. Quite clearly, this new feeling of empathy with the scientific estate was only

1. For example, see Sorel's 1919 work De l'utilité du Pragmatisme, especially Chapter IV entitled "L'expérience dans la physique moderne" where he discussed among other things, indeterminism in quantum physics p.287ff. This book also included a critique of vitalist philosophy and Bergson's theory of creative evolution p.557ff.
to be found among certain philosophers. What Dewey, for example, found heartening about modern science (such as its apparent embrace of contingency), was what others saw as a potential threat to the quest for knowledge. (1)

The significance of this rapprochement was not purely intellectual, as references to great breaches or gulfs in civilisation and not just academic knowledge attest. (Curtis 1925:492, Merrian 1924:11) As I have shown, attempts to bridge the alleged gap between science and other realms of activity were partly spurred by the concern that this was one cause of social crisis. Implicit in this was the belief that intellectual activity does have a larger meaning and purpose.

One consequence of this was the claim that the purpose of true knowledge is to calm our restive souls. Another consequence, one which does not contradict the previous injunction, was that knowledge should be channelled into socially constructive directions. It was here too that the lessons of modern physics proved promising. For just as it could provide

1. Bertrand Russell, for instance, wrote in an essay which appeared in The Political Quarterly in 1935, how Humean scepticism led to the view that science "...should be relegated to the limbo of delusive hopes and irrational convictions." He added that while Hume's followers in the 18th and 19th centuries had not accepted his scepticism, the issues that Hume touched on had been revived in "...recent discussions of the philosophy appropriate to quantum physics..." (Robson 1971:143f) This was a view that Russell had expressed in a 1928 article in Whither Mankind: a Panorama of Modern Civilization (a book designed to combat social and intellectual pessimism), when he wrote that "...scepticism [as expressed by Eddington and Wittgenstein] is a canker at the heart of science, affecting, as yet, only a few leaders, but capable, in time, of paralyzing the activities of the whole army of scientific workers." (Beard 1928:65)
a means of reconciling humanity with the rest of the cosmos, at a more practical level modern physics seemed to endorse the pragmatic or experimental attitude towards other aspects of life.

To that extent, Dewey's purpose in texts such as *The Quest for Certainty* and *Reconstruction in Philosophy* was not to attack scientific enterprise as such but only a particular image of it. The same could be said of Bergson. (Carr 1919:vii) Indeed, one of Dewey's intentions was to shore up the reputation of science because it was so heavily under attack. (1) Dewey was principally concerned to overthrow approaches to philosophy, economics and politics which, in aping what he described in a polemical piece in the *New Republic* as a Victorian understanding of science, had become characterised by dogma and rigidity. (Dewey 1921:315ff) Far from decrying scientific enterprise, Dewey wanted to see philosophers and others adopt the modern scientist's pragmatic or instrumental approach. This he thought could help reconstruct philosophy and help rebuild civilization.

This intertwining of the destinies of philosophy and civilization is easily explained. Herbert W. Schneider wrote in his contribution to *A History of Political Theories: Recent Times*, a series of 1924 essays by philosophers and political

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1. This was something which Dewey pursued with renewed vigour in the 1957 edition of *Reconstruction in Philosophy* because he felt that since the first edition appeared the reputation of science had diminished even further, particularly amongst the younger generation.
scientists in tribute to the late William Dunning (1) that there was a great sense of disappointment in philosophy among both scientists and men of affairs, because it could not provide answers to the questions asked by a deeply troubled world. (Merriam 1924:332) On the evidence presented so far, philosophers obviously felt under great pressure in the 1920s and 1930s to answer the charge of social irrelevance.

This leads us to another point. We have noted that there was a certain awe surrounding words like "new" or "scientific" at that time. (Pollett 1919:13, Merriam 1924:13) Similarly, the word "social" gained prestige in academic circles and became attached to all sorts of theories. (Cohen 1919:678) Morris Cohen, of the College of the City of New York, wrote how some philosophers saw it as absolutely necessary to substitute social philosophy for what they dismissed as "epistemologic chess." (Cohen 1919:690)

The pragmatic turn in the 1920s and 1930s and the interest in the new science on the part of philosophers was thus a consequence of pressures flowing from both social and intellectual disarray - both real and perceived. In addition to this, it was a consequence of claims put forward by social scientists (and those speaking on behalf of natural sciences) to be the sole

1. Dunning was Lieber Professor of History and Political Philosophy in Columbia University and was the author of a three volume History of Political Theories; the first, second and third volumes were published in 1902, 1905 and 1920 respectively. (Dunning 1920:v)
2. Cohen himself was critical of this retreat from intellectual impartiality and moves towards what he described as "journalism" or "propaganda"; he suggested that impartiality was the best service the philosopher could offer society. (Cohen 1919:673f)
providers of relevant social understanding. It is for these reasons that debates within philosophical circles were easily transmuted into debates about political or social philosophy and policy. More specifically, arguments about pragmatic approaches to philosophy and science expanded into arguments about the pragmatic approach to politics; pragmatism was seen by some as the bridge between philosophy and life.

The influence of pragmatism on political thought was a matter of debate by 1925. Professor Charles Merriam in the first essay in A History of Political Theories argued that while pragmatism, along with the philosophy of Bergson, had swept through the philosophical world its influence on politics had so far been very limited. (Merriam 1924:14) Earlier, the American scholar Rodney L. Mott, writing in the Political Science Quarterly on syndicalist political theory, had said that pragmatic methods, anti-monism and scepticism were slow in coming to political science. (Mott 1922:25) (1) However, reviewing A History of Political Theories Matoon M. Curtis wrote that pragmatism had gained widespread currency in modern political theory. (Curtis 1925:492)

1. Mott contrasted the late emergence of pluralism and scepticism in political science with developments in biology, where criticism of monistic thought could be seen in the attacks on natural selection by supporters of the mutation hypothesis; in economics where he cited the attacks by the Austrian Subjective school on classical political economy as being “distinctly pluralistic” and finally, in religion, where he cited the rise in agnosticism and the increasing interest of religious persons in social and economic affairs. (Mott 1922:25) See also Barker, 1915, p.248 for similar comments.
I would argue that pragmatist philosophy, complemented by the approaches and images generated by the new physics, played an increasingly significant role in debates about politics and society from the mid-1920s until the late 1930s. Pragmatism was always potentially a political or social philosophy. Many have noted the democratic zeal and confidence in industrial progress which underpins this philosophy and to which it gives expression.

(1) Pragmatism, in its humanism, provided a direct route from metaphysical or epistemological speculation to social policy. (Although some would say that in its more positivistic moments pragmatism gives way to a naturalistic anti-humanism.) But the impact of pragmatism on political thought was not only evident in the conscious adoption of pragmatist dialects by political thinkers and actors. It was also evident in the attacks made upon pragmatism's influence.

On this last point, we should recall the concerns of some writers in relation to the sceptical character of many modern philosophies and to the materialistic nature of modern society. From what we have said previously about pragmatist philosophy, it should be clear why pragmatism was also seen to have a philosophically and socially unsettling influence. This applies whether pragmatism was understood in terms of the instrumentalist theory of knowledge (something which could be used for management

of the social and physical environment), or in terms of a pure philosophy of the will.

We must remember that the philosophy of pragmatism is marked by a high level of generality. Contributors to what Curtis called the "pragmatic drift" in philosophy since the 19th century had a mixed set of allegiances. (Curtis 1925:492) Bacon, Hume, Schopenhauer, James, Bergson, Dewey and Schiller have all been included in the pragmatic tradition of thought. Indeed, James' philosophy can itself be seen as the moderately tempered heir of British empiricism as well as the more wilful child of romantic philosophical doctrines.

This duality was reflected in what were seen as pragmatism's political manifestations. These ranged from notions of direct action to an emphasis on a positivist approach to social planning, which could take on a dictatorial air. This explains why pragmatism was seen as lending support to collectivist or corporatist forms of social organisation as well as to those who argued in favour of the autonomy of groups within society.

However, while this particular simplification is useful for the moment, it will become clear in the next chapter that the alleged opposition between fascist or communist forms of political organisation (these being examples of dictatorial political systems) and a radical pluralist politics (as with the alleged conceptual opposition between positivism and intuitionism), disguises what some saw as their common core.

I will concentrate most of my examination of the alleged
internal relation between radical pluralism and authoritarian forms of government and their relation to pragmatism in the next chapter. This is because I think it is important to first examine the historical and intellectual climate in which pluralist politics (also referred to as anti-statism or as the anti-rationalist movement in politics) arose, before one can examine its relation with the philosophy of pragmatism. (1)

The important thing to remember at this stage is that pragmatism, in its opposition to all monistic philosophical systems and in its promotion of a pluralistic cosmology, gave philosophical weight to arguments in favour of pluralistic political arrangements. In addition to this, the pragmatic instrumental theory of truth was embraced by Georges Sorel who was, at various times, closely associated with the syndicalist movement. This movement achieved great notoriety both before and after the First World War. Most importantly for this argument, it was frequently viewed as only a more extreme expression of political pluralism.

1. Bernard Bosanquet, a "monistic" thinker strongly criticised by pluralists and pragmatists, wrote in the introduction to the second edition of his Philosophical Theory of the State (1910) how a great movement, that is, the one for social progress, had found itself (especially in Europe), supported by those who expressed "a distrust of the highly intellectual consciousness. We have had it from Schopenhauer, imported from the east, in John Henry Newman, and in Mr. Kidd, no less than in Professor William James and M. Bergson." (Bosanquet 1965:x1)
2. Philosophies of Group Life

The pluralist political theory which took shape after the Great War was generated by a confluence of intellectual and social forces - not all of which originated at the same time. In addition to the influence of modern physics and pragmatist philosophy, pluralism's intellectual influences included the sociology of law movement; psychological theories which depicted the state as a representative of the herd instinct or "crowd" mind or which denied the rational basis of the social contract and most importantly, arguments in favour of the "real" personality of associations. (Follett 1919:9) (1)

These intellectual influences coincided with, and were fed by, a series of social developments in the early part of this century. Developments such as the growth of voluntary associations (professional associations, the feminist or suffragette movement and ecclesiastical groups) and their spread across state borders; the related pursuit by economic and industrial groups of legal recognition and protection as well as a share in political power; the breakdown of empires; and finally, the tremendous loss of life during the Great War which did so much to inspire hostility towards governments and the idea of the state and the metaphysical theories which supported it. (Follett 1918:9 Merriam 1924:4ff) L.T. Hobhouse wrote in his

Metaphysical Theory of the State, which was an argument against the philosophies of the neo-Hegelian idealists that "when the state is set up as an entity superior and indifferent to component individuals it becomes a false god, and its worship the abomination of desolation, as seen at Ypres or on the Somme." (Hobhouse 1918:136f)

On this last point, we should stress the tendency on the part of some critics of the idea of the state to conflate governments with the state, or rather their failure to distinguish governments from the state as sovereign will. (Ellis 1920:401f) This is a point which will become clearer as the discussion develops in this and the next chapter.

I have listed above some of the major features of the intellectual and social atmosphere which existed at the end of the First World War. They go some way to explaining the origins of anti-statist and anti-intellectual feeling. More generally, Baron S. A. Korff (of Georgetown University) wrote that pluralism was the outcome of a longer-term historical development; that being the expansion in the size and power of the state during the 19th century.

Korff wrote that the state, "in response to the demands of industrial civilisation, had become in the 19th century a creative and not just a commanding power. (Korff 1923:406) Governments had expanded into a range of areas and had established a number of new instrumentalities and functions. Most notably, in the postal, mines, railways, telegraph and shipping
sectors. (Korff 1923:406) It was against this background that concerns began to be aired about the growing omni-competence or all-inclusive nature of the state. (Laing 1921:6 Korff 1923:409) Such concerns became manifest in the revival of the idea of community interests and of the distinction between state and society. (Laing 1921:5, Barnes 1921:509)

Interest in the idea of community rights or interests was significantly aroused following the publication of *Political Theories of the Middle Age* (1900) which was the name for Frederic William Maitland's translation of a section of Otto Gierke's *Deutsches Genossenschaftsrecht* (1868). Gierke's text, George H. Sabine noted in his substantial introduction to Hugo Krabbe's *The Modern Idea of the State*, was an extensive study of the legal theory of corporations. (Krabbe 1930:x1)

Gierke was described by Cohen as the "patron saint" of pluralist theory. (Cohen 1919:613) Gierke argued that from the ancient to the medieval period the idea of society as a real corporate entity had persisted and was only lost with the break up of the medieval system. (Muirhead 1924:167) Post-medieval Europe witnessed the increasing fragmentation of the body politic into governor and governed and into state and individual—a development which received theoretical expression in the theory of sovereignty and also in individualistic-contractualistic beliefs. (1) (Gierke 1900:70f, McIlwain 1910:370f, Ellis 1920:395)

1. Gierke in fact argued that this division of the personality of the state was already evident in medieval theory. He wrote: "And above all, the Doctrine of the State which prevailed in Classical Antiquity identified the State, when considered as a Subject of Rights and Duties, with its visible Sovereign, and this antique
The two most highlighted aspects of Gierke's account were firstly, his challenge to the view that corporations were artificial persons and secondly, his denial of the related notion that corporations were creations of the sovereign power. In reference to the first aspect, Maitland wrote that Gierke had shown that corporations were not *persona fictae* as Sinibald Fieschi (Pope Innocent IV) had claimed. (Gierke 1900:xix Coker 1921:187) (2) Following Gierke, Maitland wrote that voluntary associations had real personalities - they were real or group persons in possession of real or group wills. (Gierke 1900:xx)

But the argument did not rest there. For challenging the fiction theory also lead one to challenge what was known as the concession theory of corporations. (Gierke 1900:xxx) Maitland

Doctrine was becoming the starting-point for theorists. And so it fell out that even in medieval theory we may already see that the single Personality of the State is torn asunder into two 'Subjects' corresponding respectively to the Ruler and the Assembly of the People. Between them there is a conflict as to which has the higher and completer right; but they are thought of as two distinct Subjects each with rights of a contractual kind valid against the other and with duties of a contractual kind owed to the other; and in their connexion consists the Body Politic." (Gierke 1900:70f)

2. K. C Hsiao however cited H. A. Smith in *The Law of Associations*, pp. 152-6, as arguing that Innocent IV did not hold the fiction theory. (Hsiao 1926:32n) See also John Austin, another target of pluralist theorists, who explained his view of associations as fictional persons as follows. He wrote in his *Lectures on Jurisprudence* Vol. II, Lect. XII that legal persons are "persons by a figment, and for the sake of brevity in discourse. All rights reside in, and all duties are incumbent upon, physical or natural persons. But by ascribing them to feigned persons, and to the physical persons who they in truth concern, we are frequently able to abridge our descriptions of them." (Austin 1861:13f) Cohen wrote that the idea of the real personality of associations was an extension of the idea of a folkspirit (volksgeist) which gained prominence after the French Revolution and was part of a romantic reaction against Enlightenment beliefs in the rights of man and law based upon
wrote that the concession theory, which like the fiction theory had been handed down by the canonists, held that the corporation "is, and must be the creature of the State. Into its nostrils the State must breathe the breath of a fictitious life, for otherwise it would be no animated body but individualistic dust." (Gierke 1900:xxx) That is, corporations existed solely at the discretion of the sovereign or legislature. (Gierke 1900:xxx) In short, as Laski put it in his important 1916 article in The Harvard Law Review entitled "The Personality of Associations", corporations existed "nowhere save in legal contemplation" and were dependent upon acts of parliament. (Laski 1916:410) But what Gierke's historical studies had shown, was that although associations certainly could be and were destroyed by the sovereign power, they were not in fact created by it; he showed that associations had an existence both prior to and independent of the state. (Gierke 1900:xxx) In summary, it was argued that groups or bodies within the state had a "real personality", were "spontaneous" in their origin and therefore, possessed "inherent rights". (Coker 1921:187 Barnes:1921:493)

In addition to Maitland, Gierke's ideas were introduced to English-speaking audiences by John Neville Figgis. (Cohen 1919:679) (1) In Churches in the Modern State (1913) Figgis

reason. He cited Friedrich Karl von Savigny who argued that the laws and the history of the community are a product of a national ghost. (Cohen 1919:679)

1. Figgis explained the development of the fiction theory thus: "With the large number of cathedral chapters and religious orders in the Church, it became very necessary to arrive at clear views on the matter, and Innocent IV, starting from the doctrine of the civil law as to the nature of sovereign power and the rights of
traced the attempts by churches and ecclesiastical groups to maintain their independence and their rights. He too argued that corporations were real and vital psychic personalities, something which he said was reflected in current legal and judicial developments. (Ellis 1920:393f) Figgis wrote:

The courts and sometimes even the laws are being driven to treat corporate societies as though they were real and not fictitious persons, and to regard such personality as the natural consequence of permanent association not a mere mark to be imposed or withheld by the sovereign power. (Figgis 1989:111)

One example of the phenomenon to which Figgis alluded was the judgement delivered by the House of Lords in the Tull Vale Case in 1901, which overturned what had been the accepted case since the enfranchisement of trade unions of 1870s. That is, the belief that unions could not be sued for any action taken by their members. Trade unions were protected from the law of conspiracy because a 1875 act denied them the status of corporations. (1)

individuals, came quite definitely to the view that it was necessary to call such bodies persons; but that their personality was purely fictitious, nomen juris." (Figgis 1989:114) In acknowledging the importance of Gierke's study Figgis wrote: "I cannot overestimate my debt to that great monument, both of erudition and profound thought, the Das Deutsche Genossenschaftsrecht of Dr Otto Gierke..." (Figgis 1989:111)

1. There were are two acts in the 1870s which are of significance to the Taff Vale decision. Thompson writes that the Taff Vale decision caused a great deal of hostility among the trade union movement as it reversed what had been the common assumption since the Trade Union Act of 1871 which provided protection for trade union funds and also enhanced the legal position of unions. (Thompson 1950:197) Ernest Davies writes in American Labour that the 1901 decision also went against the 1875 Employers' and Workmen's Act. This act he wrote"...put the British trade unions in a privileged position...Under this Act, breach of contract through strikes became an actionable wrong, but not a crime, unless it could be proved that strikes endangered public health and safety...More important was the provision that nothing done in furtherance of a trade dispute could be punishable as a conspiracy unless if done by a single individual it would have
What the decision in the Taff Vale Case stated was that while trade unions were not legal persons they did in fact act as such and therefore they should be treated as such in cases relating to damages incurred as a result of the actions of their members. The fact that this decision in a sense weakened the power of trade unions (a point which has concerned some historians [See Thompson 1950:197]), was not relevant to Figgis; what was important was that the decision bore "witness" to the fact that corporate personalities were real and that they were living and growing entities. (Figgis 1989:114) (1)

It is important to note that while Figgis rejected the argument that the state and the individual were the only political or legal entities, he was aware of the practical dangers posed to society by too great a weakening of central authority. Because of this, Figgis' picture of society was one of an "ascending hierarchy" (a pattern which included families, schools, counties, unions and churches), rather than a horizontal proliferation of groups. Ultimate loyalty, he wrote, had to be given to that "great `society of societies' which we call the
state”; the state he said, must have the power to regulate the
groups. (Coker 1921:188)

To repeat, there was a recognition of certain social
necessities involved in this formulation. Figgis, for instance,
insisted on loyalty to the society of societies in order to
restrain groups and individuals from inflicting hurt upon each
other. (1) (Coker 1921:188) This theme was also put forward by
Ernest Barker and Harold Laski in their discussions of guild
socialism.

But as Figgis' analysis implied, there is an ethical
component to this as well. One which suggests that there is some
sort of substance which binds us together either as groups or
individuals. Barker gave expression to this when he wrote that
the state would remain more than the sum of the guilds because it
was a communitas communitatum. He wrote that the state "will not
be a mere bracket or hyphen, but a real entity in itself."
(Barker 1928:201)

1. Figgis wrote: "To prevent injustice between them [the groups]
and to secure their rights, a strong power above them is needed.
It is largely to regulate such groups and to ensure that they do
not outstep the bounds of justice that the coercive force of the
state exists." (Figgis 1989:125) Barker, in discussing guild
socialism, wrote in his English Political Thought that central
authority was necessary to prevent quarrels emerging both between
the guilds and between the guilds and the political power.
(Barker 1928:201) Laski made similar comments in The Grammar of
Politics where he said in reference to guild socialism that,
while occupational groupings should have a high degree of
autonomy, "the safeguard must always exist that the producers do
not seek to exploit the community for their own interest."
(Laski 1948:444) In some respects, this marked a significant departure
from Laski's earlier pluralist theory.
Rather than a discontinuous array of groups, pluralists often counterposed society or community to the political power. To this extent they were still allowing for some element of holism—albeit one that need only be bound up with the idea of society rather than that of the state. It should be pointed out that neither Gierke nor Maitland denied the necessity of a unified state.

We should also note that the words community and society may not, in many cases, have been able to capture the ideas which some pluralists liked to express. For instance, it was common at that time when discussing political and social theory to point to the growing complexity and differentiation of industrial society. (Merriam 1924:2, Sabine 1923:42, Korff 1923:406) In this context, William M. Urban (of Trinity College) expressed concern that the idea of community had become curiously "difficult" and "unsatisfactory"; society had dissolved into, among other things, labour unions, conventions and boards of conciliation. (1) (Urban 1919:547)

What was the significance of this linking of the phenomenon of pluralism with some of the effects of industrial society? One notable feature was a shift away from arguments for pluralism framed in terms of inherent rights of associations towards arguments framed in terms of the inappropriateness of monistic theory to societies which were fragmenting in all sorts of ways.

George H. Sabine, a historically-minded analyst of contemporary political theory, argued that whereas political monism could adequately characterise a period in which simplicity in the form of legislative control was both possible and indeed desirable, so great now were the demands placed upon government that a new political theory was required. Such a theory would have to provide for more flexibility and loose-endedness than older theories had because of this changed political and social landscape. (Sabine 1923:39, Ellis 1920:407) In this case, whether to choose between pluralism or monism rested on the issue of suitability rather than on the abstract question of rights.

It was in becoming more explicitly empirical in its thrust that pluralist theory began to make contact with pragmatism. Once they came into contact with pragmatism or with empirical approaches closely related to it, the pluralists adopted a more particularistic stance. The pluralists moved beyond arguments hinging on what was historically necessary or appropriate, to arguments hinging on the actual nature - pluralistic or monistic - of reality. This move was not made by Sabine, but by Harold Laski.

Laski was described as the most outspoken advocate of pluralism. (Ellis 1920:393) He did most to forge the association between pluralist theory and pragmatist philosophy. Originally however, he came to pluralism as a result of his intellectual training at the University of Oxford where he reacted against the neo-Hegelian branch of Oxford idealism (its theory of the Real Will being seen as providing, as Sabine put
it, "an ethical foundation for legal coercion." [Sabine 1923:647]). At Oxford Laski came under the influence of Ernest Barker, A.D Lindsay and Professor Dicey. Above all though, he was described as a disciple of Maitland. (Beloff 1950:381)

As Max Beloff noted, Laski was led to the issue of voluntary associations through his study of church history and this was what was behind his earliest book Studies in the Problem of Sovereignty (1917). (I would add that in this text examples from church history are being used to make what are essentially political points. [1]) However, in Authority in the Modern State (1919) he signalled that his earlier interest in religious associations was already shifting towards the claims of secular groups - in particular economic groups. (Beloff 1950:381) (2)

This transition was only natural. Laski wrote that it was no coincidence that Figgis (who as we have seen was concerned with the restoration of the church) was the first to recognise and pick up on the significance of the Taff Vale and Osborne cases - the latter being the case in which the House of Lords decided that trade unions could not use their funds to support non-industrial causes. (Laski 1919:573) It was this decision which threatened to jeopardise the development of the British Labour Party. (3)

2. Laski's interest in the politics of the labour movement and other secular groupings were also reflected in his political activities at Oxford where he was involved in both the Fabian society and the women's suffrage movement. See "Harold J. Laski" in Clifton Fadiman (ed.) I Believe: The Personal Philosophies of Certain Eminent Men and Women of Our Time, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1939, p. 164.
3. It was the hostile reaction to the decision in the Taff Vale
Laski is interesting for us because what he did was attempt to tie together the strands of thought he gathered from the writings of Maitland and Figgis with the philosophically robust pluralism of William James. His article on The Personality of Associations referred appreciatively to the ideas of Dicey, Maitland and Figgis as well as to James' philosophy. He noted in the concluding section of that article that James' work A Pluralistic Universe was of "vital significance for political theory". (Laski 1916:425n)

Yet combining James' radical empiricism (I do not say pragmatism for reasons which I will explain later) with pluralism made for a different sort of politics to the quite gentle protest raised against state power by Maitland and Figgis. Indeed, the mixture of these influences in the writings of Laski may help explain why it is not always clear whether his theory is normative or empirical in nature or whether it is federalistic or polyarchic in its political implications. These points are not unrelated to the question as to how accurate or detailed was his Case, as with the 'Osborne judgement' of 1904 which denied trade unions the right to spend their funds on political activities, that saw parliamentary legislation after 1906 establishing rights of association and giving unions protection from judgements such as Taff Vale. Political rights were restored in 1913. (Thompson 1950:197) But the unions were, in terms of pluralist theory, attempting to have it both ways. Barker wrote that the same principle that allowed unions to be sued in the Taff Vale case was also one that enfranchised them and disallowed judgements such of those of Lord Naisbury in the Osborne case which held that unions could "only exist through a charter of incorporation or within the limits of a statute." (Barker 1915:178) This was the same point that Laski made in 1916 when he wrote that while Taff Vale was a "vital advance" the Osborne case was a "reactionary step." (Laski 1916:422)
reading of James, or indeed, the question of whether the importation of this philosophy into Laski's pluralist theory helped impel him towards ambiguity in the area of political theory.

There is no doubt that Laski's political theories stemmed from deeply held convictions. The relation between freedom and authority in particular was of central import to him. (Hawkins 1950:392) He saw the struggle between these principles manifested not just in local struggles in England, the country of his birth, but also in such events as the massacre at Amritsar (the leaders of which were court-martialled by the British military authorities in India); the imprisonment of socialists in Germany by the German Imperial Chancellor Otto von Bismarck in the 1870s and the activities of lynch mobs in America. He was also aware of the fact that groups who were fighting for or had won their own liberty (the Irish group Sinn Fein was cited as an example) often denied their own consciences and overlooked their own excesses. (Laski 1930:6,252)

Clearly for Laski the struggle between freedom and authority had not been resolved by democratic revolutions. The power that kings had seized from popes and the people had seized from kings had resulted in a new sort of monism and new forms of oppression. It appeared that the bourgeois revolution of 1789 had transformed what had been a theocratic and then an imperial monism into a democratic one. (Hsiao 1927:4, Elliot 1922:639) Or as Laski put it, the divine right of kings had become the divine
right of state. (Duguit 1919:xvi) (1)

There were actually two arguments which were put to express this objection to a democratic form of monism. One argument was that the structure of government and the concentration of power in the hands of the political executive and its bureaucratic arm allowed elected representatives to escape the control of the community. Even where subjective rights had been constitutionally enshrined (such as they were in France with the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen), it was argued that these rights were soon subsumed or overcome by an "irresistible logic" of the political executive. (Elliot 1922:639) (2)

Another argument used to express concern about democratic monism derived from John Stuart Mill's warning in On Liberty: Representative Government about tyranny on the part of the majority. Laski was a great admirer of Mill and de Toqueville. (Beloff 1950:380) It is this second argument against majoritarian democracy which explains why pluralists like Laski were not satisfied with a deconcentration of executive power but in fact sought to dismantle it. What Beloff called Laski's "essential liberalism" was expressed in his belief that the voice of the people was not the voice of God. (Beloff 1950:380, Wilde 1920:358)

1. Article II of the French Constitution of 1798 declares the that sovereignty is "one and indivisible, inalienable and imperceptible."

2. Elliot wrote that in England a similar development (the subjective rights of individuals in the community being transformed into the subjective right of the state) had taken place after 1688. He wrote that "Benthamite theory took authoritative form in Austin with something of the same logical rigor, though British practice and British theory have ever been two different things altogether." (Elliot 1922:639)
Mass-democracy was not a sufficient condition for freedom and indeed could militate against it. In order to achieve true freedom, Laski wrote, sovereignty had to be "co-ordinate" or "partitioned"; it had to be parallel rather than hierarchical. (Laski 1919:539) Here, Laski has clearly broken with the pluralism of Maitland and Figgis.

The basis for other objections to democratic monism could be found in studies of social psychology. Works such as Wilfred Batten Lewis Trotter's *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War* (1919) and Stoddard's *The Revolt Against Civilization* (1922) are good examples. Stoddard's text in particular expressed an objection to majoritarian democracy dressed in psychological clothes. Stoddard called his own objections to mass democracy neo-aristocratic. (Stoddard 1922:221) (1) This is important for as I said earlier, hostility towards the state was in part due to the view of it as a representative of the crowd mind. (Follett 1918:87) Indeed, the takeover of the state by the crowd was seen as having as its consequence the Great War (and in some cases both the French and the Bolshevik revolutions) something which

1. What makes Stoddard's neo-aristocratic objection to democracy curious is that while he condemned mass democracy because it brings into the political sphere those who are, he thinks, genetically incapable of rational judgement, something which he said was an "unmitigated disaster" (Stoddard 1922:5) - such as those who adhered to the syndicalist movement in France or to Bolshevism in Russia - he also noted how fundamentally aristocratic the leaders of those movements were. He wrote that, while the masses were to be harnessed for their muscle in the course of revolutionary activity once the goal of revolution was achieved, the leaders of these movements, had no wish to listen to them. He cites the French syndicalist theoretician Hubert Lagardelle as saying: "The mass, unwieldy and clumsy as it is, must not here speak out its mind." (Stoddard 1922:172f)
added to the revulsion against the state and majority rule. (1) (Follett 1918:9)

While psychology was used to warn of the dangers of the crowd mind, it was also used to provide positive support to pluralistic theory. McDougall's *Group Mind* (1920) seemed to support the idea that voluntary associations possessed real personalities and that therefore they deserved legal recognition. In this case, the group mind is something that belongs to subsections of the community, rather than to the community as a whole. The crowd mind is thus a dangerous thing while the group mind is something less to be feared. McDougall's theory was ambiguous on this point. Some saw in his theory of the group mind justification for a form of social holism. However, McDougall himself cited Maitland and Barker and their support for the idea of group-persons as in sympathy with his own theory. (McDougall 1921:19) Indeed, he was careful to point out that his theory of the group mind should not be construed so as to lend support to the idealism of Georges Hegel or Bernard Bosanquet; it was this philosophy he said, which had proved so destructive in Germany in the period leading up to the war. (McDougall 1921:ix)

1. For a further discussion of this issue see Sir Martin Conway's *The Crowd in Peace and War*, Longmans, London, 1915, Ch. XVI "War: Its Cause and Cure" and Ch. XVIII "The Crowd at War". See also the discussion of the theories of group behaviour by Harry Elmer Barnes; Barnes noted that social psychologists "have demonstrated beyond question the fact that without the proper socio-psychological background and support, political sovereignty could not have even the most nebulous existence or any power whatever to compel obedience." (Barnes 1921:508)
Psychological theories were also used to deny the rational basis of the social contract. Again, a number of psychological theories were appealed to whether rightly or wrongly. These included McDougall's notion of the will to life, Freud's idea of the sex impulse or Jung's idea of the libido. We should note that students of politics were quick to adapt psychological theories. The most notable in this context was Graham Wallas in Human Nature in Politics where he cited James' Principles of Psychology. (Wallas 1908:25:189) Psychological theories could be used to argue against the belief that social organisation rests on informed consent because we are as human beings complexes of impulses. (1) The radical view which flowed from bringing the idea of a discrete self into doubt (due to a phenomenalism which emphasises the fluxational character of sense perception), might be that human beings are too variable or erratic in their behaviour to give effect to any lasting compact.

There were a number of problems with this appeal to the play of instinct and impulses in order to provide justification for a pluralistic society. If human beings are so fickle in their preferences, it is doubtful whether even voluntary associations could manage to exist. Furthermore, one could argue that it was hardly consistent to condemn the state as a representative of the

1. Bernard Bosanquet wrote in 1910 that in these psychological analyses "a great deal of the actual content of social - still more of supersocial - life, simply disappears. We are left with a foundation [in this case, instincts] which has not superstructure." Here, Bosanquet refers specifically to McDougall's Introduction to Social Psychology. (Bosanquet 1965:xliii)
crowd mind only to paint an image of society as a bubbling cauldron of unstable psychological impulses. (1)

The more moderate argument was that a greater emphasis must be placed on the role of voluntary organisations and that political arrangements must be made more flexible in order to accommodate multiple and shifting allegiances; we must construct a federal society that can fit our federal souls. Laski wrote that like it or not we are "bundles of hypens" - although he added that when loyalties clash we are forced to choose between them. (Laski 1916:425) Dewey argued that voluntary associations were in some ways superior to rigid organisations like the state because of their voluntary nature; this made them more supple, more open to adaptation and the accommodation of changing wills. (Dewey 1930:203) (2)

3. Radical Pluralism and Some of its Critics

In the 1920s protest against the state was largely couched in terms of the rights or reality of groups or associations rather than in liberal terms on behalf of the individual. Groups were described as the real units of social analysis and

1. See the debate between Walter Lippmann and Harold Laski on the significance of psychology for pluralism in the New Republic, May 31, pp.148-150.
2. Ernest Barker made a similar point some years earlier in his essay The Discredited State (1914) in which he argued that the "State is the organ of freedom: it is also a vehicle of force. Its sphere is automatism: it does external acts to produce external results. Other associations need consent the more as they use force the less; they must act more in the spiritual sphere, and seek to supply motive ideas in order to produce spiritual reactions." (Barker 1957:168) Barker was not however, suggesting that the state could not become something other or more than an instrument of force. This essay is not the anti-statist tract that its title would suggest. Indeed, Barker concludes that the "discredit of the State is a sign that it has done its work well..." (Barker 1957:170)
activity; it was the individual and the state, it became common
to hear, which were *personae fictae*. (Dewey 1957:204 Urban
1919:549)

Placing groups at the forefront of the resistance against
overweening state power often involved a rejection of the liberal
ideal of the utility maximising or contract-making self. One can
certainly see traces of 19th romantic ideas about the individual
in pluralist theory. (Elliot 1928:56) Here the word romantic is
intended to imply an emphasis on the role of individual will and
creativity. In the 20th century however, the group became the
repository of this creative will.

It was the supposed romantic or irrationalist side of
pluralism that caused the most concern because it was see as
giving rise to a voluntarist form of politics. These in
particular, were among the qualities which were seen as linking
it to pragmatism. To its earliest critics, it was mainly the
association of pluralism with the bitter class war-fare of the
syndicalists that saw it condemned. It is to some of these
criticisms which I shall now briefly turn.

Attention was drawn to the link between syndicalism and
"romantic" philosophical doctrines by a number of scholars and
public figures. J. H. Harley, in a small volume published by The
People's Books and entitled *Syndicalism*, associated the violence
of the French syndicalists with the "intuitionist" philosophy of
Bergson. (Harley 1912:56ff) Harley's view was repeated, among
others, by J. Ramsay Macdonald, the British Labour member of
parliament and future Prime Minister, in his book also called
*Syndicalism* (1912). (Macdonald 1912:18:22) In their remarks on
the relation between Bergson's thought and the syndicalist movement these texts appear to be greatly in sympathy with one another.

While Bergson was not always or even necessarily associated with pragmatism we should note the enthusiasm with which both Bergson and James embraced each others' work and the resemblance they felt existed between them. (1) Thus, it is not surprising that when Bergson was invoked in syndicalist literature or in writings critical of syndicalism, James was often mentioned as well. After 1921, when Sorel (the most famous of the movement's theoreticians and interpreters) published a volume entitled De l'utilité du Pragmatisme in which he spoke appreciatively of James' attack on "the servants of scientism", the link between

1. For example, James wrote: "O my Bergson, you are a magician, and your book [L' Evolution créatrice] is a marvel, a real wonder in the history of philosophy...." (Perry 1935:618) See Ralph Barton Perry The Thought and Character of William James, Vol II, 599ff and 618ff for a discussion of the relationship between Bergson and James as well as copies of letters exchanged between them. See also Lecture VI in James' A Pluralistic Universe, (1909) "Bergson and His Critique of Intellectualism". (James 1977:101ff) Richard Bernstein notes in his introduction to the 1977 edition of A Pluralistic Universe that while the "intellectual relationship between James and Bergson was intense and complex, both felt that what they discovered in each other was a confirmation of insights that each had reached independently." (James 1977:xxiii) Bosanquet however, claimed that James in A Pluralistic Universe, "practically adopts Bergson's phraseology and point of view." (Bosanquet 1965:xlin) Note also that it was as a result of his lectures in England, some of which form the basis of A Pluralistic Universe, that James ensured Bergson's popularity in England. (Gunn 1927:278) See also Gunn's comment that not too much should be made of the association between Bergson and James because of the mystical nature of the former's work as compared with James and his dislike for the notion of utility as a test of truth. Gunn also lists a number of texts which explore the relation between the two philosophers. (Gunn 1920:7:7n)
syndicalism and pragmatist philosophy was referred to explicitly. (Sorel 1928:1) By then, syndicalism was already in decline as a social movement. Nevertheless, attacks on it and pragmatism persisted well into the 1920s and 1930s. There were good reasons for the persistence of this criticism. Mainly, it was because, even when the political phenomenon of syndicalism subsided, the pragmatic spirit was held to be manifest in the authoritarian regimes of the 1920s and 1930s, in Italy and to a lesser extent Germany.

One of the severest critics of pragmatism and intuitionism was the Oxford educated and Harvard based scholar W.Y. Elliot who wrote a substantial work on what he called The Pragmatic Approach to Politics (1928). (Elliot must have been a near contemporary of Laski's at Oxford.) In this text he developed the criticisms of Bergson's philosophy and the syndicalists put forward by Harley and MacDonald into a wide-ranging critique of irrationalist philosophies and the politics that they generated. His particular focus was upon pragmatism.

Elliot's book, dedicated to his tutor at Oxford, A.D Lindsay who was also a publicist for the pluralist cause, was an extended version of articles he had published in journals such as the American Political Science Review, Economica and the Political Science Quarterly in the 1920s on the dangers of pragmatism and pluralism as applied to political life.

1. W. Y. Elliot claimed that Sorel made reference to pragmatism in the 1910 edition of the The Illusions of Progress treating it as the final phase of bourgeois thought. (Elliot 1924:236n) However, I have not been able to locate this particular reference to pragmatism in the text.
Harold Laski, one of Elliot's targets, described Elliot's book in a later edition of his *Grammar of Politics* as an "interesting attack" on pluralism and a "fairly complete guide" to the literature on pluralism and politics. (Laski 1948:249n)

Equally severe criticisms of pragmatism as an approach to politics were those made by the Chinese scholar K. C. Hsiao, a student of Frank Thilly's at the Sage School of Philosophy at Cornell University. Hsiao's *Political Pluralism* (1927) was a book of greater philosophical depth than Elliot's, but he concurred with the latter's beliefs that pragmatism and pluralism, especially when taken together, were inimical to an ordered and harmonious social life. (1)

One exception to this tide of critical opinion, albeit written some years earlier than Hsiao's and Elliot's books, was a work by H. P. Follett entitled *The New State: Group Organisation, the Solution of Popular Government* (1918). Follett warned of the dangers of some of the political approaches that went under the label of pluralism, but she also expressed support for an increased role for municipal organisations and neighbourhood groups. According to Morris Cohen, her book was well-received in philosophical circles as an example of the new trend towards social philosophy. (Cohen 1919:676) But this would be a limited description of the work. More importantly for us, Follett thought that the ideas of both Bergson and James ran counter to radical forms of pluralism. (This is a point that Hsiao also made in relation to James and it is one I discuss in

1. Both Elliot and Hsiao referred to each others' work in their respective texts. (Elliot 1928:x Hsiao 1927:13n)
the next chapter.) Follett's book greatly enthused Bosanquet, who described it as the "most sane and brilliant of recent works in political theory." (Bosanquet 1965:liv) (1)

As we have seen with Laski, it was the struggle of economic and industrial groups to obtain legal recognition that excited interest amongst some pluralists. But such recognition proved to be a double-edged sword. Barker hinted at the reasons for this in his paper The Discredited State (1914), where he made the observation that the legal recognition of groups as persons raised the whole problem of what it meant for associations to come out into the public eye. Maitland had written that the trust (a quintessentially English institution [Barker 1957:157, Laski 1916:418]) helped preserve religious freedoms. Further to this, it also allowed trade unions to gather and keep funds and go about their business all behind the protective shield of their trustees. Barker asked whether group life would be so well sheltered and tolerated if it were to be given legal recognition. Again, this would mean that groups would have to operate out in the open - under the full glare of the public light. (Barker 1957:157)

Thus, while freeing associations from arbitrary power, as Barker wisely observed and as Figgis and Laski noted in relation to the Taff Vale case, legal recognition also meant groups had to become responsible for their collective activities. (2) The

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1. William McDougall also considered Follett's text an important work in harmony with his own. (McDougall 1921:xii)
2. Laski cited Maitland as saying that the trust "has served to protect the unincorporated Genossenschaft against the attacks of the inadequate and individualistic theories. We should all agree that if an Anstalt or a Genossenschaft is to live and thrive it
need for legal recognition could not be avoided. Industrial groups required protection given the nature of claims made by them in relation to existing distributions of wealth and political power; they especially required protection given the sort of actions they would take in order to further those claims.

Adam Kirkaldy, then Professor of Finance at the University of Birmingham, in *Economics and Syndicalism* (1914) wrote that it was the intensity of the struggle between the industrial groups and the groups of owners that saw parliamentary interference in trade disputes in Britain. (Kirkaldy 1914:107) It was this action by the legislature (an action which was repeated, although to varying degrees, in other countries) in industrial disputes that helped engender violent opposition to "stateism"; under these circumstances discussions about the basis of political obligation were transformed into discussions of the principles of revolution. (Tufts 1919:595, Merriam 1924:42f) (1)

4. French Syndicalism: Sorel and Bergson

Not all groups were as antagonistic to the state as economic or industrial groups. But it was because of their very militancy that these groups received the most attention from those who were both drawn to and repelled by pluralist theory. It was the association of pluralism (as well as voluntaristic philosophies) with revolutionary political activity that saw it come to be regarded with deep suspicion. For some, pluralistic politics must be efficiently protected by law against external enemies." (Laski 1916:418)

1. James H. Tufts, a colleague of Dewey's at the University of Chicago, likened the dispute between labour groups and the state in the early part of 20th century to the great struggles between church and state in the Middle Ages. (Tufts 1919:589)
meant nothing less than a society divided down the middle consumed by class struggle.

While industrial unrest was characteristic of most Western countries prior to and after the First World War, Elliot claimed that anti-rationalist politics was at its most formidable in Europe. (Elliot 1928:viii) In particular, it was the activities of the syndicalists in France that caused the most antagonism. The French word syndicat meant trade union. But Kirkaldy wrote that it also came to denote the policy of the Confederation Generale du Travail, (the body which co-ordinated the activities of all the local industrial groups), which sought to "destroy the existing organisation of industry, and transfer industrial capital from its present owners to...the Revolutionary Trade Unions." (Kirkaldy 1914:101-2)

The French syndicates were legalised by Waldeck-Rousseau in 1884 and the Bourses du Travail were formed soon after; a law on Associations was passed in 1901. (Dimnet 1913:19, Fairchild 1919:345, Sorel 1950:198) Harley wrote that the men who founded the French trade unions were acutely aware of the time and trouble it took to gain these liberties from the political authorities. (Harley 1912:76, Dimnet 1913:19) Also important was the fact that state soldiers were used in France against workers' groups, notably in 1906 at Villeneuve-Saint-Georges, and this frequently resulted in bloody clashes. (Harley 1912:36) (1)

1. The syndicalists antimilitarism in fact predated these encounters. Barbara Mitchell argues that this posture was used to get the peasant's on side because the peasants had "abiding hatred of recruitment." She wrote that the syndicalists also hoped to encourage "working-class solidarity" within the lower
Harley and others believed these facts helped to explain why the unions developed a great deal of distrust in the law and the legislature as protectors of their "rights". (Harley 1912:76, Dimnet 1913:23)

But delays in achieving legal and political recognition were not peculiar to France. In America, for example, this was achieved much later. Peculiar to France were certain other conditions which saw syndicalism flourish there in a way it did not in places such as Britain and Australia. (Harley 1912:30, Mott 1922:26, Coker 1921:208) The Dreyfus affair was seen by Harley and Laski as focusing French attention on the dangers posed by a centralised state. (Harley 1912:76) Laski, in his introduction to his 1919 translation of Leon Duguit's *Law in the Modern State*, (1913), (Duguit was Professor of Jurisprudence at the University of Bordeaux) wrote that the revolt against étatisme coincided with the unfolding of the Dreyfus affair. (Duguit 1919:xi) (Dreyfus was a military officer accused of spying.) Ernest Dimnet wrote that it greatly weakened the patriotic sense of the French people. (Dimnet 1913:21)

Also of crucial importance in fueling working class hostility towards the French state was the persistence of severe economic inequality. (Lorwin 1957:31) Val R. Lorwin in an essay comparing the origins and development of French and American industrial groups argues that economic inequalities persisted in France due to its relative industrial backwardness. France had a...
stronger agricultural base than America or England - something which was hailed in France as a force for social stability. (Fairchild 1919:348, Lorwin 1957:28) French entrepreneurs had also proved more timid than their counterparts elsewhere; competition from outside and inside France was curtailed due to government protection and the operation of cartels. (Fairchild 1919:348, Lorwin 1957:28) 

It was because electoral politics had not brought benefits to the workers that democracy was dismissed as the "political expression of individualism"; on this view, democratic elections only secured the property interests of the bourgeoisie, therefore creating a new set of masters for the proletariat. (Fairchild 1919:348) This conclusion had been reached by Sorel who at that stage was, along with Hubert Lagardelle and Eduard Berth, publishing regularly in Le Mouvement Socialiste. (Dimnet 1913:24 Coker 1921:208) Sorel's view was that if the Fourth Estate wanted control of their destinies then they had to seize it themselves, and certainly not by the futile parliamentary route. (Harley 1912:72 Sorel 1950:88) Sorel rejected the gradualism and moralism of the orthodox socialist movement. (Sorel 1950:270-1n) Sorel described the Dreyfusist movement as a conspiracy of greed and ambition and socialism as a "belly philosophy". (Dimnet 1913:26, Sorel 1950:20f, 84, 194f)

1. Lorwin does however, add that French industry was more productive than most thought. He writes that: "The workers' leaders were echoing the self-denigration so articulate in the nation, and sometimes long after the criticism had been most deserved." (Lorwin 1957:29)
But there was another reason for Sorel's dismissal of a politics of compromise and gradualism. One which underscores the point that was often made about Sorel; that his fascination was with the act of revolution rather than its outcome. Sorel's view was that co-operation with parliament, or indeed parliamentary service itself, inevitably led to a corruption of the revolutionary spirit; war, he wrote, "...is not made under the direction of talking assemblies." (Sorel 1950:270) Furthermore, as he shrewdly recognised, physical comfort and fat purses usually lead to a reduction in the virile courage of a political movements' leadership. (Mott 1922:30, Sorel 1950:88:269)

Sorel's concerns about preserving the heroic spirit were not necessarily uppermost in the minds of the actual syndicalists in the workshops; for them, the withdrawal from the political process was a tactical rather than an aesthetic choice. Indeed, one of the major syndicalist tactics was the less than spectacular "grouping process"; the routine recruitment of new members was to continue until the industrial groups achieved numerical superiority. (Dimnet 1913:23) (1) Of more significance in terms of the syndicalist association with Sorel were its other policy instruments such as direct action, sabotage (in Britain it was called ca'canny) and guerilla warfare; some of these tactics were adopted during the French railway strike in 1910 and it was these which brought syndicalists much of their notoriety. (Sorel 1950:221, Dimnet 1913:24, Kirkaldy 1914:122, Mott 1922:34, Merriam 1924:220)

1. Ernest Dimnet wrote that there was no more repeated syndicalist phrase than: "Do the humble and humdrum syndicate work." (Dimnet 1913:23)
Because they adopted these methods syndicalists were often described as being opposed to politics. (Harley 1912:75, MacDonald 1913:5-15) From the literature I have examined, it is clear that what was meant by this term was parliamentary politics and that force and violence were not being included within its ambit. Politics on this account became an essentially rational activity counterposed to an irrational policy of direct action. This can be contrasted with the literature I have examined in relation to the rationalization movement and social planning in the 1920s and 1930s which certainly did include force and violence and more generally irrational impulses within the definition of politics. Thus, while Sorel rejected politics in the above sense, he was certainly reasserting, as Hsiao's analysis suggests, the primacy of force in social life. In this context, Sorel wrote of Nietzsche's advice that one must seek mastery, especially through the energy of the act, over social forces. (Sorel 1950:230ff) (1) As a related point, we should note how a number of writers called attention to the hypocrisy of the anti-military stand of the syndicalists when they themselves were advocating essentially military or rather, violent solutions in the conflict between labour and capital. (2) This particular issue will gain added significance when we later address the professed internationalism of the pluralist movement.

1. Perry noted that the relation between syndicalism and the ideas of Nietzsche was discussed by G. Guy-Grand, *La Philosophie Syndicaliste*, esp. Ch. IV. (Perry 1918:341)
Hsiao contrasted this syndicalist picture of society as a field of forces with the image painted by economic monists - be they market liberals or marxists. (Although syndicalists did accept Marx's analysis of the nature of capitalism). Both of these schools of thought held that society was at bottom an economic machine; one which could be arranged perfectly. In literally smashing machines and challenging the political and economic elites to show their muscle the syndicalists were attempting to expose the co-ercive basis of existing social and economic relations and of the state's claim to legal sovereignty. (Hsiao 1927:111ff)

But there were other more important intellectual influences associated with the syndicalist movement than Nietzsche, to whom there were few references. For example, the 19th century French anarchist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon was described by Laski as the "guiding genius of French labour." (Beloff 1950:381) Proudhon was inspirational not only in terms of his disgust with parliamentary politics but also in terms of his vision of a future society run by local groups of producers. (In relation to this last point, the Russian anarchist Peter Kropotkin should also be mentioned.) (1) Laski claimed that Proudhon realised, as

1. See for example, Proudhon's *General Idea of the Revolution in the 19th Century* (1851) and Peter Kropotkin's *Fields, Factories and Workshops Tomorrow*, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1974. (In the introduction to the 1974 edition Colin Ward tells us that Kropotkin's text, which was first published in 1888-90, was revised and enlarged for a new edition which appeared just before World War One. His ideas were very influential at that time, especially in England where he lived before his return to Russia after the revolution. [Kropotkin 1974:9-12]) Note however, that syndicalism was not really anarchist. Stoddard described it as mid-way between anarchism and state socialism as it proposed some form of federalistic arrangement. (Stoddard 1922:151)
Marx never did, that the cause of industrial strife was the desire on the part of worker to control their own destinies rather than in any strong sense of class exploitation. (Duguit 1919:xiv) (1) Indeed, collectivist answers to the class problem were doomed to failure (here the influence of Vilfredo Pareto and Roberto Michels was also important) as they only resulted in a new bureaucratic and eventually corrupt elite. (Sorel 1920:16)

So insofar as the syndicalists offered a vision of a better world it was the idea of a society dominated by small-holdings. But for Sorel, at least, this was not meant to convey the impression of a final or utopian state of affairs. In his opposition to rationalist utopias Sorel resisted providing any neat blue-prints for the future. (Harley 1912:63) This appears also to be true of Proudhon. Sorel thought Proudhon was sceptical about the idea of progress and cited him (in a 1920 appendix to the French edition of the Illusions of Progress) predicting in 1860 that the future would be a place of blood and slaughter. Sorel added that the situation in 1920 was even more serious; and that it could only be saved by what Proudhon had called a "'sweeping revolution'...in men's minds and hearts." (Sorel 1969:211) It is also important to point out that this resistance to theorising about the future once again reveals that tendency in syndicalist theory to focus on methods rather than final aims. (Fairchild 1919:348, Merriam 1924:219)

1. Laski wrote that Proudhon "...gave no quarter to the nationalisation which was the result of Marx's teaching. Rather did he insist that only by the destruction of the centralised bureaucracy created by the Revolution could freedom become effective." (Duguit 1919:xiv)
degree this was more true of the theoreticians rather than the activists is a matter of debate. Bertrand Russell, for example, suggested that this view of the syndicalists was partly the result of some myth-making on the part of those intellectuals who followed their activities. He wrote that:

Syndicalist aims are somewhat less definite than Syndicalist methods. The intellectuals who endeavour to interpret them— not always very faithfully—represent them as a party of movement and change, following a Bergsonian \textit{vital}, without needing any very clear prevision of the goal to which it is to take them. (Russell 1919:81)

However, it has been noted that syndicalist leaders such as Emile Pouget and Emile Pataud, contrary to Sorel's teachings, did talk (in their \textit{Comment Nous Ferons la Revolution}), of a "syndicalist millennium". (Harley 1912:209, Merriam 1924:218) But syndicalist activists, it has been argued, also differed from Sorel to the extent that they were much more pragmatic and flexible in their use of tactics than his writings would suggest. I have mentioned for instance the routine of the grouping process. We should also note that sabotage was introduced a means of attacking the wealth of capitalists without at the same time threatening life and limb. (van der Linden 1990:29) (Sorel himself did not approve of practises such as sabotage but only because he believed workers should strive for perfection and nobility and acts of sabotage worked against this because they both ruined the fruits of proletarian labour and were motivated by revenge. (Harley 1912:58, Sorel 1950:21, Gunn 1920:115) [1]

1. On the role of violence Sorel's position is difficult to define. He seemed to draw a distinction between a noble sort of violence and a barbaric sort—although in practice this distinction would be rather hard to maintain. In relation to
In seeking to interpret the syndicalists, Laski argued that people had been greatly misled by the "attractive glamour" of Sorel. If one really wanted to understand the syndicalist phenomenon he wrote, then one should look to the "workshops themselves and in the effort...to develop a complete economic and social life for the worker outside the traditional categories of the state." (Duguit 1919:xiii) (2) Dimnet, on the other hand, contrasted the purity of Sorel's motivation with many others in the socialist movement - Sorel, he wrote, had sought to sacrifice himself to the ideals of the socialist movement and had not sought personal power. (Dimnet 1913:25f)

this distinction Sorel wrote that proletarian violence is "fine and heroic" as it awakens the proud sentiments in the workers such as those carried in the hearts of soldiers in ancient Greece. Indeed, he argued, proletarian violence which is swift and pure can save the world from the barbarism created by economic decadence and is therefore something which is in the service of civilisation. (Sorel 1950:21n:98) For a further defence of this idea of proletarian violence see Appendix 2 "Apology for Violence" included in the third edition of Reflections on Violence. (Sorel 1950:275-6) It is also worth noting that in the fourth edition of 1919 a third appendix "In Defense of Lenin" was added, in which Sorel responded to attacks on his earlier paens to the role of violence, that he saw violence as a necessary instrument of change which was already in use by the ruling classes. This did not mean he supported ruthless tyranny. He wrote "I have...very strongly criticised in my book the frequently bloody tyranny of the French Revolution." (Sorel 1950:277n)

2. Barbara Mitchell has recently argued (in addition to pointing out that in 1920 the Third International outlawed independent socialist or syndicalist movements which had an obvious impact on their future [van der Linden 1990:37]) that the leaders of the movement had "always been too practical to put all their eggs into one tactical basket. Direct action had always been based on taking advantage of the opportunities inherent in any given circumstance." (van der Linden 1990:38) Her analysis would seem to confirm Laski's point that too much attention was given to the philosophy of Sorel and not enough to the more practical aspects of the movement. Indeed, she concludes her study by saying that the syndicalist movement was not the great failure some have claimed it to be. (van der Linden 1990:40)
The exact nature of the relation between Sorel and the syndicalists and the degree to which this movement has been incorrectly interpreted as "irrationalist" are not debates I want to enter into here. What is important for this study is the actual regard in which the syndicalists were held by scholars in the English-speaking world; the fact is, that in discussions of the syndicalist phenomenon there was a great deal of focus on its cataclysmic approach (the proclaimed intention of tearing down capitalism rather than reforming it [Fairchild 1919:348, Dimnet 1913:23]) and on the influence of Sorel as well as Bergson. In many respects, this emphasis on tactics, particularly an explosive set of tactics, became one of the defining features of syndicalism. In *Reflections on Violence* Sorel directly drew upon military theory in his discussion of revolutionary strategy, likening the general strike to a Napoleonic (or Clausewitzian) war of annihilation. (Sorel 1950:119) It was due to this belief, that the construction of New Jerusalems is a pointless task and that all that matters is the battle itself - an idea which implies permanent warfare. (Stoddard 1922:157). It was for this reason that Sorelian syndicalism was dismissed as irrational. (1)

1. In the light of the preceding comments, we should note that some have argued that this aspect of syndicalism has been overstated. Shils writes that Sorel was not so much objecting to all imaginings about the future but only those that posited the ideal of a final and ideal world. (See Edward Shils introduction to the 1950 American edition of *Reflections*, p. 15.) Sorel himself wrote that while we cannot predict the future scientifically, and indeed attempts to do so by socialists lead to a political passivity that can only serve the interests of the ruling classes, one must be able to think about in some way if one is to act. Sorel preferred to call such musings about the future social myths - which are useful to the degree that they arouse people to act. (Sorel 1950:124-5)
Sorel's rejection of socialism and its visions of utopia was in line with his rejection of the scientific belief in progress which was so current in France in his student days when he was undergoing training to be an engineer. Bergson's rejection of Darwinian or rationalist conceptions of historical development, as I noted earlier, was also influential here. (Sorel 1969:136)

But it was Bergson's philosophy of intuition that was most associated with the political aspects of Sorel's programme.

In fact, syndicalists were often called Bergsonians. (Dimnet 1913:23, Mott 1922:26) Sorel drew from Bergson ideas about the desirability of voluntary action and constant motion, and a Heraclitan view of reality as ceaseless change and flux. (Mott 1922:26) The political world too was a mixture of possibilities and potentialities ready to be seized by the brave adventurer. Politically, one had to immerse oneself in reality rather than sit back and wait for the fulfillment of divine edicts or latent pattern in history; the revolutionary should rupture history and break its steady course by swift and sudden action. (Dimnet 1913:25)

The association with Bergson only added to the charge of irrationalism; other words such as mystic, gestural and poetic have also been used to describe Bergson's influence upon

1. It is also not surprising that Sorel so appreciatively hit upon the pragmatism of James for its puncturing of the scientific faith and denial of all absolutes, in addition to his instrumentalist appreciation of the role of myth and gesture, seemed to sit comfortably alongside the pragmatists rejection of intellectualistic approaches to politics and life and its own emphasis on methods rather than final aims, as one writer put it. (Fairchild 1919:349)
syndicalism. As a certain Australian scholar, I.G. Sutherland noted in the early 1930s, the syndicalist resort to violence had been blamed on their embrace of Bergson's ideas of change and becoming. Sutherland wrote that these notions were "most likely to produce dangerous revolutionary movements." (Sutherland 1932:222)

How real was the influence of Bergson? Sorel it seemed had certainly listened to Bergson's talks and studied his philosophy. The Illusions of Progress and De l'utilité du Pragmatisme demonstrated his knowledge of Bergson's critique of science and his theory of creative evolution. (Dimnet 1913:24) In Illusions, Sorel's even defended Bergson against the charge that in attacking rationalism in philosophy Bergson was also attacking democracy. (1) When Bergson wrote Sorel an amiable letter thanking Sorel for sending him a copy of De l'utilité du Pragmatisme Sorel was overjoyed. (2) Furthermore, Sorel certainly asserted a connection between Bergson's philosophy and his own political theories. Harley cited Sorel as stating that the

1. Sorel wrote in The Illusions of Progress that: "If someone considers making a pretext against the illusion of rationalism he is immediately accused of being an enemy of democracy. I have often heard people who pride themselves on working for progress deplore the teachings of Bergson and point to them as the greatest danger confronting modern thought." (Sorel 1969:22)

2. It is recorded in Bergson's Mélanges that: "Bergson replied with a most amiable letter in response to the book having been sent and this was one of the last great pleasures for Sorel. In spite of all the bitterness of the war Bergson remained for him the master who he listened to with Peguy. His pleasure erupted in all the letters which he wrote to his correspondents." (Bergson 1972:1332-3)
General Strike was "the perfect knowledge of the Bergsonian philosophy." (Harley 1912:57) (1) There were indeed, constant references to Bergson's philosophy and to its affinities with Sorel's own in *Reflections*, 1950:122ff)

Whether this direct influence was profound is another question. Dimnet, for instance, argued that despite his long studies of Bergson, Sorel's use of that philosopher was confined to the use of his language. (Dimnet 1913:24) *Reflections* is laced with words such as intuition, *élan*, flux and becoming. Interestingly, however, both Lovejoy and Perry have suggested it is precisely Bergson's language, his use of figures and "strange symbols" with obscure meanings which could only be sensed or intuited, that resulted in his utility and popularity. (2)

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1. This quotation was oft-cited; for various references to it see Gunn, 1920, p.173n. The whole quote is as follows: "Strikes have engendered in the proletariat the most noble, the most profound, the most moving sentiments they possess. The General Strike goupse these in a composite picture, and by bringing together, gives to each its maximum intensity; appealing to the most acute memories of particular conflicts, it colours with an intense life all the details of the composition presented to the mind. We obtain thus an intuition of Socialism which language cannot clearly express and we obtain it in a symbol instantly perceived, such as is maintained in the Bergsonian philosophy." Sorel wrote in *Reflections* that in the general strike one obtains "...that intuition of Socialism which language cannot give us with perfect clearness - and we obtain it as a whole, perceived instantaneously." (Sorel 1950:128) He added that this is the "global knowledge of Bergson's philosophy." (Sorel 1950:128n) Sorel also saw at the core of James' philosophy a celebration of a "mystic *élan*" and of the experience of the supernatural. Such experiences, Sorel wrote, ennobled human beings and were the very things that bourgeois society was so befreft of. It was precisely this sort of sense of the sacred - this mystic *élan* - that he wanted to see carried forward by the working classes. (Sorel 1969:180f)

A related point, made by Schneider, was that it was because Bergson, as was much remarked upon, did not develop or refine the moral and social implications of his theory that it was left open to exploitation by various authors including Sorel and James. (Merriam 1924:325-7) Schneider argued that the political implications of Bergson's work were clear enough; that is, they were on the side of individualism and romanticism. (Merriam 1924:325-7) Dimnet had earlier argued that Sorel's methods owed less to Bergsonian philosophy or language and more to the love of sensation and war-fever that were so characteristic of the yellow press. On this last point, Fairchild cited Sorel himself as saying that storming capitalism was like the quest for glory in war in because it awakened the soul. (Fairchild 1919:348-9) (1)

That Bergson's philosophy was not intended to be an incitement to violent action must have been well known. A sympathetic rendering of his ideas published by the People's Press in 1911 entitled Henri Bergson: The Philosopher of Change written by H. Wildon Carr and which was referred to by both Harley and Macdonald in their own books. (Harley 1912:56n, Macdonald 1912:18) (2) Carr wrote that Bergson was conscious of the implications of his work, and had him saying that neither

1. Sorel wrote that it was this sensation that saved the proletariat from the "quackery of ambitious leaders, hungry for the fleshpots." (Fairchild 1919:348-9 Sorel 1950:127)
2. Macdonald cited Carr's text in order to point out that Sorel had fallen "into errors against which Bergson himself warns his readers" because Bergson himself agreed that the intellect had value in the service of action. However, Macdonald did later add that at some points in Sorel's writings, "Bergson is Sorel's master - and with Bergson stands Nietzsche, with his superman." (Macdonald 1912:18:22)
philosophy or philosophers could stand apart from the international strife - that is, the Great War. In this context, Carr referred (although not by name) to an address Bergson gave, entitled "Life and Matter at War", in front of the French Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques on December 12, 1914, where he registered his support France's war effort. Carr claimed this was not just for patriotic reasons. It was also because Bergson saw the war against the Germany as ultimately a philosophical struggle between freedom and matter or between free-will as embodied in the French people and that form of mechanistic determinism that the German people had chosen (despite their past love of art, metaphysics and poetry) in pursuing Bismarck's path towards unification. (1) (Bergson 1915:466, Carr 1919:ix-x) As regards syndicalism, Gunn in his Bergson and his Philosophy (1920) and in later articles defended Bergson saying that just because the philosopher believed in the reality of change did not mean that he regarded all changes as good. Furthermore, he argued that Bergson's philosophy politically implied a society in which people had the freedom and wherewithal to fully express themselves. (Gunn 1920:116ff:1927:279) (1)

1. This speech was well publicised both during and after the war years. The opening portion of this address was translated and published in The Hibbert Journal, 1915, pp. 465-75. Lalande also cited Bergson as saying in relation to the war: "The France of to-morrow will be what we will it to be; for the future is dependent upon us, and is that which free human wills make of it." In relation to this point Lalande wrote that whatever France did or willed would not be the result of "pure caprice...Our will is the faculty that we possess as men, of decision by the consideration of ideal values." (Lalande 1916:535) Lalande also noted the fact that the war had severely affected instruction in
But I want to leave aside this question as to the moral or political implications of Bergson's work as it relates to a general issue I will return to later—that being the relation between philosophy and politics. Let us just note that Sorel's political theory, which was supposed to be inspired by the syndicalists but which also owed much to certain philosophies of action, was not appropriate to the task of steadily improving the living standards of ordinary workers; indeed, in many ways it was not intended to do so. It is not surprising then, that his influence among the syndicalists (which some believed had been over-stated anyway) waned. (1)

As for the syndicalist movement itself, despite early successes such as the postal strike of 1908, the movement declined, especially during the First World War when the patriotic spirit of the French people was reawakened. (1) The Confederation Generale du Travail was revived after the Treaty of Versailles. Inspired by the Bolshevik example, it began

philosophy in France; both students and teachers had enlisted in the war-effort. (Lalande 1916:526) Perry also cited this speech at length and noted that it was one of Bergson's few incursions into the realms of moral or political philosophising. (Perry 1918:345) Gunn also drew attention to the fact that a number of articles had been written concerning Bergson's message to feminism. (Gunn 1920:119)

1. In the years between 1910-14 Sorel, disillusioned with the syndicalists, drifted into neo-royalist circles. He was also extensively cited in their pamphlets. (Dimnet 1913:27, O'Neal 1924:93) It was the Bolshevik revolution which once more raised Sorel's hopes that society could be renewed by the workers. (Sorel 1950:23)

2. Dimnet in fact claims that a new public spirit was appearing in France before the war. (Dimnet 1913:29)
launching strikes in May 1920 in order to create a revolutionary situation; but such efforts were wasted. Elliot noted Duguit’s comment that that in the midst of this strike the French nation rose against the enemy within just as they had rose against the Germans in 1914. (Elliot 1924:249) In ensuing years, the CGT succumbed to the same political fate that had turned Sorel against the socialists; that is, it gradually accumulated wealth and political standing, and began to adopt a more reformist path. In Sorel’s terms, it had lost its virility.

5. Syndicalism Elsewhere

Italian syndicalism followed a similar although in one sense less spectacular path than that of the French movement. Sorel was read and translated there from 1903 onwards and he himself saw Italy as providing a rich soil in which his ideas could take root. (Harley 1912:59,44, Elliot 1924:234n) Yet after brief period of violence in 1919-20, the syndicalist movement in Italy declined. This was partly due to the movement’s lack of any coherent programme or set of policies. (Elliot 1924:249f,249n) (1) In their attempts to reconcile Marx and Sorel (Marx’s vision and Sorel’s tactics) Italian syndicalists had failed to shape a coherent programme or philosophy. (van der Linden 1990:139-40) As a consequence syndicalism in Italy was very fractionalised with different sections of the movement adopting different ideas and approaches. Perhaps more importantly, their emphasis on local autonomy meant there was a failure to develop a strong national

1. Mussolini claimed that by 1919 "Socialism, as a doctrine was already dead..." (Mussolini 1935:16)
industrial organisation equivalent to the CGT in France. (van der Linden 1990:139-40, Lorwin 1957:36)

The most significant legacy of syndicalism in Italy came from the effects of the industrial struggles of 1919-20, themselves a result of the economic strains imposed by the war. (van der Linden 1990:140) While the strikes of this period failed, their importance for us is twofold. First, the justification that industrial disarray gave to fascist violence, and second, the conversion of some syndicalists to the cause of fascism and indeed, the admiration in fascist circles for the writings of Sorel. (1) (Shils writes that in Weimar Germany the intelligentsia also became interested in Sorel following their disillusion with democracy. [Sorel 1950:24]) There is perhaps a little irony in the fact that Sorel died in 1922 shortly before Mussolini's march on Rome. (Sorel 1950:23) It was the peculiar relation between syndicalism and fascism that led Elliot to concur with G.D.H. Cole's view, expressed in The World of Labour (1913), that Sorel's influence was greater in Italy than in France. (Elliot 1924:234f, Cole 1915:166ff) Obviously, Cole could not have been referring to the relation between syndicalism and Fascism when he made this comment. Cole wrote that it was because socialism in Italy had "always been much devoted to the criticism and interpretation of Marxian doctrine, his [Sorel's] neo-Marxism has probably had even more effect on theory there than in France." (Cole 1915:167) Cole also argued that the syndicalist movement, contrary to widespread belief, was not very strong in Italy. (Cole 1915:167-8)

1. After 1922 the fascists attempted to force all workers into
Weaker syndicalist movements also appeared in the English-speaking world. These movements, in countries such as England and Australia, were seen as being more moderate and more tolerant of political participation than their European counterparts. Harley wrote that this was partly because they were more pessimistic about their own ability to change the system through strike action. (Harley 1912:79-47) But it was also attributed to what were alleged to be peculiarly Latin intellectual tastes. Elliot wrote that the popularity of syndicalism in France and Italy was due to a "Latin love of the sublime" (the words sublime and sublimity are often mentioned in Reflections [Sorel 1950:210f]), in contrast with a more moderate political temperament which was alleged to prevail in the English-speaking world, at least before the 1926 General Strike in Britain. (Elliot 1925:499, Harley 1912:45)

Moderation was not always characteristic of the English-speaking world. In some places it seems, there was at least a flirtation with sublimity. Harley, for instance, noted that Sorel's theory of the General Strike "gave confidence to the desperadoes" of Australian industrial trade unionism. (Harley 1912:59) However, it was in America that the major expression of syndicalism in the English-speaking world occurred.

Syndicalism in America was represented by the Industrial Workers of the World (also known as the Wobblies). They were their own National Confederation of Syndicalist Corporations. (see van der Linden and Thorpe 1990:148-51) This was complemented by the Anti-Strike Law of April 3, 1926, No.563. A translation of this piece of legislation is included in Paul Einzig's The Economic Foundations of Fascism. (Einzig 1933:133ff) See Mussolini, Fascism, Ardita Publishers, Rome, 1935, pp.16-7.
formed in 1905, arising out of the ashes of an earlier secret organisation known as the Noble Knights of Labor. Like the French syndicalists, the Wobblies rejected political negotiation in favour of direct action. For while much of the industrial movement was incorporated into the state after the war, when President Wilson introduced a number of industrial reforms, the members of the IWW stayed true to the syndicalist faith. (van der Linden 1990:215) (1) Melvyn Dubofsky has recently argued that it was their policy of direct action in the period 1917-18 which brought American syndicalists into open conflict with the government. (van der Linden 1990:215) Another major source of friction was that many American syndicalists, (like the French movement in the war's early years) had openly opposed their country's participation in the Great War. (Oneal 1924:93) (2)

In America, the conflict between industrial groups and political and economic elites followed the same logic of escalation as had similar conflicts in Europe. Many have argued that American industrial warfare, on the part of both employers and employees, was waged with a ferocity unknown in Europe. (Russell 1919:86, Davies 1943:28f, Lorwin 1957:37)

One of the explanations for this offered at the time was that violence was an endemic feature of American society and

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1. In this context, Davies mentions the Clayton Act of 1914 which afforded labour "temporary protection against injunctions...This was primarily an anti-trust act and the opportunity was taken of excluding labour from its operation." (Davies 1943:35)

2. On the collapse of socialism in America during the war and the part played by the syndicalists see James Oneal, "Changing Fortunes of American Socialism", Current History, April, 1924, pp. 92-97.
culture. It was part of America's greatness and had its source in the harshness and discipline Americans had had to learn in their pioneering days. Americans were in Sorel's sense an heroic race. He appeared to express admiration for the courage and daring which inspired the use of the lynch law in America—although at the same time he called it barbaric. (Sorel 1950:98, Elliot 1924:241n)

An additional explanation offered by Bertrand Russell was that what the French syndicalists claimed about the state as an agent of capitalism was much more true of the American situation, where the trusts were more powerful than were the corporations in Europe. (Russell 1919:87f) Another consequence of the laissez-faire attitude towards the industrialists (whom Davies has argued exhibited an implacable hatred for unionists not in evidence in Britain [Davies 1943:16]), was that they were able to get away with deploying private armies, factory arsenals and industrial espionage services in their fight with the workers. (Davies 1943:16 Lorwin 1957:37) One should note too that "citizens committees", or lynching parties were used against members of the IWW. (Elliot 1928:118, Elliot 1924:241;241n)

With public opinion behind it, the government was able to pass the Criminal Syndicalism Act during the war years and generally use the courts to prosecute the movement's leaders. (Elliot 1924:255;256n) Another consequence of this mood of fear and hostility (the end of the war had seen a return to bitter and violent strike action [Davies 1943:42]) was the arrest in 1919, and later trial, of the two "anarchist fish pedlars" (as Laski
called them, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti who were charged with robbery and murder. (The two were executed in 1927.) The whole case caused an uproar in literary and intellectual circles because of the perceived political motivation behind it. Laski claimed that they were arrested for their anarchism rather than for their alleged crimes. (Laski 1930:5f) (During the trial a gangster confessed to the murders and claimed the robbery was performed by the mob.) Laski had been teaching at Harvard up until 1920 and this incident helped fuel his hostility towards the excessive use of state power. [Laski 1930:5f] (Beloff wrote that Laski was so affected by their trial and execution that he was still writing indignantly about it twenty five years later in The American Democracy. [Beloff 1950:380]) (1)

Indeed, Laski's whole experience in America was important, for there he graphically saw the struggle between capital and labour; he also saw how the machinery of the state was used to crush the striking workers such as in the Boston police strike of 1919. Laski argued that if American society were to survive class hostility and war-fare then it was necessary to make society more pluralistic and participatory. (Lask 1920:337) Such calls for compromise were made also against the backdrop of the Russian Revolution. Dewey referred to this event in 1920 in the New Republic when he, like Laski, argued the case for worker participation schemes in order to stop the spread of sovietism.

1. Laski left England for America in 1914, first to McGill University and then to Harvard. Returning to England in 1920 he took up a post at the London School of Economics where he stayed until his death. (Fadiman 1939:165) For references to the Sacco and Vanzetti case see Laski's The American Democracy, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1949, pp. 70, 140, 163, 579, 588, 626, 665f.
and militant industrial unionism in the United States. (Dewey 1920:317)

The syndicalist movement in Britain was the most moderate and weakest of all the syndicalist movements. G.D.H. Cole made it clear in his *World of Labour* that the syndicalist movement was only of limited significance in relation to British industrial affairs. The Industrial Syndicalist League was formed in 1920 under the leadership of Tom Mann whose writings indicated a willingness to compromise with the political power. (Harley 1912:44f) Harley claimed that this was partly a result of Mann's experiences in Australia where he had witnessed a Commonwealth Labor government refuse to assist the state government of Queensland in the suppression of strikers during the Brisbane tramway dispute of 1912. (Harley 1912:44,79) Nevertheless, the word syndicalism appears to have caused anxiety in some circles. Fairchild wrote that in England the hysteria was such in some quarters that one would think it as easy to raze the Bank of England as to remove the Russian Tsar. (Fairchild 1919:348)

Not surprisingly, syndicalists were disliked not just by political conservatives but also by the mainstream labour movement, the Labour Party politicians and figures such as Sidney and Beatrice Webb. (van der Linden 1990:114) In the latter case the fear was that the disruptive practices of syndicalist-inspired groups (such as the English coal miners' strike of which took place in the spring of 1920 [Elliot 1925:492]), could setback Labour's own parliamentary and industrial work on behalf of the labour movement.
Laski claimed in Studies in the Problem of Sovereignty that before the First World War the union ideal commanded wider allegiance than did the state. (Laski 1917:15) Yet it must be remembered that the labour movement was much more successfully incorporated into the mainstream of political life in England (as well as in Australia and New Zealand), than it was elsewhere. Hence, J. Ramsay McDonald's book on Syndicalism, which, while condemning it strongly, also conceded that its influence in England was hitherto limited. (Macdonald 1912:45)

Barker too, at least before the war, seemed little concerned by the presence of syndicalist elements and the ability of the British state to cope with these. In fact, Barker argued that pluralist ideas were well in keeping with English political traditions. He wrote that anti-statism had a long and respected history in England in the form of non-conformism and liberalism. The English state, Barker wrote, was accustomed to being discredited - and it was too its credit that it was. (Barker 1957:154f)

The most developed form of syndicalism in England was the rather "bookish" guild socialism. The National Guild League was formed in 1915 and guild socialist ideas were embraced by leaders of the National Union of Railwaymen, the Railway Clerks Association and the National Union of Teachers. (Coker 1921:208)

1. Guild socialist ideas were being articulated before the war in Guild socialists broadly spoke of a pluralist society in which A.J. Penty's The Restoration of the Guilds System (1906) and in A.R. Orage's the Politics for Craftsmen (1907) (Coker 1921:204n); its most well-know advocates after the war were S.G. Hobson (e.g. Guild Principles in War and Peace, Bell and Sons Ltd., London, 1917), G.D.H. Cole (e.g. Self-Government in Industry, Bell and
participation was extended into the administrative and production structures of society. They presented a reformist syndicalism; occupying a space somewhere between the radical pluralism of the syndicalists and the monism of the state-socialists seeking to reconcile producer and consumer interests. (Merriam 1924:227)

While emphasizing distributivist rather than collectivist values, most of the movements theoreticians seemed aware of the need to prevent the weakening of central authority through too great a dispersal of power. In line with the pluralist thought of Figgis, there would not be a complete absence of collective association. Barker wrote that a guild socialist society would be a co-operative commonwealth. (Barker 1915:226f) In reference to this last point, we should note that guild socialists frequently based their notional political system on what they considered to be the organic industrial organization of the Middle Ages.

Doubts about the historical accuracy of this medieval ideal were expressed. (1) More importantly for us this organic conception of society could shade into something far more technical-sounding. That is, insofar as guild socialists promoted the idea of functional representation, they obviously overlapped with those who placed an emphasis on bureaucratic expertise. The

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(1) See Austin P. Evans in the Political Quarterly where he discussed the lack of historical accuracy in the guild socialist picture of medieval society. (Evans 1921:603,614f)
American scholar Harry Elmer Barnes described the functionalist state as one where, instead of attempting to resolve all social and economic problems through one single political organization, legislation and administration would be turned over "to specialized groups which are most competent in the field of their own activities and interests." (Barnes 1925:144) (1)

When expressed in this form, guild socialism came very close to the Fabian idea of Municipal Socialism, which while allowing for some local autonomy, also spoke of rational guidance by an impartial public service which would occupy the commanding heights of the economy. It is for this reason that Fabian socialism, unlike guild socialism, is usually identified with collectivist or consumer rather than producer or group interests. Guild socialism understood as functional representation was similar to administrative syndicalism - the idea of a civil or public service independent of political power, whose expertise was devoted to the efficient running of society. (2)

Many discussions of pluralism liked to cite the development of independent civil or public services as evidence of the pluralistic trend. The growing system of authorities charged with overseeing economic and industrial relations were seen as an

1. Laski described the guild socialist society as one where parliament would govern alongside a "Congress of the supreme bodies representing each of the main functions in Society" (Laski 1948:138) We should note that guild socialists such as Cole did not believe functional representation was the sole answer. (Cole 1918:85-9) Also note Laski's suggestion that Cole was far too optimistic in believing the guilds could spontaneously govern themselves. (Laski 1920:383)
2. Laski wrote that while guild socialism was in vogue in 1920 by the middle of that decade its influence had become negligible or had largely come to lie in its emphasis on industrial decentralisation. (Laski 1925:99)
example of this. (Sabine 1923:47) Francis W. Coker (of Ohio State University) specifically referred to the emergence of boards of Compulsory Arbitration in New South Wales and New Zealand, the Whitley system of industrial tribunals in England (which involved establishing in various departments boards which were jointly representative of employees and ministerial heads) and the British government's moves to establish a national council of representation for the English police. (Coker 1919:203:210n)

France was also grappling with the issue of administrative decentralisation at this time. (Lippman 1919:148f) It was the controversy in the French Civil Service before 1914 over its claims to autonomy from the arbitrary acts of political authorities that fostered Duguit's writings on administrative pluralism. (Duguit 1919:xii, Coker 1921:198, Cohen 1919:201) Duguit regarded the evolution of self-directing boards and commissions in the public service and in the state universities as crucial examples of administrative syndicalism. (Sabine 1920:312) (1)

If we can still call this a variant of syndicalism, it is clearly far removed from the syndicalism of Sorel, which insisted on the centrality of power in political life and which seemed to care less for the detailed planning of social development. As Coker noted, Duguit's primary interest was in government activity, not in the welfare of "nonpolitical social groups". In particular, Duguit sought to show that the creation of "statutory law (Lois) is not the exclusive prerogative of any one organ in
the state" and further, that governmental action is or should be subject to certain legal limits. (Coker 1921:191) (1) I shall say more about this in the next chapter. For the moment, one should note that calls for the decentralisation and independence of the public service were far removed from the struggle of producers to seize control of the tools of their trade and the fruits of their labour.

Both Sabine and Mott implied that to greet such developments as evidence for syndicalism or worker participation was somewhat premature. Surely, as they suggested, these developments constituted a delegation rather than a real decentralisation of power. (Mott 1922:39, 1920 Sabine:312) In fact, it was not just the ideal of worker participation that inspired these developments. The growth of syndicalism or worker participation in the public service was a byproduct of the growing need to enlarge the talent and initiative within the service. Delegating some power and thereby encouraging the ideals of service and dedication was a sensible means of achieving this goal. (Coker 1921:202) Laski thought the issue of an independent civil service excited such controversy in France because the evils of a centralised bureaucracy were most strikingly apparent in France. (Duguit 1919:xiv)

Thus, the word syndicalism was stretched to encompass a broad range of activities and movements; as we have seen, it was used to describe the gestural politics of Sorel as well as moves towards administrative decentralisation in France, America and

1. Duguit was to prove influential in the development of Laski's thought. Harold and Frida Laski produced the English translation
England. Municipal or regional movements were also added to the syndicalist list. (1) It was even made to accommodate the role of the Soviets in post-revolutionary Russia. Mott wrote that the Soviet system was an example of pluralism practically applied because it included, in theory at least, local autonomy. (Mott 1922:25) The inclusion of Bolshevik Russia within the syndicalist tradition may seem odd given the lack of democratic control by the workers under the new regime. (Laski 1920:383) However, there already was in syndicalism a tendency towards an elitist emphasis on leadership. The comparison between communism and syndicalism might also seem strange given its related stress (real or imagined) on scientific development and government by experts. As we saw in chapter two, the Soviet Union later came to be seen by some as the ultimate rationalist or scientific state. Of course, it was argued that claims that the Soviet Union was ultra-modern were false. Stoddard argued that the Russian experiment sprang from the same ancient barbaric impulses that drove the syndicalist movement. (Stoddard 1922:214) (2) But even where the claims that the Soviet Union was a scientific state were taken seriously, it could still be likened to syndicalism to the extent that this term implied functional representation or administrative syndicalism. As I have shown, placing a high premium on expert guidance was not entirely antithetical to the syndicalist tradition.

of Duguit's 1913 work Law in the Modern State. (1919)
1. See Coker 1921:186-212
2. On this point see also Elliot who claimed that Wallas also saw the Russian revolution as springing from raw instinct. (Elliot 1924:257) Note also that Charles Merriam likened Bolshevism to syndicalism because of its fondness for direct action. (Merriam 1924:42)
6. The Impact of the War

I want to now turn to another aspect of the anti-statist movement. This aspect pertains to the fact that sovereignty or the state is Janus-faced. Sovereignty has both internal and external significance. (Korff 1923:404 Laing 1921:4) While we have just discussed the challenges to the internal dimensions of the sovereign state, I now want to discuss its international dimensions. Objections to the state in its external dealings were also voiced by those critical of its internal workings. (Although here again, there was a failure to distinguish the "state" from the government of the day – as I said, this is a problem that frequently appeared in pluralist theory.) This is not surprising as the internal, unitary theory of sovereignty which asserts there is no other higher power in the land logically implies an external theory of sovereignty which upholds the principles of a plurality of states and non-interference. As figures from the Abbe de Saint Pierre to Heinrich von Treitschke have observed, the creation of the sovereign state simply displaces the struggle for survival onto the international arena. (1)

The problem of particularism in international relations came into focus around the time of the Great War. Some saw this war as marking an end of an era which began either in 1648 with the

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1. Rousseau summarised Saint Pierre's argument in Abstract of the Abbé de Saint Pierre's Project for Perpetual Peace (1761). (See Savigear 1970:136ff) and the first lines in von Treitschke's Die Freiheit were: "Treat the State as a person, and the necessary and rational multiplicity of States follows." (Savigear 1970:326)
Treaty of Westphalia at the conclusion of the Thirty Years War, or with the victory of Napoleon over the Frederick II at Jena in 1805. This was the triumph of the sovereign, or in the case of the latter example, the sovereign bourgeois state.

Perhaps the latter date is more appropriate. As according to scholars of international law there were some means of restraint, some degree of sociability, present in the international system up until the 19th century. In the 17th and 18th century, publicists and diplomats such as the Dutch-born Hugo Grotius and the Swiss-born Emerich de Vattel had attempted to establish a legal framework, (based on a mixture of natural law principles, rules of expediency, Christian doctrine and consensual agreement) by which state behaviour could be regulated. (1) Sovereignty was accepted as a legal or jurisprudential fiction. However, as Pitman B. Potter (of the University of Wisconsin) wrote, in the 19th century, international thought had become more empirical and inductive - less interested in principles of right behaviour than in the actual behaviour of states. The consequence of this was that the doctrine of sovereignty had become utterly politicised and had become detached from notions of legal rights and obligations. (Potter 1923:382) (2)

In the 20th century the 19th century development of the doctrine that whatever the state wills is right became the crude basis of diplomacy. Laski wrote passionately against the conduct

2. Potter writes that political philosophers and scientists bore a responsibility for the war of 1914, for having let this development take place. (Potter 1923:392)
of the modern state in the midst of the First World War. In 1916 he stated that the state was a modern Baal whose conduct in war knew no restraints. Evidence for this lay in the fact that in the name of the state Belgium had been invaded; passenger ships had been torpedoed; the Luisitania had been sunk; and barbarous submarine warfare was conducted. (Laski 1916:302-3) He repeated these views no less strongly in 1930, writing that since 1870, particularly a result of Bismarck's efforts, the "doctrine of force and fraud" had become enshrined in international relations; since that date, he wrote, all nations had stood poised ready to fight as "gladiators." (Laski 1930:254:257)

In particular, from the post-war perspective, 1914 and its aftermath had demonstrated the ruinous consequences of a purely political understanding of sovereignty as expressed in the form of the doctrine of self-limitation. (Korff 1923:410) As previous comments suggest, this highly political notion of sovereignty was seen to prevail especially in Germany. (Laski 1916:302-3) It is noteworthy that Treitschke's lectures in Berlin in the late 19th century on the power of the state were strongly condemned in England during the war years for inciting the Germans to militarism. (Savigar 1970:325) But it was not just the more obvious figures such as Treitschke who were blamed. Intellectuals like Laski spoke of the acceptance of a certain "grim Hegelianism" as leading to war. (Laski 1919:302) Dewey published a book in 1915 called German Philosophy and Politics (a revised edition with added material on Hitler and his relation to German philosophy appeared in 1942) which examined the influence
of Germany's classic philosophy on its politics. (Dewey 1942:5)

Of course, much of this literature was written in the midst of the "heat of war propaganda". Nevertheless, the question of what relation philosophy bore to politics (as we have seen in the case of Bergson and the syndicalists), was regarded as a worthy and important topic of discussion. (1) Indeed, the interwar criticisms levelled at certain Western philosophical doctrines in the because of their alleged association with unsavoury political movements or all-powerful states must have been taken seriously up to a point. There was often more than a hint of defensiveness in some of the philosophical studies published in that period.

But we should note that in the post-war years criticism shifted away from a specifically German conception of state-power and was also directed at range of monistic thinkers in other Western countries. Korff said it was true that Germans had glorified in the nation and the all-powerful state before the war, but he added this was not solely a German pre-occupation. (Korff 1923:404-5) Other scholars agreed. Charles A. Beard wrote in his introduction to *Whither Mankind* (1928) nationalism, or at least a sense of the moral superiority of one's own society, was expressed by opinion leaders in England, France and America before the war and not just by William II. (Beard 1928:6f) Merriam made the same points in the first chapter of *A History of Philosophy in Recent Times*. (2)

1. On this topic also see Perry, *The Present Conflict of Ideals*, 1918, where he appeared to endorse Dewey's views. See especially, Ch. XII, Ch. XIX, Ch.XXVIII. This book also addressed the philosophical background to the syndicalist movement.
2. On the role that nationalism played both before and during the War see also Merriam, 1924, p.27-8.
But it is not the phenomenon of nation-worship that I wish to examine. This was seen as a popular rather than as an intellectual pastime. It is observations about the role of monistic theories of unitary sovereignty giving rise to gladiatorial states that I am most interested in. On this matter too, there were other culprits besides an outdated Teutonic metaphysics. Thus, when Laski was fulminating against the war it was not just the Germans who were the object of his attack - despite his strong words. For Laski flatly argued that the sovereign state was the cause of war. In this context too, Korff (although perhaps for slightly different reasons) listed English thinkers such as Thomas Hobbes (whom Laski called "that prince of monistic thinkers" [Laski 1917:25]), John Austin and Sir William Blackstone, the Russian theorist Kortunov, France's Carre de Malberg and America's John William Burgess as supporters of the all-powerful state - although he said that only Blackstone and Treitschke could be counted among the really hard-line advocates of state power. (Korff 1923:405) (1)

Nor was the German state alone in demanding terrible sacrifices of its citizens. One could argue that there had been a general failure on the part of governments in their obligations to citizens, shown by the sometimes careless way in which human lives were used and disposed of during the First World War. (Cohen 1919:687) This wastage of human lives was also attributed to the development of the doctrine of the offensive (such as the

1. Laski established a direct line of descent running from 16th century publicist Jean Dodin down through Hobbes and Bentham until its full flowering in the jurisprudence of Austin. (Laski 1919:563)
Schlieffen plan) on the part of European military officials before the war. But what is interesting is that the doctrine of the offensive had itself been informed by Nietzschean philosophies of the will and the Bergsonian idea of the vital force - at the same time as the ideas of these philosophers were being taken up by syndicalist theoreticians. (1) The vital force could thus work both for and against the state.

Both "intellectualist" theories of the state, such as that of John Austin and "anti-intellectualist" philosophies (such as Nietzschean ideas about the will to power) were held to be responsible for the war. (2) But in the English-speaking world

1. The great loss of human life has been attributed to among other things, ignorance of the effects of new instruments and methods of warfare and the development of the concept of total war. Most importantly for us, it is attributed to the prevailing military doctrine of the offensive - a doctrine which itself has been seen as one of the major contributing factors to the war because it encouraged pre-emptive action. (See Stephen Van Evera, "Why Cooperation failed in 1914", *World Politics*, Vol. 38, 1986, pp.81-117) It is also important to note how this military doctrine was seen to gain impetus from philosophical doctrines which placed an emphasis on the role of will. Again, this is seen as not solely a German phenomenon. The doctrine of the offensive, Michael Howard tells us in *The Theory and Practice of War*, which stresses the importance of having a "'proud and violent army'" and which sees small losses in war as a sign of weakness and lack of patriotic fervour, had been pushed by the French, British and German military commands before the war. Again this could be sheeted home to the philosophical beliefs current in some of the countries taking part in the war. Howard adds that this doctrine was explicitly associated with Bergson's well-attended lectures at the Sorbonne where he expounded on Nietzschean concepts of the Creative Will and his own *l'elan vital*. (Howard 1966:521) The fact that military theorists across Europe invoked the concept of the vital force or some such similar notion (although not necessarily in a way that the originators of these ideas would have intended or wanted) makes Bergson's claims about the true nature of the conflict (i.e. that it was a struggle between French free-will and German determinism) all the more intriguing.

2. In the case of Nietzsche, Merriam wrote that the intimacy of the relation between his "pessimism and materialism" and militaristic posturing could be doubted given the presence of imperialistic and nationalistic sentiments in many countries. He
pluralists tended to focus their criticism on idealist rather than "anti-intellectual" philosophies. (Given that syndicalism and pluralism in general were often deemed to be inspired by anti-intellectual philosophies themselves, this is hardly surprising.) Sometimes one or both of the English philosophers Bernard Bosanquet (and his *Aspects of the General Will: Social Problems and the reality of the Will* [1895]) and F.H. Bradley (and his essay "My Station and its Duties" in his *Ethical Studies* [1876]) figured prominently in pluralist assaults. The pluralist strategy was one of collapsing idealist notions of the general will or public spirit, as well as John Austin's juristic theory of sovereignty, into the more tough-minded theories of Treitschke. (1) (Merriam 1924:88, Coker 1923:195) This move, which required the assumption that certain political theories, however inoffensive they may appear, will by some inexorable logic transform themselves into something much more unattractive. It is a move which would be used against the pluralists themselves.

One cannot underestimate the significance of the war in relation to these debates. The English philosopher J. H. Muirhead wrote that it was the association of idealist theories of the will attributed the belief in this association to war propaganda. (Merriam 1924:14)

1. See Bradley *Ethical Studies* pp. 176ff. We should also note that the reputation accorded Treitschke both before and during the First World War in England was to some degree challenged by H. W. C. Davis in *The Political Thought of Heinrich von Treitschke* (1914). Forsythe tells us that in that text Davis examined the development of Treitschke's early thought as a German nineteenth-century liberal. (Savigear 1970:325)
with the image of the all-powerful German state that had led to severe questioning of the theories of the neo-Hegelian idealists in England. He was unhappy about this and pleaded with critics to get away from the "disturbing atmosphere of the War" and to engage in dispassionate analysis. (Muirhead 1924:166) Indeed, it was when the memory of war began to fade that idealist philosophers regained their self-confidence and the most bitter attacks on pluralism and those philosophies associated with it (whether pragmatist or Bergsonian or Nietzschean philosophies) began to be launched. It was in that context that the causes of war were linked with "irrationalist" philosophies of will rather than with monistic theories of the state.

7. Imperial fragmentation.

The fragmentation of empires and a move in the international arena from what James called imperial "bigness" to particularism was also seen as evidence of the pluralistic spirit at work. Certainly, in the case of William James there was a continuity between his liberal bias in favour of the individual or small group and his preference for small nations over large imperial systems. (Perry 1935:315) Both before and after the war, examples cited of particularism were the mandate system under the League of Nations; the push for home-rule or subsidiary parliaments in Ireland, Wales, Scotland (although again, as with the regionalist push in France or America, this was seen as an example of deconcentration rather than decentralization of power [Mott 1922:39]); the independence movements in India and Latin
America and the growing autonomy of dominions within the British empire. (Merriam 1924:27f, Sabine 1923:46f Korff 1923:411 Elliot 1925:481f Barker 1928:181f)

But it is at this point that pluralist theory begins to most clearly reveal some of its ambiguities and contradictions. Many of those who called themselves pluralists and who wanted to limit the domestic jurisdiction of the state were also internationalists who saw a rational world order evolving through the mechanisms of international law, international organizations and trans-national associations. (Laski 1916:303 Krabbe 1930:269 Russell 1919:158f)

This is because they believed that this same state, in competition with other states, was the source of international conflict. Thus, and I do not think this is spelled out in the literature, while it is monism that is being attacked on the inside it is essentially pluralism or fragmentation that is being attacked on the outside. (1) Responses of pluralists were thus inconsistent. Firstly, it was contradictory to argue that the pluralistic nature of the international system is the source of conflict and then to welcome the further disintegration of that system whether that process affects empires, nation-states or composite states. We should note that the fragmentation of states in the name of self-determination was also seen as a manifestation of the nationalist mania. (Merriam 1924:14f)

1. Follett remarked that while a number of English commentators were "raging against Hegelianism, at the same time the English are pouring out in unstinted measure themselves and their substance to establish on earth Hegel's absolute in the actual form of an International League." (Follett 1918:267)
Secondly, and I will deal with this further in the next chapter, it was equally contradictory to condemn particularism in the international sphere and then recommend it as a way of ordering the domestic arena.

In some cases it would seem that critics of the sovereign state did not adequately theorise the relation between the internal and external dimensions of sovereignty. Where they did they tended to argue in favour of pluralistic arrangements inside the state and more co-operative or unitary arrangements on the outside. That is, what they did was reverse the traditional order of our conceptions of intra and inter-state relations.

Most of us are familiar with the calls for world government that prevailed after the Great War and which drew inspiration from the creation of the League of Nations. What is most interesting about this denial of the validity of the state as a social unit (because the only real social units are groups or associations), is how quickly it ascends to the idea of new monism in the form of a universal legal order. (This was likened by a couple of writers to Dante's concept of a universal or world empire [Merriam 1924:99, Hsiao 1927:52]) Hugo Krabbe, for

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1. Hsiao wrote that on the question of international law, the pluralists advanced their arguments in two directions: "First, they are concerned to show that the notion of state sovereignty is incompatible with true international law, and, secondly, that with the growth of modern social life in complexity and organisation, states should no longer be regarded as the sole subjects of international law, or as the sole units of international relations." (Hsiao 1927:50) For further sources for these views in addition to Russell and Krabbe see G. D.H. Cole, "The State and its External Relations", Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, 16, p. 137ff, cited in Hsiao, 1927 p. 51.
instance, spoke of a gradual shift from what he called "national legal communities" to an international "legal community", the rules of which states would be subject to. Indeed, he wrote that the term international law was misleading because what he was talking about was not treaties enacted between states but a "supernational law." (Krabbe 1930:233ff, 245) Where this leaves pluralism is another question indeed — although as Follett noted, some syndicalists were not adverse to appealing to the existence of objective rights or laws (albeit based on social function) in stating their case. (Follett 1919:22)

Dewey however, did see a contradiction in this position of attacking monism inside the state and the supporting it in the international sphere. He was rather more sceptical about the enthusiastic support for world government among some of his peers, recognising the potential for tyranny in such a body and seeing this aspiration as another residue of the old scientific world-view (like state-socialism or collectivism in general). He wrote:

One may sympathize with a longing for some state which shall reduce international anarchy to order... But even here it makes a mighty difference whether the super-state is something into which the multitude of nations is to 'dissolve,' or whether it is a descriptive formulation under which the multitude of local states, provinces, towns, villages, and other human groups may follow more securely their own careers, and voluntarily engage in undisturbed and fruitful conversation with each other. For the only conversation in which participants 'dissolve' is the one in which some tyrant bore monopolizes discourse, while voices melt into monotony. (Dewey 1921:316)

Thus, rather than speaking of world government some pluralists (and this group included at times Russell and Krabbe),
preferred to speak in terms of world federalism. (Merriam 1924:98f) (1)

But the important point here is the conjunction of pluralist and internationalist thought. The breakdown of the sovereignty of the state was seen as occurring at two levels; firstly, in relation to the development of transnational interests, and secondly, in relation to the emergence of sub-state or sub-national groupings. Dewey wrote that both of these "cut across" and threw "out of gear the traditional doctrine of exclusive national sovereignty." (Dewey 1957:204 Curtis 1925:493) These developments also gained expression in the peace settlement in the aftermath of the Great War. The "rational Wilsonian" principles which were supposed to herald a new era of co-operation in both the domestic and international spheres (Elliot 1928:viii) encompassed both the push for greater global co-operation and the rule of international law and the push for national self-determination. We should recall here that this coupling of economic, political and cultural integration with an emphasis on diversity and autonomy was also a feature of the rationalisation movement - except in that case this arrangement was seen as being scientifically justified.)

The other thing to note here in relation to both voluntary associations and the internationalist aspects of pluralism is

1. Barker made similar comments to those of Dewey. He wrote that: "A true internationalism...must recognize the existence of the State in all its fulness, and it must seek to comprehend states in its fold without any derogation from the fulness of their being." (Barker 1928:246)
that these associations were often trans-national in their scope. (Hsiao 1927:41:54) Religious organisations provided obvious examples. But this was also true of art leagues, professional associations, the suffragettes and industrial or socialist groupings - the latter gathering together under the banner of the Second International. (Harley wrote that Internationalism was also a leading sentiment among the syndicalists [Harley 1912:86]) It was hoped by some that with more and more of these groups emerging and extending themselves into new territories and lands, the distinction between the international and the domestic realms would eventually dissolve and the whole world would become both one and many - freed from the "artificial" restrictions of the state. (1)

8. Syndicalism, Pluralism and Pragmatism

This chapter has been a discussion of some of the intellectual and political developments which gave rise to the theory and practice of pluralist politics. In discussing the ideas of Maitland and Figgis, I was seeking to show that the relationship between pragmatism and pluralism, which is what I will concentrate on in the next chapter, was much more arbitrary than the critics of pragmatism and pluralism seemed willing to allow. Further, I chose to focus much of this chapter upon what

1. The point seemed to have been overlooked, as Korff points out, that as international law is the result of treaties signed by states, abolishing the sovereign state would in fact destroy international law as it stands. (Korff 1923:413) Although, what these internationalists were arguing was that international law is in fact derived from certain eternal principles of right behaviour. (Hsiao 1927:51) Hsiao thought that it was in this internationalist phase, as a programme for world peace, that pluralism was at its most constructive. (Hsiao 1927:55)
was seen as a particular and most extreme variant of pluralism, that is, syndicalism. I did this firstly, because it was this sort of pluralism which especially generated hostility towards pluralist theory as a whole. Secondly, because it was this variant of pluralism that did most to establish in the minds of critics the dangers of posed by the philosophies of Bergson and James. Thirdly, because it was syndicalist-style politics, in conjunction with the philosophy of pragmatism, that were held responsible for the development of fascism.

In this chapter I also demonstrated the flexibility of the term syndicalism. On the one hand, I showed that one of its defining features, in contrast with earlier pluralist theories, was its focus on means rather than ends. This distinction is of course, unstable. In a sense, we can say that for the syndicalists the political means (the destruction of capitalism and the state) became the end. But on the other hand, I also showed that far from being seen as a gospel of direct action, syndicalism was also talked about in the context of reforming the civil service. In this case, syndicalism simply implied the independence of the public service from the political power and greater participation of public servants in the running of administrative departments. Hence the descriptions administrative syndicalism or administrative pluralism.

The flexibility of the term syndicalism in this regard is also true of pluralism - although some might argue that this is simply a reflection of the equal flexibility of the pragmatist philosophy which underpins them. This I think would be both
simplistic and inaccurate for there were too many other social and intellectual forces contributing to the development of syndicalism and pluralism to simply attribute their dualistic character to the philosophy of pragmatism. Indeed, one could go further and point out that what was called the modernist movement, of which pragmatism is but a part, was seen to be manifest in philosophies that placed human will or intuition at the centre of action as well in the social scientific belief that by studying human behaviour and discovering its laws society could be planned down to the last detail.

Nevertheless, what makes pragmatism so intriguing is that it seemed to be the only single philosophy within the modernist movement to manifest these qualities at the same time. That is, one could call oneself a pragmatist while focussing upon instrumental techniques and experimental methods; one could also call oneself a pragmatist while stressing the ability of human beings to remake their world at will and use intuitive modes of understanding. We shall find this very same duality in fascism as well — and again, according to some, it was the influence of pragmatism that explains why this was so.

Finally, this chapter examined pluralist observations about international affairs — in particular the complaint that the balance of power system was the cause of the Great War. I did this partly to bring to light some of the contradictions in pluralist arguments as regards domestic political arrangements. For as I will show in the next chapter, it was their views on the nature of sovereignty (derived in part from sociological studies
of law; from analogies drawn from the physical sciences— and most importantly from pragmatist philosophy)— that were seen as putting exactly such a balance of power system in place of the monistic state.
Chapter 6: The Legacy of Pragmatism

In order to understand the sorts of conceptual relations that existed or were held to exist between pragmatist philosophy and pluralist political thought, as well as some of the other political ideas that were current in the inter-war years, we need to draw a clear distinction between the pragmatic methods and what was known as radical empiricism. As we have seen, Dewey was mainly interested in the former while James was mainly interested in the latter.

This chapter begins then with an analysis of the respective roles played by empiricism and instrumentalism arguments in James' thought and the significance of this in relation to pluralist political arguments. Following this, I go on to examine the use of analogies drawn from modern physics in relation to political arguments. I then go on to examine the importance of James' philosophy to the political thought of Harold Laski and the impact that pragmatist ideas in general had upon theories of sovereignty and jurisprudence. This is followed by an examination of the arguments pertaining to the alleged contribution of the thought of Bergson, James, Dewey and Duguit to the emergence of tyrannical governmennts in Europe in the 1920s and 1930s. I then go on to look at the attempts to rebut the claims that there was a relation between Bergson's philosophy and the philosophy of pragmatism and the political movements known as syndicalism and fascism. In looking at these rebuttals, we are also driven to...
study those presentations of pragmatist thought which associated it with the ideas of the general will, of liberalism and democracy.

This chapter also discusses the drift away from pluralist and pragmatist thought in the late 1930s. In this context, I look at the return of collectivist arguments and the development of what was labelled rationalism in politics; I examine the relation between these developments and pragmatist thought. I also briefly examine the turn away from arguments in favour of the internationalist ideal which accompanied the decline of pluralist thought. This chapter concludes with some thoughts about the attacks on pragmatist thought and, more generally, addresses the issue of the relation between political theory and political practice. This is an issue that arose up repeatedly, although usually only implicitly, in the political arguments of the period. The material included in this chapter is substantial but it is also necessary in order to illustrate the evolution of certain political arguments.

1. Pragmatism and Empiricism

I pointed out in the last chapter that pluralism and pragmatism developed independently of one another. Yet as we saw in the case of the syndicalists and in the case of those empirically minded pluralists there were some points of connection. For Hsiao, these connections were largely conceptual. He conceded that there was no logical connection between pragmatism and pluralism; nevertheless, he did remark that they "run down the same grooves". Hsiao made the point that while
Laski was the only political pluralist (if we do not count Sorel and Follett who both used James but in diverse ways) claiming to be a disciple of James, there was a "genuine sympathy in spirit" between the ideas of James and pluralist theory well before Laski appeared on the scene. (Hsiao 1927:176) That is, the politics of pluralism and the philosophy of pragmatism coalesce at certain points and resemble each other.

The resemblances between pragmatism and pluralism are both methodological and metaphysical. In this regard, Hsiao drew attention to three possible links between them. Firstly, and most obviously, pragmatists and pluralists could be likened to each other to the extent that both appealed to experimental methods — that is, the pragmatic working test. Secondly, the pluralist emphasis on actual will could sound very much like the pragmatist emphasis on immediate consciousness; thirdly, the argument against unitary sovereignty closely resembled the pragmatist protest against the all-inclusive block universe on behalf of the discontinuous aspects of experience. (Hsiao 1927:206)

We should note that these last two points of contiguity between pluralism and pragmatism actually sprang from the same source — that is, from the association between pragmatism and radical empiricism. But we have to be careful here because pragmatism, strictly speaking, need not imply radical empiricism (this is a point I alluded to earlier). That is, if we identify, as James does, pragmatism with an instrumental approach to
metaphysical issues (to ask the question what difference would it make if I believed x rather than y), it may stand quite apart from the empiricist or pluralist perspective.

This distinction between radical empiricism and pragmatism was noted by James himself in the preface to Pragmatism where he noted that there is "no logical connexion between pragmatism, as I understand it, and a doctrine which I have recently set forth as 'radical empiricism.'" (James 1907:ix) Thus, the question as to whether experience is in fact one or many (the one and the many being a central motif in pluralist thought) may be of no interest to the pragmatist. Although the pragmatic method may be a way of approaching or cancelling out that question.

I draw attention to these points in order to make it clear that it was radical empiricism, rather than the pragmatic method which provided the metaphysical foundation for political pluralism. I shall explain how in due course. Suffice to say that even if we define pragmatism solely in terms of experimental or instrumental methods we have not removed all ambiguities. For I would also want to stress that the instrumental method of pragmatism is open to interpretation. It can be used as a way of addressing practical or political and not just metaphysical issues. But even then, it may be put to different uses - ones which may lead us down quite different political paths.

For instance, if we take instrumentalism to mean, as some did, the satisfaction of some desire or impulse then we can see how it might lead towards completely self-regarding political behaviour. It might also lead us, as it did in Sorel's case, to
argue that there are no social truths but only myths which are useful to the extent that they encourage political action on the part of groups. But we should note that neither of these attitudes rules out the possibility that the state itself can be seen as a useful tool for whatever ambitions that I or my group might have. The point is, that instrumentalism need not be accompanied by a belief in pluralistic political arrangements. It may not lead us to believe that the state should be dismantled or weakened - quite the reverse in fact. In addition to this, we should note that where the term instrumentalism is closely associated with notions of scientific prediction and control, it may have yet another meaning for political life; one which suggests that social institutions should be manipulated in order to achieve maximum social satisfaction and efficiency.

Experimental or instrumental methods might coincide with pluralism where one argued, as I illustrated in the last chapter, that the actual configuration of society suggests that pluralistic arrangements might work better at producing happiness. This was the sort of empirically attuned argument that Laski and Sabine, although to different degrees, were inclined to put. It helps explain why pragmatic methods and political pluralism were somehow seen as being conceptually related.

There is however, another reason why pluralism and pragmatism could be run together. The reason is philosophical and is related to the pairing of radical empiricism with the conventionalist theory-of-knowledge.
of knowledge, which we discussed in relation to changes in the philosophy of science, does not greatly differ from the pragmatic method. It is in some ways only a stricter version of it because it imposes greater limits on the criteria which we can use in order to judge what works. In other ways, it is a more radical version of it to the extent that it emphasises the purely conventional character of scientific knowledge. But what links together radical empiricism and conventionalist theories of knowledge is that in order to adopt the latter one must to accept some of the premises of the underlying the former. That is, conventionalist theories of knowledge presuppose that what we observe is somehow or to some degree formless or fluid; this view of sense-experience is one that is frequently associated with the radical empiricists as we shall see. What we should also note is that this founding of knowledge on immediate sense data drives us to focus on the particular instant or moment.

Thus we can see that the conventionalist theory of knowledge may implicate, even if it does not logically entail, an emphasis on the particular, the empirical and a view of immediacy as flux. To the degree that pragmatic methods can be identified with conventionalism we can say that pragmatism is driven towards a radical empiricism as well. Indeed, a particularistic orientation towards the world as well as an emphasis on the given has long been associated with pragmatism. (Hibben 1908:373)

It is above all in the work of James that attention to the immediate and the particular was combined with pragmatic methods. Thus we can also perhaps assert a certain complementarity between
pragmatism and radical empiricism—despite James' claims to the contrary. Dewey, on the other hand as we saw in the chapter four, was associated with pragmatism's more rationalist or instrumentalist side, insofar as he had a greater belief in the veracity of the results of scientific experiment and placed more emphasis on arranging various data in order to present a wider picture of experience.

As we also saw in chapter four, Dewey was not in favour of a radical form of empiricism and tended to place a greater emphasis on the objective character of his pragmatism. It is interesting to note here again how the very strictness of the radical empiricist or positivist definition of the given is precisely what may allow it to shrink into solipsism or a subjective form of idealism; whereas a "metaphysical" commitment to the reality of facts may induce greater rationality, insofar as one might try to arrange the facts so as to form a coherent whole.

These fine distinctions and subtle ambiguities within pragmatism are important because, as I suggested earlier, they are related to the different tendencies that existed within what was called the pragmatic approach to politics. Indeed, pragmatism was an equivocal philosophy which gave birth to an equivocal politics.

2. Modern Physics and Politics

Before I explore the various manifestations of pragmatism in politics, I want to discuss the impact of modern physics on the
political theory of pluralism - something which I alluded to in the last chapter and which ties in with the generally empirical thrust of much pluralist theory. That there was such an impact is not surprising. Physics and politics have a long association. Classical physical theories had been used to give support to earlier political and economic creeds. Against this background, it was only natural that any changes in physical theories, changes that as we have seen were given a great prominence in intellectual debates, would invite political interest and speculation as to their significance.

The connection between pragmatism in science and philosophy and political thought was often nebulous and indirect. As I have mentioned previously, there was a tendency to invoke something called the "spirit of the times" when arguing on behalf of or against "anti-intellectual" positions in various areas of life and study; so it was for politics as well. Thus, we find Laski arguing that the questioning of traditional social notions was merely in keeping with the general spirit of anti-dogmatism or anti-intellectualism in art, science and religion. (Laski 1920:335 Elliot 1928:3ff;15f) Laski himself made no use of the vocabulary of physics in his discussions of pluralism - although he often did mix empirical arguments with moral and metaphysical ones.

A little more closely related with the field of physics were appeals to political scientists to adopt the "relativistic" viewpoint in studying social institutions. This meant examining institutions in temporal rather than purely spatial terms. To put
this more clearly, political scientists should examine the actual workings of institutions and not simply the axioms on which they were based. (Barnes 1925:117-119) The American political scientist Professor William Bennet Munro wrote that, like modern physicists and biologists, political scientists should free themselves (as scientists had freed themselves from the a priori idiom of Galileo) from static categories and structures — including axioms pertaining to the sovereignty of the state, the natural rights of man and the principles of laissez-faire. (Munro 1928:10)

But these were no more than methodological injunctions and did not differ much from appeals to an empirically-minded, anti-dogmatic spirit. Nevertheless, more explicit references to physical analogies appeared in political arguments, stating that the empirical approach of modern physics revealed that the macroscopic and microscopic worlds which are to a degree fluid and pluralistic.

Thus, we find Dewey appealing to Einstein's relativity theory in arguing against what he called social absolutism. As we noted in the last chapter, Dewey argued that social absolutism (in particular, he was referring to its latest manifestation in Soviet Russia) was a product of an out-dated view of science — both in terms of its methods and in terms of the picture of things that it offered. As I have pointed out, Dewey argued that Einstein's theory gave support to the instrumental or experimental approach.
But what sort of political beliefs did he see modern physics supporting? In this context, Dewey wrote that the collectivist views of writers such as H. G. Wells were based on a misunderstanding of the picture of things that modern science offered. Collectivism, like the policy of laissez-faire, was based on a view of science handed down from Isaac Newton to Herbert Spencer—one which depicted a well-ordered mechanical world. But, Dewey wrote, this understanding of science popularised by Wells among others, was no longer warranted in the wake of Einstein's theory. Einstein's theory had replaced the well-ordered world of classical science by a world full of "puckers and skews." (Dewey 1921:315ff)

Quantum physics was also used in a most adventurous manner in this context. Munro argued that it was very "difficult to believe" that quantum theory had no metaphysical implications. Political scientists, he wrote, must be ready to "borrow by analogy" from the new physics and explore the "sub-atomic possibilities" that it offered. (Munro 1928:2:8:5) (1) Thus, just as the absolutist state was a microcosm of a monistic cosmos for idealist political theorists (as Elliot described it), the pluralistic state became a type of macrocosmos of the sub-atomic quantum world for the pluralists. (Elliot 1928:88)

1. Munro seemed conscious of the deliberate character of this metaphorical transposition. He defended it by arguing that in intellectual life: "New truths cannot be quarantined. No branch of knowledge advances by itself. In its progress it draws others along." (Munro 1928:3) Similarly, George Sabine (who as we noted earlier believed that ideas "naturally" migrated from one field to another) wrote that that while such borrowings by analogy could prove to be a "shaky form of inference," nothing could be more common "than for one science to be stimulated and enriched by the example of others." (Sabine 1930:880)
Turning to the new physics implied more than a methodological shift for political science, for it could lead one towards a political metaphysics of sorts. Again, what was called for was a change in the central metaphor upon which political theory is built — that is a turn from static mechanical metaphors of atomic theory to biological or quantum metaphors of evolution and process. Munro wrote that just as the language of biology allowed public institutions to be seen as "living organisms" caught up in a process of evolution like the "protoplasmic cell", so too the language of quantum physics allowed one to view political "electro-dynamics" in terms of dynamic group forces (subject to process and change), rather than in terms of static mechanical models. (Munro 1928:3-4)

Dewey wrote that society is not just a complex of "many associations" but is also a flux of associations as "social molecules" recombine to form "new associations." (Dewey 1957:203) This is because the associations which exist in society are prone both to swell and break down. (Laski made the same point only using a different vocabulary. He wrote that: "Right...is not a static thing, but made and remade in the crucible of experience." [Laski 1948:263]) Thus, we are not describing arguments in favour of a static pluralism; instead of this, we are describing a picture of a society characterised by groups which are constantly flowering, fading and shifting.

The political conclusions drawn from such analogies were not very controversial. Physics seemed to imply something in between a society premised on the ultimacy of both the individual and an
a priori general will. As both Dewey and Harry Elmer Barnes wrote, neither anarchism nor absolutism were justified by modern science. (Dewey 1957:202ff, Barnes 1925:142) This brings us back to pluralism - but even here the pluralism is not of a radical kind as there is no attempt to deny the role of the state. Dewey, Barnes and Munro all saw the future role of the modern state in encouraging and co-ordinating the activities of voluntary associations. (Dewey 1957:204) It was this particular conception of pluralism which prevailed in post-war America.

How far did this sort of scientifically derived pluralism go? Not too far. This has been much remarked upon in relation to Dewey. A number of writers, including Perry and Charles Morris (the latter being a student of Dewey's at the University of Chicago), note that Dewey was much more communalistic in his leanings than was James. (Morris 1970:96) One explanation for this relates to a point made earlier. Whatever his early leanings towards the notion of immediacy and conventionalist theories of knowledge, Dewey also developed a strong belief in the efficacy of scientific methods of observation, prediction and control. (Although he did not believe that the procedures of the natural sciences had to be adopted in their entirety in order for the social sciences to become scientific.) That is, Dewey had a much greater faith in the unity of the scientific method and its applicability to moral and social affairs - his was not the radical empiricism of James. (Elliot 1928:7) Indeed, it was for this reason that Dewey's critics charged him with "scientism" (Morris 1970:89)
Further to this, Dewey's interest in science was very much tied to the instrumental uses to which it could be put; in particular, he wanted to socialise the fruits of its methods. The explanation for this may also lie in Dewey's earlier cultural or ethical idealism. (Morris wrote that Dewey began his intellectual life as an "avowed Hegelian" and only later moved from being a "cultural idealist" to being a "cultural naturalist". [Morris 1970:177]) Morris makes the important point that out of all the pragmatists Dewey was the most interested in questions of value. (Morris 1970:37:81) Dewey defined values not in terms of any passion or desire but as "enjoyments which are the consequences of intelligent action." (Dewey 1930:85) As we have seen, Dewey regarded values or purposes as a means by which to assess the efficacy of a particular course of action. But in addition to this, he also thought that the pragmatic method could help us to resolve disputes over values insofar as it could assist in the discovery of what would be required to revolve such disputes in the particular situation in which they arise. (Dewey 1939:47) (Although, this also led to the charge that he was not scientific enough. [Morris 1970:89]) We should keep these points in mind, as they are relevant to the charge levelled against Dewey by Elliot that in his attempt make a science of ethics he was creating a philosophy fit only for fascism. In the view of critics such as Elliot, Dewey had denied morality an independent status and reduced it to a form of behaviour to be assessed in the context of a given environment and in terms of its success or failure in relation to a given
3. Pluralism and Pragmatist Metaphysics

In *Studies in the Problem of Sovereignty* Laski declared himself to be a pragmatist and he related his political pluralism on a number of occasions to James' philosophical pluralism. This asserted philosophical influence might to some extent explain why his pluralism was more particularistic than that of many of his mentors or peers. On the other hand, James' philosophy may have served only to provide philosophical justification or reinforcement for the radical pluralistic stand that he had already developed. But before I address that issue I should briefly examine the development of James' work and some of its possible implications. It is an examination which will further help demonstrate the relation between empiricism and pluralism.

James' pluralist philosophy was a development of his empirical study of psychology. James described the reality disclosed to him in his psychological studies as a "sensible reality, the flux of our sensations and emotions as they pass."

(James 1907:191) As Perry writes, when James was passing through

1. Elliot wrote that in Dewey's "...hands pragmatism changed character radically from the individualistic and romanticist 'way of looking at things' that it had meant to James. Later on it may become clear that for pragmatism to walk the same road with what Dewey has called Instrumentalism is a case of the lady and the tiger all over again. James, the enemy of scientific determinism applied to human conduct, would have cast off the alliance had he been able to foresee Instrumentalism as it appears in *Experience and Nature.*" (Elliot 1928:27) Elliot complained that Dewey's argument in *Experience and Nature* was essentially that he sought to make a science of human conduct (a science *des moeurs*). He wrote that this was possible because Dewey believed that the forces that animated man were much the same as those which animated nature; Elliot wrote insofar as there were values in his analysis they were only the pragmatic ones of survival. (Elliot 1928:24)
his "phenomenalistic phase" (when he was influenced by the work of Mach, Ostwald and Poincare), it was this "pure experience" which he put forward "as the aboriginal form of being..." (Perry 1938:100) (1)

But James went further than Mach and the other radical empiricists. Because he used this phenomenalism as a basis on which to construct a metaphysics or cosmology. Perry notes how in *A Pluralistic Universe* James, encouraged by his association with Bergson, elevated this pure experience or immediacy "to the rank of ultimate reality." (Perry 1938:100) Thus, we have arrived at James' "buzzing" cosmos.

As I said in chapter four, positivism as a form of personal idealism could bloom into a metaphysics of process. That is, the contents of private experience could be projected onto an objective reality; the contents of mind could become the contents of experience and matter in general. This is exactly what happened with James - his radical empiricism expanded into the metaphysics of pluralism. But the injection of his empirical psychology into the cosmos happened by design not by accident. In *Pragmatism* he embraced profusion, rather than Mach's rule of economy, as the key to reality. (James 1907:190) The qualities associated with the phenomenalistic understandings of experience, that is, discontinuity and flux also became the qualities inhering in a larger, concrete reality. In this way the universe was rendered as a multiverse and unity became multiplicity.

But James' crucial statement in relation to his pluralistic metaphysics, at least as far as political thinkers were concerned, was the one he made in *A Pluralistic Universe* and
which is as follows:

Pragmatically interpreted, pluralism or the doctrine that it [the universe] is many means only that the sundry parts of reality may be externally related. Everything you can think of, however vast or inclusive, has on the pluralistic view a genuinely 'external' environment of some sort or amount. Things are 'with' one another in many ways, but nothing includes everything, or dominates over everything. The word 'and' trails along after every sentence. Something always escapes...something else is self-governed and absent...and unreduced to unity. (James 1977:145)

It is this statement in the concluding chapter of James' book which Laski drew upon in The Personality of Associations (1916), Studies in the Problem of Sovereignty (1917) and again a few years later in A Grammar of Politics (1925). (Laski 1916:425 Laski 1917:10 Laski 1925:261) Laski appeared to have accepted much of James' understanding of reality as flux. He accepted James' view that things can only ever be partially unified; that variety or difference is essential and that life can never be reduced to unity. He too writes of a multiverse rather than a universe. (Laski 1948:261)

But let us see what happens when we move downwards from James' projected cosmos to social or political configurations. In applying James' pluralistic metaphysics to the individual and his relations with the rest of society Laski concluded that "never as human beings [are we] wholly included in any relation"; we are surrounded by an environment which "separates us from others, or, at the best, makes our union with them but a partial one." (Laski 1948:260) (1) As social beings we experience

1. Laski wrote in Liberty in the Modern State that the real self is the "self that isolated from his fellows." It is "all that I am and do. It is the total-impression produced by the bewildering variety of may acts, good and bad and indifferent." (Laski 1930:29)
ourselves as enfolded in but also separate from the rest of society and the associations into which we enter. According to Laski, men are never fully merged into groups and groups are never fully merged into the rest of society or the state. We should note that this argument would seem to contradict Laski's position of 1916 when he spoke of groups having real personalities.

Laski did not always make it clear whether his pluralism proceeds from the psychological or metaphysical bases which James provided. Indeed, Laski seemed to shift between these two levels of explanation; although, not surprisingly, this is somewhat true of James as well who, as we have seen, shifted upwards from sensory perception to grand metaphysics.

Indeed, from the quotations I have cited from Laski, it can be argued that the psychological elements in James' pluralism were also in evidence in Laski's work with its strong emphasis on the isolation of the self - something which well suited Laski's own early liberalism. Further to this, we can also see a relation with James' psychology in Laski's occasional focus on the complexity of each individual self. The self and the universe become then mirror-images as we find that division or difference goes to the core of each; just as we have a plural universe we also find within us a plurality of selves. Laski wrote, for example, that we "...experience ourselves not in unity but in
It is not hard to see what political consequences might flow from these interpretations of James' psychology and metaphysics. Psychological complexity translates into the political fact that in any given society an individual may have multiple allegiances and that these should be accommodated. But what form of political organisation can accommodate such bundles of hyphens? At this point, Hsiao presumed that Laski's plural state was intended to be an exact replica of James' plural universe. (Hsiao 1927:126)

That is, Laski's state, like James' universe, was ultimately a pluralistic arrangement of grouped forces. Indeed, Laski admitted in his article "The Personality of Associations" that the implications of this theory were polyarchic. (Laski 1916:425) In the Grammar however, he argued that the implications were federal — whether this means a centralising or decentralising federalism is not clear. Indeed, Laski apparently refused to answer this question on the grounds that one can only respond to shifting desires, allegiances and needs. To this extent, we can say his pluralism is pragmatic or experimental rather than static.

Drawing political conclusions from James' metaphysics is not as strange as it may seem. In a sense, James himself had prepared the ground for this in using political metaphors in order to explain his own conception of the universe. For example, he wrote that his conception of reality was closer to "a federal republic than an empire or a kingdom." (James 1977:145) His book Pragmatism also made use of political analogies. Hsiao even suggested that James' metaphysics, which he slammed as the "most
audacious piece of anthropomorphism" in the history of Western philosophy, was implicitly political — in the sense that it had a strong liberal bias. James had created his "cosmic republicanism" by extending the "libertarian idea of 'self-government' from the realm of political organisation to metaphysics." (Hsiao 1927:113)

(1) However, the real basis for the metaphysics lies in his empirical psychology — although no doubt James' own liberal predisposition (2) is present in his metaphysical projections of his psychology. Thus, James travelled from a psychological theory of the self as a stream of experiences to argue for the pluralistic nature of the universe. From this pluralism there emerged a political theory which depicts society as a series of partially related autonomies — be they groups or individuals.

Nevertheless, and contrary to Hsiao who saw pragmatism as the underlying philosophy of pluralism, I would argue that James' metaphysics fed and confirmed pluralist political positions Laski had already arrived at. As I mentioned earlier it is not clear

1. In his Pragmatism James pointed to the fact that the authority of States and Empires was crumbling, but that this anti-monistic political sentiment had yet to infiltrate the philosophy classrooms. (James 1907:261) Laski wrote in The American Democracy that James' philosophy was an "affirmation of faith in the individual, an insistence upon his freedom, a call upon him to act, and a promise that his action will not be in vain." (Laski 1949:448)

2. Hsiao derided James' philosophy as a "Cosmic Reign of Terror" and was equally scathing about Laski's politics, declaring that James has played Rousseau to Laski's Danton. In continuing his French revolutionary analogy he wrote: "The absolutist Bastille is shattered; the all-absorbing monarchical God dethroned, liberty for all; Year one of the Universe-Republic is declared." (Hsiao 1927:193)
whether Laski proceeded from James' psychology or his metaphysics; and nowhere do we find a sustained analysis of James' philosophy among Laski's works - although he was obviously familiar with some of James' ideas. What James' philosophy did was firstly, provide pluralists like Laski with a means of launching a metaphysical, and not just political, assault on the Austinian or neo-Hegelian theories of the state. Secondly and more simply, James' philosophy, as with empiricism in general, also provided a new vocabulary with which to challenge political "block-universes." Thus, it could be argued that rigid notions such as the territorial state did not take account of the flux and complexity of social structures.

4. Pluralist Theory of Sovereignty and Law

In relation to this last point, we find that empiricism and pragmatism also had an impact upon theories of jurisprudence. (Jurisprudence, Laski said, is the "eye of the law" because it relates law to the social environment and to the spirit of the times. [Laski 1948:577]) The influence of pragmatic or sociological thought in the area of law was evident in both America and on the continent. In the case of France, the jurisprudential theories of Demogue, Francois Geny (professor of civil law at the University of Nancy) and Duguit are the most cited while the Dutch-born Krabbe was also important. (1) America

1. See Geny's four volume work Science et Technique en Droit Privé Positif, Paris, 1913. Note that in volume one, chapter three, Geny discusses the intellectual atmosphere of the times. He mentions for example the philosophy of Bergson (and its association with syndicalism as well as the radical empiricism of Poincare. (Geny 1913:75ff)
was represented in this regard by Dean Roscoe Pound and Justice Holmes. (Oliver Wendall Holmes Jr.)

These were the names that were variously cited in discussions of the sociology of law movement, the members of which called upon jurists to reject the idea of law as solely derived from either first principles or from contract. (Follett 1918:122) It was argued that one should study all the sources of law; in particular, the concrete circumstances in which law arises and is observed. It is not surprising that with this call to turn away from abstract principles we see the words relativity creep into discussions about legal theory. This was in order to stress the tentative and negotiated character of law. Sabine for instance wrote of the "relativity of legal truth" adding that for that reason the jurist's attitude must always be one of "compromise" and "adjustment" - seeking the "pragmatic adaption of means to ends". (Sabine 1930:879 Merriam 1924:16) (1)

Vital metaphors were also used to remodel traditional thinking about the law. Follett, Laski and Sabine all argued that not only in a process of becoming but was also an expression of life - law was an articulation of the community's vital fluid. (Follett 1919:131, Laski 1948:577, Sabine 1930:878) (1)

There were actually three distinct but overlapping arguments in relation to legal theory being offered in discussions about the sociology of law. And all three of these views of legal

1. There are numerous examples of the pragmatic spirit in the area of law. Hsiao cited Hugo Krabbe as saying that the stability of law is a contradiction in terms and Dean Pound as saying that while law must be stable it can never stand still. (Hsiao 1927:169-70)
theory related in some way to the various tendencies within pragmatism. Firstly, there was a pragmatic conception of law as that which works. That is, law is simply those rules of conduct which, pragmatically speaking, can get "themselves obeyed" (Urban 1919:649; Elliot 1928:147). Secondly, there was the notion of law and sovereignty, as put forward by Follett, which has them as the products of active willing on the part of the community - an understanding which she derived from James. Thirdly, there is the conception of law as a set of biological or psychological imperatives; a view of law which is seen as being close to, rightly or wrongly, the scientific pragmatism of Dewey.

I shall deal with Follett's conception first. In Follett's analysis we move beyond a view of law as something which is pragmatically negotiated; something which expresses nothing more than whatever individuals or the authorities can get away with. Law, she wrote (echoing Bergson), is the "entelechy of freedom"; that is, law like other institutions should allow us to be free to become our true selves or to express our true personalities. (Follett 1919:578f)

Thus, Follett did not simply seek to expose the political nature of the law, she also attempted to put something more ethically satisfying in place of the older and arguably discredited theories. Her emphasis (and here she cited the German jurists Ihering and Jellinek as well as Dean Pound), was on the

1. Follett cited Mr. Felix Frankfurter's address to the American Bar Association in August 1915 in which he proclaimed that "law must follow life." (Follett 1919:130)
fact that law is produced by the community or grows out of community needs and desires and therefore it should reflect these things. Krabbe is also relevant here, for implicit in his idea of the state as a legal community, and also in his idea of an international legal community, was the notion that law grows out of interests which are then evaluated in accordance with man's sense of right.

Krabbe wrote that it is mankind itself which is the source of "legal values" and it is for this reason that law is by its "nature sovereign." (Krabbe 1930:151ffj232) However, while Krabbe's emphasis was on the creation of legal values or standards, Follett was more interested in the idea of the law as a reflection of the community will. (It should be obvious here why the notion of law as based on contract was rejected. Contract law rests on the idea that our wills are divided rather than fused; it leaves us "'free' to fight" out our differences [Follett 1919:124f]) The basis in Gierke should be apparent; how this grows into a theory of sovereignty resembling Bosanquet's I will explain in due course. (Follett 1919:122f)

Looking to all the sources of law and prescribing that the state and its legal institutions should reflect the people's will could also be developed in another way. That is, one could begin to argue that law should relate to social purposes or needs. (Lass 1948:577, Urban 1919:549) There are some similarities between this view and Follett's argument. However, the conception of law as something which should reflect social purposes could be made to sound more objective than Follett's idea of law as a
reflection of an active community willing — either by attaching this notion to a set of moral abstractions or by ascribing it to certain laws of human behaviour.

Given the varying tendencies available to those who approached law from a sociological perspective, it is not surprising that there was often a lack of clarity in some of the arguments. Laski is a good example as he appeared to approach jurisprudence from a number of different and potentially contradictory perspectives. At times he attempted to ruthlessly expose the political realities which lie behind the law while at other times he made the prescriptive claim that law should serve social purposes. Even here ambiguity remained for these social purposes were sometimes treated as if they are moral commands and at other times as if they are mere functional necessities.

These same shifts are also evident in Laski's discussion of the theory of sovereignty. At times, he followed the nominalistic path laid down by Duguit, denying that there are any essences behind our abstractions. (Wilde 1920:352) Thus he could argue that the apparent reality of the state as a juristic person, along with the will that it was supposed to represent, was nothing but an effect of language. (Elliot 1925:485 Elliot 1928:88:41) As Barker recognised, this could equally lead to an attack on the idea of group personality. Certainly, this was an idea that Laski seemed to gradually move away from in the 1920s; although he still seemed to treat groups as if they were somehow more authentic than larger collectivities such as the state. We should also note that this nominalistic approach, which might leave us with nothing but individuals and their interests, was
also very compatible with Laski's liberalism and with his interest in James' empirical psychology. (1)

According to the nominalistic picture, what lay behind the fiction of the juristic person was not a single sovereign power but an array of particular social forces or interests. (Laski 1948:55f Elliot 1928:88). Similarly, the state could not be seen to give expression to a single or united will. What the state wills is really the result of constant negotiation and compromise with and between conflicting interest groups. (Elliot 1928:89) It followed from this that sovereignty was, like the law, a relative notion; and that obedience was always a "matter of degree." (Elliot 1928:89)

We should note at this point how the instrumental method interposes in a most interesting way. Pluralists (from Gierke onwards) did not simply aim at providing a more empirically or metaphysically correct account of the source and workings of institutions; at least when they did there was a larger political point to this. This was especially true of Laski. Thus we find

1. While Laski early on accepted the notion of the real personality of associations, he later seems to have rejected this. Firstly, this would entail the acceptance of undesirable groupings. But also, this would undermine his emphasis on individuals and their particular experiences. Further to this, to dismiss as metaphysics the idea of a social mind would seem to necessitate a similar dismissal of the idea of the group mind. Barker also wrote that pluralists had to decide whether it was the case that the members of a group shared the same identity and that therefore the group was a real person or whether it was the case that we are as individuals ultimately isolated and that therefore the idea of the real personality of groups is a nominalist fiction. (Barker 1957:160ff)
him shifting between observations on the relative nature of sovereignty to arguing in terms of the instrumental purposes of the state - just as he did in his discussion of jurisprudence. (Ellis 1921:401, Zerby 1945:138, 142) He wrote that we must judge the state not "from what it announces itself to be, but from what it does to the daily substance of men's lives." (Laski 1948:249) Thus, we turn from an empirical argument (which in itself is not conclusive) to a normative one, insisting that the limitation on the sovereignty of the state and its claim to obedience flows from the fact that the existence of any government solely rests on its ability to fulfill and maintain rights; rights which are held to be prior to the state. (Elliot 1924:259)

In this vein Laski wrote that government rests on a "contingent moral obligation. Its actions are right to the degree that they maintain rights." (Laski 1948:57) As evidence of the infinite flexibility of pragmatic arguments, we should also note how Laski broadened out pragmatic criteria to include moral considerations. For he wrote that what the state does is right, not by virtue of the fact that it has willed something, but because whatever it does "works" in relation to the betterment of men's lives. (Laski 1948:283)

With this appeal to abstract moral categories such as rights which impose limitations on state power we are moving beyond realistic appraisals of the operation of the law or of sovereignty; we are also moving out of the area of pluralism. Indeed, we saw this earlier in relation to the seemingly
paradoxical situation which had pluralists proclaiming their internationalism.

This point deserves further explanation. Here we should note that one of the significant features of pluralist theory was its revival of the medieval distinction between positive and natural law. But the most important thing about this distinction for the pluralists was that traditionally, natural law (itself a manifestation of "eternal law") was held to be superior to the laws of man. (Hsiao 1927:10f) (1) Whatever the practical reasons for this distinction and the concomitant elevation of natural law, the point of drawing upon it in the 20th century was (as with the "realistic" analyses of sovereignty), to upset juristic theories of the state; in particular, those theories which were associated with the names of Jean Bodin and John Austin. Drawing upon this antique distinction allowed pluralists to assert that there was an objective law beyond the state and that this was a righteous law.

Quite obviously, this was where Krabbe's argument concerning a universal legal community was going. But the influence of Duguit was also important to the pluralists in this regard.

1. See also Evans, "The Problem of Control in Medieval Industry", Political Science Quarterly, 1916, pp.606ff. Hsiao noted that this distinction proved useful in a period when the institution of the state was gaining increased strength and "self-consciousness". For it became "necessary to reconcile political supremacy with legal supremacy. The traditional sharp distinction between natural law and positive law provided a ready solution, and it was, as a matter of fact, utilized with great advantage. Positive law, it was held, whether it be declared by will of the prince, or promulgated by the sovereignty of the people, is plainly a creation of the political power of the state,—and, as such must be regarded as below the state. It is natural law alone which is independent of, that is above, the action of the state." (Hsiao 1927:10ff)
Indeed, Duguit was best known for reviving the notion that there were laws that existed beyond the state; that the state was conditioned by a higher social purpose. It was he above all among the pluralists who spoke of the requirement of the state to obey a certain "rule of right" or "law of nature" (Hsiao 1927:16); that is, the state should obey what Duguit called "objective law" (droit objectif). (Duguit 1919:50)

But from what or where is this objective law derived? Duguit thought his approach thoroughly scientific in this regard. Objective law is derived from those things that are necessary to ensure the survival of the social organism and are also a consequence of that part of our psychological make-up that dictates that we must seek the realization of social purposes. (Duguit 1919:43f) These comprise what Duguit calls the facts of social interdependence or solidarity (solidarité sociale); it is these which oblige the state and institutions to act in the public interest. (Duguit 1919:39-44 Elliot 1922:641-2)

For Duguit the state is not sovereign and self-limiting; it is disciplined by this objective law and the rules of conduct which flow from it. (Wilde 1920:357)


2. In fact, it is the objective character of the rules which distinguishes them from positive or statute law (lois) - the latter being tainted by the subjective will of the state. (Coker 1921:188ff)
These laws discipline the behaviour of members of the community - each member must uphold these laws so as not to threaten social security and to preserve and promote those benefits which one gains in becoming a member of a community. Duguit wrote:

The basis of public law is therefore no longer command but organization. Public law is no longer based on individual right or the autonomy of a private will, but upon the idea of a social function imposed on every person. (Duguit 1919:49-50)

Thus, Duguit's conception of an objective law or rule of right differed markedly from that promoted by natural law or natural rights advocates and from the idea of a universal legal community as proposed by Krabbe. Duguit insisted that government cannot "infringe" objective law; laws that the government issues (laws by statute - *lois*), will only be obeyed to the extent that they give expression to these objective laws and the social purposes on which they are based. (MacMahon Ball 1932:177)

Further to this, he argued that citizens or groups will not do anything to jeopardize social solidarity. But what, we may ask, is the exact thrust of the "cannot" or "will not" in this context?

That is, it is possible to call the objectivity of Duguit's law into question. Indeed, the word *droit* itself is essentially ambiguous. In French *droit* connotes both right and law yet is not quite the same as either of these terms as they are used in English. (1) While Duguit himself appeared to be using the term

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1. Lalande wrote that the word *Droit*, one which French philosophy has attached great importance too, "is a very comprehensive term; it is at the same time right, justice, a rightful claim, law (and
to mean law rather than right, this ambiguity still allows what may be merely an injunction or command to present itself as indubitable fact.

Again, when Duguit said that the state must or will conform with the principle of social necessity, we have to enquire into the nature of these terms. As I said earlier, his objectivist view of law relied on appeals to the compelling power of biological and psychological facts. Thus he wrote: "Statute is [or should be] the expression of a rule which social needs are elaborating in individual consciences." (Duguit 1919:73) Thus, it is clear that if we accept Duguit's premises then the "must" of which Duguit spoke is tautological, because we cannot disobey what our psychology compels us to do, and prescriptive, because he was saying that it is a practical necessity that we pay attention to biological laws of survival. Thus, his droit objectif exists as both fact and exhortation. (1)

especially natural law), and positive legislation." (Lalande 1916:531:531n) John Austin also noted that it was common for German writers on the philosophy or rationale of law to confuse the terms "law" and "right". (Austin 1861:258) In relation to the confused use of the term objective law Follet wrote that by le droit objectif Duguit means "merely law." She added that because he also speaks of "power as resting on function in contradistinction to the classical theory of the abstract 'rights' of man, rights apart from law and only declared by law, political writers sometimes speak of Duguit's 'objective'--theory of law, as opposed to a 'subjective' theory of law, [that is, the notion of subjective rights] when jurists would tell us that law is objective, and that subjective right is always merely a right, my right." (Follet 1918:273n)

1. Elliot likened Duguit's idea of social interdependence to Rousseau's notion of the general will. (Elliot 1922:646) If he is correct in this analogy, the argument for compulsion is essentially tautological. That is, we can not logically disobey because, by definition, we found ourselves and participate in the general will. Interestingly, Laski himself, makes this point
Duguit's concept of objective law thus has normative elements; nor can he maintain his claim that it is non-metaphysical simply because in a nominalistic fashion he rejected the idea of a community will. As many observers (including Laski) have suggested, rather than being positivistic and realistic as he had claimed, Duguit's objective law was actually a metaphysical abstraction and to assert otherwise revealed a weakness in his argument. (Geny 1913b:193, Duguit 1919:69f, Wilde 1920:364) (1)

Duguit did assert that his objective law was evolving because the requirements of social solidarity themselves changed. Law, he wrote, "...like every social phenomenon, is subject to perpetual change." (Duguit 1919:xxxv) Nevertheless, it is difficult to see his theory as other than one which substitutes a legal for a political monism; a legal monism which had the state and individual or groups as its instrument. (2) This is a point which would seem to damage the credibility of both his pragmatist

about Rousseau's volonté générale in Liberty in the Modern State. Similarly, Wilde notes that Hegel and Bosanquet "admit the existence of bad states, though they refuse to recognize them as strictly real or Wirklich. 'A bad state', says Hegel, 'is one that merely exists.' And Bosanquet, both in his earlier and his latest writings, claims for the state, not moral absoluteness, but only absoluteness as having 'the distinctive function of dictating the final adjustment in matters of external action,' and even as to this, he asserts a duty of rebellion under certain conditions." (Wilde 1920:368)

1. Laski noted that it was pointed out by Geny in his Science et Technique en Droit Privé that one of the errors in Duguit's writings is the "absence of an explicit avowal of its implied metaphysics." (Duguit 1919:69n) What is being referred to here when Laski and Geny speak of a metaphysics would seem to be a moral core.

and pluralist credentials. Follet wrote that Duguit's pragmatism had not as "yet rid itself of absolute standards." (Follet 1918:276) Further to this, his conception of objective social necessity suggests an underlying harmony in society which sits oddly alongside the emphasis on conflict that some of the pluralists (especially the syndicalists) held to be pivotal.

So, we have a number of different directions in which pluralist theory on the sovereign state and on jurisprudence could go. We have on the one hand, a political theory in which there is a harmonious conception based on the idea of objective needs, and on the other hand, we have a "realistic" account which depicts social life as a ceaseless struggle between two or more discontinuous groupings. In between these, we have a conception of law as the creation of the will of the community.

As Sabine suggested, many of the critics of existing theories of sovereignty simply missed the point. For while it might be true that conflicting loyalties exist and that the unitary state had not been handed down from on high, these facts in themselves do not explain away the value of the doctrine. For Sabine, the debate between pluralists and monists was above all of a practical rather than logical or metaphysical nature. (Sabine 1923:41) Indeed, casting the debate in stark metaphysical terms could serve to escalate conflicts of opinion and introduce division of where none were warranted.

Sabine also made the important point that in attacking the depiction of the state as a juristic person, pluralists were in some ways attacking a straw-man. This depiction he wrote, was not
intended to be interpreted literally; it was really a shorthand way of expressing the necessary unity of law. Sabine wrote that the seeming strangeness of the doctrine was due to the fact that a younger generation of political thinkers and actors were unused to this particular theoretical language. (Sabine 1920:306)

Furthermore, the fact that there was a distinction between legal sovereignty and actual empirical sovereignty was hardly a discovery of pluralist thinkers. Figures such as John Austin and Lord Bryce were well aware of this. But for these theorists, whatever the empirical limitations upon the exercise of unitary sovereignty, it remained a very practical thing. Pluralists however, saw it differently. For them, a continued insistence on the necessary unity of law and sovereign power would not only prove highly impractical; it was also a recipe for tyranny.

I will now go on to examine in detail the criticisms of pragmatism in relation to pluralist theory — both in its voluntaristic or functionalist form. In particular, I will examine its alleged association with fascist doctrine and administrative techniques. I will then go on to discuss the concept of sovereignty as something which can only be willed into being by the community. This is an idea that was also held to be

1. For example, Lord Bryce pointed out in his 1901 Studies in History and Jurisprudence that "legal sovereignty had no more to do with actual political power than a demonstration in geometry had to do with irregular figures drawn on paper." (Bryce 1901:458) Even earlier than then, Austin had alluded, in his Lectures on Jurisprudence, to moral and other limits to sovereignty when he wrote: "Like the sovereign body of which it is a member, it [the state] is obliged or restrained morally: by opinions or sentiments current in the given community." (Austin 1861:238)
implicit in James and was put forward as part of an attempt to wrest James' philosophy from the hands of the pluralists.

5. Pluralism and Tyranny

Many of those of who were critical of Austinian notions of sovereignty or Bosanquet's theory of the general will (because they were seen as paving the way towards dictatorship) were themselves accused of letting loose tyrannical forces. I commented in the last chapter that the pluralist enthusiasm for crumbling empires seemed somewhat odd given their view that the sovereign state - or the anarchic balance of power system that it resulted in - was the cause of war. Similarly, I said it was odd that the very thing that was believed to have caused the war should be recommended as a way of ordering the domestic arena. That is, as Elliot described it, a polyarchic system in which groups were "sovereign in themselves". (Elliot 1928:291) As Cohen wisely observed, the "evils of the absolute state are not cured by multiplication of absolutes." (Cohen 1919:689) Further to this, one can also ask how such a system differs from the anarchic system of laissez-faire which pluralists also attacked. Had they not just created a new set of sovereign atoms?

One can also raise doubts about the claims of pluralists to provide an empirically superior account of society. As Muirhead wrote, it was not so much a question of overcoming metaphysics but of which metaphysics would be chosen; that is, pluralism or monism. (Muirhead 1924:174) (1) Cohen argued that what many

1. Sabine regretted that essentially a practical or political issue had been reduced to a stark metaphysical choice. Sabine
pluralists had done was simply to reify groups rather than the state. Furthermore, it was argued that this metaphorical description of the group as an autonomous person was dangerous. (Cohen 1919:683ff) Granting groups the same status as persons might permit the entry into public life of all sorts of strange and sinister associations. As Barker had recognised, to hold that all groups are in possession of rights might entail the acceptance of evil groups such as the Mafia or Camorra. (Barker 1957:163)

But less colourful examples could also be provided. Trade unions, for example, could be seen as equally or more oppressive than larger social organisations. As earlier pluralists recognised, it is because of the potential for group oppression that the state, with the ability to command, becomes necessary. In relation to this point, one could also argue that pluralists had been too selective in their choice of historical examples. For example, Cohen wrote that cities were freer than villages and that the kings' court was superior to the local court. (Cohen 1919:687:677, Laing 1921:12) Again, as Laing noted, the reason for accepting the "kings peace" was that it was a practical thing. It provided greater autonomy for religious groups reacting against the established church and the physical

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pointed out that neither pluralism nor monism were theories as such but at best marked certain philosophical dispositions or attitudes. Indeed, Sabine regretted the introduction of these two terms into political argument at the time because of the heavy and possibly misleading philosophical baggage that they carried. (Sabine 1923:44-5)
security necessary for the conduct of trade and commerce. (Laing 1921:12)

Thus pluralism was considered to be poor metaphysics and poor politics. Indeed, Hsiao wrote that the political dangers posed by pluralism only became more obvious when they were projected onto a metaphysical canvass. (Hsiao 1927:192-3)

Let us now begin to explore these dangers in more depth. Elliot, who as I said was one of pluralism's most vociferous critics, wrote that where one detracted from the legal authority of the state, society would decline into a "period of feudalistic strife among the interests". (Elliot 1924:259) Here, he was clearly referring to the syndicalists. But this was only the first danger - one which did however, prepare the ground for the next. For in the midst of social division, it was possible for demagogues or disciplined and tightly-knit groups to seize power.

The critics of pluralism in drawing attention to this issue were intent on attacking syndicalism. But they had another target in sight as well. For even though syndicalism as a political movement was largely dead by the 1920s (although this is not to say that industrial unrest did not occur) it was seen as being replaced by an even uglier political phenomenon, namely, fascism. Indeed, according to the critics, it was the class war-fare conducted by the syndicalists that helped form the pretext for the establishment of fascism in Italy. Elliot wrote "feudalism begot nationalism so lawlessness begets Fascismo." (Elliot 1924:257) Or as J. Ramsay MacDonald wrote in an article in the
Socialist Review in June 1923 that: "The reply [answer] to syndicalism is Fascismo." (Elliot 1924:235, Stewart 1928:856)

The relation established between syndicalism and fascism that I have so far elaborated upon was purely one of cause and effect. There were, however, suggestions of a more profound connection; a connection which related to the doctrine of voluntarism, and by that path to the philosophy of pragmatism. What Elliot did was in fact to identify voluntarism with pragmatism. For Elliot, it was what he regarded as the pragmatic doctrine of voluntarism which was the "thread of unity" which drew together fascism and syndicalism. (Sabine 1931:212) It was pragmatism, Elliot wrote, which gave both syndicalism and fascism their "ideology and their values." (Elliot 1928:viii) (Elliot also added functionalist and guild socialist political theories to his list as well - but I will explain the reasons for their presence later. [Elliot 1928:viii]) Both fascism and syndicalism, Elliot argued, embraced the centrality of will in political life and this is what placed them squarely within the pragmatist tradition of thought. Although we should note that while voluntarism could follow a meliorative path, it could also ascend to the absolute and divine. (1)

What makes this point interesting is that not long after this argument was being put, Laski was arguing in Dangers of Obedience that the tyrannies which existed in Europe (in Spain,

1. This was a point made by H. G. Townsend, 1937, "On the possibility of a better world". Philosophical Review. Vol. XLVI, No,2, March, pp.132-46.
Italy and Russia) were expressions of the monistic theory of sovereignty taken to their logical conclusion. (Laski 1930:27) What Laski took as providing support for his pluralism, his critics saw as evidence of its danger. Further to this, Laski was often arguing that both Lenin and Mussolini were cut from the same "Machiavellian" cloth—insofar as both saw the ends as justifying the means. (Laski 1930:251) Yet this was exactly the complaint that Hsiao and Elliot were making in relation to pragmatism (a pragmatism to which Laski had earlier declared his allegiance). As we shall see, the critics of pragmatism argued that it tended to view individuals as instruments and this could be regarded as immoral.

But these are points I shall return to later. At this stage, we need to examine the relations between syndicalism, fascism and pragmatism; or perhaps I should say, the relations between James, Sorel, Bergson and Mussolini. It was in a famous interview which appeared in the Sunday Times on April 11 1926 that Mussolini declared that he owed most to Sorel; he said that his "rough theories of revolutionary tactics has contributed most to form the discipline, energy and power of the fascist cohorts." (Sorel 1950:24 Perry 1935:575n) (1)

Another point of intellectual connection, which ties in with their common interest in tactics, is that Sorel and Mussolini both shared an appreciation of the philosophy of pragmatism. As

1. See also Mussolini in Fascism (1935) where he mentions Sorel, Peguy and Lagardelle of the Mouvement Socialiste as well as the of Italian syndicalists as having an input into Fascism. (Mussolini 1935:16)
I noted in the last chapter, Sorel admired American society and culture for what he saw as its dynamism, energy and unremitting realism. (1)

Elliot wrote that Mussolini had admired and sought to imitate "these 'american' traits." (Elliot 1928:118n) Mussolini seized upon pragmatism, which some have seen as the authentic expression of American culture. William Kilborne Stewart (of Dartmouth College) wrote an article appearing in the American Political Science Review called the "Mentors of Mussolini". In it he mentioned Machiavelli, Nietzsche, James and Sorel, all of whom had been cited by Mussolini, and added to this list Pareto and Oriani. (Stewart 1928:845) Stewart said that Mussolini had embraced this "'American Philosophy'", insisting as "pertinaciously as James on the 'cash-value' of an idea." (Stewart 1928:862) (2)

But it was not just James' pragmatic instrumentalism which was absorbed into Mussolini's philosophical framework. Fittingly, especially in the light of Sorel's presence, we also hear the rushing sound of Bergson's metaphysics of life. Thus we again find the key descriptions; the world is an endless flux -

1. Elliot noted that it was in the context of this admiration that he quoted James approvingly as saying that the "Yankees not only 'consent to live on possibilities'...but they even seek out the hazardous in their enterprises." (Elliot 1928:119, Sorel 1928:20n) The connection between the philosophy of pragmatism and the realism of the American people since their pioneering days was also addressed by Waldo Frank in Our America. (Elliot 1924:241n Frank 1919:26-29)

2. It was because of the emphasis in Machiavelli's Prince on acts of indomitable will in the face of both fortune and necessity, that Machiavelli, above all, was seen by Mussolini as the "'prophet of the pragmatist era in politics.'" (Stewart 1928:845) In reference to the pragmatic element in fascist thinking
a ceaseless becoming. We find that Mussolini too had become
infused with the relativistic spirit in throwing overboard all
"fixed principles and preestablished categories." (Stewart
1928:863)

Relativity, flux becoming - Mussolini could not have sounded
more Bergsonian or pragmatic. But it is at precisely this point
that the pragmatic method is brought to bear. Indeed, we can
begin to see why a pragmatic instrumentalism and a metaphysics of
process are so politically compatible. Because if one is to
exercise one's political will successfully, then it is a
necessary precondition that the world is in some way or to some
degree plastic. Indeed, this is the reason for Hsiao's insistence
that the pluralist's assertion that social life was plastic
increased the chance of "majority-tyranny or the domination of
contingent force." (Hsiao 1927:192f)

That is, as we saw with Sorel, once you view the world as
infinite flux, as a universe "with the lid off" as James put it,
then it can be seen as ripe, for good or ill, for exploitation.
Insofar as Mussolini held this view, Stewart wrote, he could be
regarded as a pragmatist. (Stewart 1928:863)

Mussolini [or someone writing on behalf of Mussolini] wrote: "All
doctrines aim at directing the activities which in their turn
react on the doctrine, modifying and adjusting it to new needs,
or outstripping it. A doctrine must therefore be a vital act and
not a verbal display. Hence the pragmatic strain in Fascism, its
will to power, it will to live, its attitude toward violence, and
its value." (Mussolini 1935:26) See also pages 6-7 where
Mussolini spoke of fascism as a philosophy of action and also
p.59 where he dismisses economic understandings of society whether
capitalist or socialist. Stewart cited Mussolini as saying that
the opinions he expressed should "not be considered as dogmas,
but as expressions of the needs of today, which may tomorrow
become relative...Every program should be carried only to the
right point." (Stewart 1928:863)
We asked earlier how real was the relation between Sorel and Bergson; now we must investigate this alleged association between Mussolini and James. As Stewart noted, pragmatism was popularised in Italy by Papini. (Stewart 1928:862) Papini was part of a small philosophical discussion group which existed in Florence between 1903 and 1907 known as "The Pragmatic Club". (Perry 1935:570) Eleanor Hammond Broadus wrote in her 1934 English translation of Papini's work *Dante Vivo*, (a book which was awarded the Premio Mussolini in 1933) that in those years Papini became the "leader of the younger generation in Italy, voicing their doubts, their social discontent, their programme of reform." (Papini 1934:v) She also added that he was a friend of Bergson and James and along with Benedetto Croce, became one of the principle figures in Italian philosophy in the first few decades of this century. (Papini 1934:vi:v) Perry remarked that the friendship with James began when the American made the acquaintance of the group in the spring of 1905 on a visit to Rome to attend the Fifth International Congress of Psychology and was impressed by their enthusiasm, "frolicsomeness," and "literary swagger" - particularly that of Papini. (Perry 1935:571) (1) As a result of this association Papini in turn became known to American academic audiences with an article he wrote called "What Pragmatism is Like" being translated and published in *The Popular Science Monthly*, in 1907-8 in which he described the pragmatist as one who forced "things to exist"

1. There are a number of approving references to Papini "the young Italian pragmatist" as James called him in James' *Pragmatism*. (See pages 54, 79, 159, 257) Papini himself, in letters to James referred to him as Master. (Perry Sorel 1928:3n)
rather than one who merely asserted that they do exist. He emphasised the particularistic and pluralistic character of pragmatist thought whilst also stressing the difficulties of defining it. (Papini 1907-8:351-354)

But how does this relate to Mussolini? Stewart claimed that Mussolini probably began to read James before 1910. (Stewart 1928:862} Perry concurred with this view, however he also noted that a number of unusual rumours were circulating in the 1920s and 1930s about the origins of Mussolini's interest in the ideas of Bergson, Sorel and James. For example, Perry said that Mussolini had actually claimed to have met James - although Perry regarded this as unlikely. (Perry 1935:577) What he thought most likely was that the future Italian leader had been acquainted with Papini, the Florentine "Pragmatic Club" and its publication Leonardo. He noted that when Leonardo ceased publication in 1907 Mussolini became a contributor to its successor publication La Voce. Hammond Broadus, however, thought that the association between Papini and Mussolini came about at the end of 1914 on the Popolo d'Italia where both were involved in a campaign to get Italy involved in the war. (Papini 1934:vi)

By then the mercurial Papini had already switched from pragmatism to futurism and from futurism to Catholicism. (Hammond Broadus 1934:v Perry 1935:571) (1)

Papini is interesting for us in relation to the links between pragmatist philosophy and fascism. He too was aware of the distinctive strands within pragmatism; primarily the distinction between its "puritanic" utilitarian and
instrumentalist strand which reflects a desire to control the environment in order to achieve social goals and its particularistic strand which sees life in time and chance. For Papini, Perry writes, the distinction was between a social-and a magical pragmatism and it was at this end of the pragmatist spectrum that he saw himself standing with James. (Perry 1935:573f) (1) Pragmatism Papini wrote seemed made to "stimulate the poets and dreamers of the world of thought." (Papini 1907-8:358) The fascist state however, as we shall see, was said to have adopted both aspects of pragmatism; taking the first from James and the second from Duguit.

Mussolini (or those who worked with him) certainly sought to demonstrate a familiarity with certain pragmatist philosophers and ideas. In the same Sunday Times interview I mentioned, Mussolini claimed to have embraced the philosophies of Nietzsche and James. (Indeed, Papini asserted that the pragmatists had taken from Nietzsche and developed the idea that theories originated in "biological needs" and in the "deepest sentiments" of the human race or "exceptional persons". [Papini 1907-8:357]) The former had "re-inforced" his anti-democratic feelings while the latter had led him to believe in the "will to live and fight" and that such actions "should be judged" according to

1. This turning away from pragmatism to Christian piety may explain why Papini's volume on pragmatism, which he had announced never appeared. James wrote of the books coming in the preface to Pragmatism, (James 1907:viii) Sorel wrote rather dismissively of Papini some years later in De l'utilite du Pragmatisme (Sorel 1928:3n) Geny described Papini and the pragmatists of Florence as "pseudo-pragmatists". (Geny 1913a:75n)
their results rather than on any "doctrinary basis." (Perry 1935:575)

Perry was aware that when he was writing in the mid-1930s questions—had been raised about the relation between pragmatism and fascism. He referred for instance, in the Thought and Character of William James to Elliot's The Pragmatic Revolt in Politics. (1) (In his 1938 text, The Spirit of William James he defended James against the charge made by a writer called Van Wyck Brooks that James had failed to create values. [Perry 1938:129]) On this point, he wrote that it was not necessary to doubt that Mussolini had read or was acquainted with the ideas of these thinkers. He also conceded that fascism and pragmatism (as well as Bolshevism and pragmatism) held something in common insofar as they exalted the role of will, emphasised the importance of action and also supported the working test. (Perry 1935:576f,577n)

To this extent, Perry wrote, Mussolini was correct to cite James "even if it be an afterthought." (Perry 1935:578) However, he added that one still had to be careful of taking Mussolini at his word; other advocates of free will or practical reasoning could have served Mussolini just as well as James or even Sorel. (Perry 1935:575, Sorel 1950:24) To the extent that one could use the term philosophy in relation to fascism it was quite obviously very "eclectic"—although Stewart thought this

1. Perry also referred to Herbert Schneider's Making the Fascist State, 1928, VII, pp. 121, 232, 244.
provided yet another basis on which to compare it with pragmatism. (Stewart 1928:863) Mussolini himself described fascism as a "great river". (Mussolini 1935:26) In this context, Perry argued that Mussolini had simply picked out a few fragments from James' philosophy and tossed it in amongst all the other currents flowing through his doctrine. These points aside, Perry argued that the fascists' anti-individualism, their hostility towards democracy and their doctrine of force were entirely antithetical to James' liberal and tolerant outlook. (Perry 1935:578) (1) Indeed, he argued that fascism in its later stages owed more to Giovanni Gentile's philosophical idealism, in the Hegelian sense, than to the pluralistic theory of pragmatism. (Perry 1935:578-9) (Gentile was for a time minister of education in the Fascist government. [Stewart 1928:845]) Although we should recall, as I pointed out in chapter four, that Gentile's philosophy expressed in Theory of Mind as Pure Act was also likened to the philosophy of Bergson, James and Dewey as an anti-intellectual philosophy to the extent that he described mind in terms of activity rather than knowing. (Fite 1923:549) (2) Thus, Gentile was described (along with the philosopher Croce) as a "pragmatic Hegelian", although the author of this description conceded that Gentile himself had strongly rejected the label

1. Perry also thought it noteworthy that one member of The Pragmatic Club, Giovanni Amendola became a political opponent of Fascism and was alleged to have been killed by its henchman in 1926 for his outspoken opposition to Fascism. (Perry 1935:571) See Giovanni Gentile, "The Philosophic Basis of Fascism", Foreign Affairs, VI, 1928, p.290. Cited in Perry, 1935, p. 578n.
pragmatist. (Fite 1923:549) Gentile rejected voluntarism, so often associated with the pragmatists, insofar as he rejected a conception of mind as pure will, as much as he rejected the characterization of mind as pure intellect. (Fite 1923:549 Gentile 1922:271ff) More importantly, he objected to the failure of the pragmatists to unite the particular with the universal. (Gentile 1922:81f)

Thus, Perry argued that pragmatism was too particularistic and empirical in its conception of mental activity to sit comfortably with Gentile's idea of a universal mind. It was this idea which was associated fascist thought and which, Perry argued, provided the basis for the conception of the state as an "organic solidarity." (Perry 1935:578) But this point was countered to the extent that it was argued that each particular will or non-intellectual mind activity that erupted would eventually absorb all other wills or minds around it because it could not but see itself as the one and only true will or mind. (1) This argument could be used to explain the development of fascism. Roberto Michels wrote that the fascists had snatched "power from weak hands" and had called "in the name of the country" upon "...active and energetic men" who could give "expression to an authentic and autonomous popular will." (Michels 1927:770)

1. Perry himself later made the point that despite their pretensions to individualism (and one could say this equally of pluralists) romantics find themselves irresistibly pulled towards a form of unity infused with their concept of higher being. Romanticism is therefore, simply a pause in the road to absolutism and this explains why romanticists can pursue either a "ruthless subjectivism" or immerse themselves in nationalist movements. (Perry 1938:143-6)
On this account, the particular will must become an absolute will and therefore James must become Gentile. The American scholar William Kay Wallace expressed similar opinions about the pre-war German philosophy and politics in 1924. He did not explicity refer to Italian fascism but the connection is clear enough. The argument was that any philosophy which encourages the idea that success depends, not on right reasoning, but on swift and sudden action, and that all acts are not the result of reasoning but a strong action, will lead to chaos and then tyranny. The will to believe is thus transformed into the will to power - "James and Nietzsche join hands with Spinoza and Hobbes". Opposition is crushed within and the nation-state then seeks to "impose upon the world what the Germans called the 'national idea'." (Wallace 1924:271)

In fact, Perry did concede that there was a certain logic in the development of fascism from being a pragmatist political movement to being an idealist one. The logic was, however, a political rather than a philosophical one - imposed by the requirements of rulership, something which every revolutionary group must face after it has gained power. Perry wrote:

Pragmatism of the type represented by the youthful Papini encourages the individual or casual group to become heroes and martyrs on behalf of any cause. Its tendency is disruptive and anarchical. But when a revolutionary movement has seized upon the agencies of the state it becomes automatically the champion of the state. For the subjective principle of freedom it is now necessary to substitute the objective principle of common action. (Perry 1935:379)

1. On this point about the absolutism inherent in pragmatism and pluralism Hsiao wrote that: "...James receives his theory of
Related points were raised about the relation between pragmatism and the advent of Nazism, but the criticisms of this relation were rather muted. Firstly, because the evidence was scant. Perry wrote in 1935 that there was little evidence of pragmatism being embraced in Germany. He noted that while Mach was "canonised" in Germany by the Vienna Circle it was Mach the positivist not Mach the pragmatist. (Perry 1935:580) (Although some might say that positivism and pragmatism ultimately amounted to the same thing—that is, unreason.) Secondly, as we shall see, pragmatists were well able to contrast their tolerant and flexible philosophy with the intolerance and inflexibility of Nazi doctrine.

Nevertheless, the doctrines of intuition and voluntarism, which were often associated with (and sometimes even conflated with) pragmatism were viewed as important elements in Nazi doctrine. In the case of voluntarism, H. G Townsend complained in the Philosophical Review that in its contemporary humanistic and empirical form it tended to treat all values as a function of desire. (Townsend 1937:139) This danger was apparent in a statement by someone he described as "the official spokesman of the Hitler state", which went: "Any philosophy is exactly as strong as the will of its representatives to defend it". This, truth into the rationalist principle of coherence, and his pluralistic universe itself suffers a transformation into a panpsychic system. The pluralists, similarly, conclude their political theory by re-establishing a comprehensive sovereignty which exceeds the power of any sovereignty conceived by the legal monists."—(Hsiao—1927:207) This absolutism is also interesting insofar as pragmatism, as a "voluntaristic pathos", is seen as a reaction to a monistic and eternalistic pathos. (Randall 1936:215) To the extent that this is the case we can say that pragmatism in expanding towards monism has only gone a full circle.
Townsend said, reduced voluntarism to a patent madness. (Townsend 1937:138)

As mentioned earlier, Dewey revised his 1915 book on German Philosophy and Politics and reissued it in 1942. Dewey, of course, did not implicate pragmatism in his search for the philosophical causes of Nazism but he did refer to philosophies of desire and intuition, although in a somewhat curious way. Dewey saw the origins of Hitlerism as lying in the same classical German tradition of thought, in particular Hegel, that he had argued in 1915 had contributed to German bellicosity before the First World War. The main point of connection which Dewey claimed existed between Hegel and Hitler (and this may seem curious because of the depictions of Hegelianism by so many pluralists in the 1920s as intellectualistic) was a common emphasis on impulse and desire. Dewey wrote that Hegel's reason operated largely in the realms of "impulse, passion, desire, ambition, of personal or 'subjective' wills, who unconsciously execute the will of absolute spirit, or Hegel's 'God'." (Dewey 1942:44)

In fact, what Dewey was describing is what Frederick L. Schuman of the University of Chicago described as a "qualified" Hegelianism; qualified, because it was a Hegelianism which held that ideas were the product of impulse rather than reason. (Although Schuman added that in accordance with Nazi philosophy, these impulses were not to be seen in Freudian terms; rather, they sprang from things such as the nation, race, individual genius or "the esoteric depths of the German soul." [Schuman
In addition to this, both of these commentators wrote of the essentially "hazy" or "mystic, cloudy" character of Nazi doctrine — with Dewey also emphasizing its use of the method of intuition as a means of discovering ultimate truths. (Dewey 1942:21; Schuman 1934:211) Indeed, Schuman wrote that it was for this reason that what he called German Fascism, even more so than Italian fascism, was "less a doctrine than a faith..." (Schuman 1934:211) We should also recall that the cloudiness of Bergson's own methods and vocabulary had earlier been seen as a contributing factor to syndicalist irrationalism.

What is interesting here is that Dewey was condemning the very same things (such as the emphasis on intuition [Dewey 1942:21]), that others condemned in relation to Hitler's philosophy. He traced them back to a classical German tradition thought, which he wrote had found a home in Britain and America as well. (Dewey 1942:29). Whereas others, as I shall further demonstrate, traced these features back to the philosophy of James and Bergson. (1)

In this regard, it is interesting to contrast Dewey's observations on this topic with those of Bertrand Russell in an

1. Of all the thinkers who were seen to be most closely associated with German politics, Hegel was seen as the major influence. Dewey even appeared unsure as to what extent Hegel should be associated with Hitlerism. Dewey wrote that: "I do not think he [Hitler] can be called a disciple, in any literal sense, of Nietzsche, Houston Chamberlain, Treitschke or Spengler any more than of Kant or Hegel." Dewey seemed to regard Hitler as totally opportunistic in the use of other people's ideas — albeit an opportunism "combined...with fanatical inflexibility of purpose." (Dewey 1942:15)
earlier essay. For while Dewey mentioned some of the same figures that Russell had, his focus is overwhelmingly on Hegel. Russell did not mention Hegel at all. What Russell did in his essay, The Revolt Against Reason, was to explicitly tie philosophies of will to what he called Nazidom. (1) (Russell did not claim that this revolt against reason was entirely a German phenomenon but the Nazi regime was used as the major example of its political effects.) For Russell, Nazism was the culmination of the philosophy begun by Fichte in 1807 and developed further by Carlyle, Mazzini, Nietzsche, Bergson, Treitschke and Rudyard Kipling. (Russell 1971:142, 146) As with so many others, what Russell was pointing to were philosophies which emphasised the role of will and intuition.

Unlike Dewey, Russell included James and his definition of truth based solely on the criterion of success amongst his catalogue of influences. (Russell 1971:152) Russell was not suggesting that James had intentionally contributed to such strife. "Poor William James", he wrote, would be "horrified" at the use that had been made of his pragmatic theory of truth. (Russell 1971:146,155f) Nevertheless, Russell did add that

1. It is also worth noting that there are striking continuities between this essay and material that appeared on the same topic after First World War which emphasised the role played by "irrationalist" philosophies in the lead up to World War One. For example, the phrase, "the revolt against reason", was also used by Perry as the title of one of the chapters in his The Present Conflict of Ideals, a study, which as I have noted, was aimed at examining the philosophical causes which lay behind the Great War. In addition to this, many of the philosophers whom Perry examines in relation to both the war and to the syndicalist movement are those whom Russell referred to seventeen years later in relation to Nazism.
where all notions of objective truth are abandoned the big battalions move in. (Russell 1971:156)

6. Fascism and Functionalism

We have seen how fascism was viewed as highly energetic and wilful in its early stages, but that later the will that inspired it was sanctified - it became divine. But we should also note that fascism was, as Mussolini put it, a regime as well as a doctrine. (1) Here we should recall that fascism had another image; an image closer to an instrumental pragmatism aimed at social and environmental control in order to provide benefits to the collectivity - a socialised pragmatism would be one way of describing it. (Perry 1935:574) Here the emphasis was not on the will that seeks to destroy but on social purposes, administration and organisation. So interest passes from battle tactics to techniques of social management. We have noted the fashion for scientific planning that developed in Western countries after World War One and which really came to the fore in the 1930s. This trend was also apparent in Italy under the fascists. Indeed, we should recall my comment in chapter two that during the depression and war years the fascist state (along with the Soviet state) was held up as the embodiment of order and

2. Perhaps we should qualify this by drawing attention to Schuman's point that Italian Fascists largely fabricated their doctrine after seizing power. In this context, he contrasts them with German Nazis who had fourteen years to refine their doctrine before coming to power. (Schuman 1934:211)
discipline, especially when contrasted with the depressed economies of America, Britain and Australia.

We can find examples of this trend in fascist Italy in Paul Einzig's book called *Fascist Economics*, published in London in 1933, which presented a view of mature fascism as a rational and scientific form of social organisation. He wrote that fascism embraced the fashionable term "planning" as its political aspects - which were necessary to attain power - were overshadowed by its essentially economic aspects. It became a technique of efficient social organisation which sought to overcome social tensions and antagonisms and enhance the welfare of all. (Einzig 1933:4-6:62) Indeed, it is interesting to note how "scientific" fascism in Italy was contrasted by Einzig with the very unscientific barbarism of the Nazis. Yet Brady's text on *Rationalization in German Industry* does present an image of Germany as a scientific and functionally organised state. (Brady 1933:6,7)

We should also recall that scientific planning was supposed to eliminate competition between the interests and the lust for domination, and replace these aspects of political life with the disinterested administrative state. For this reason, the fusion of fascism (with its initial enthusiasm for social chaos and its celebration of the will) with more scientific programmes of social reform may seem puzzling. Some would argue that the fascist ethos and the idea of scientific administration were in stark opposition to each other. Clearly Einzig did not see it that way. But then, his work can also be seen as a defence of that regime. What is more important is that critics of the
regime also drew attention to the functionalist or administrative aspects of fascism. Why they did this will become clearer as we proceed.

As I have already suggested, even when fascism moved into its positivistic phase signs of the influence of pragmatist thought were still being detected. But it is not James' voluntarism that we are concerned with here; what we are concerned with is the input into fascism of pragmatism's more "scientific' values." (Elliot 1928:x)

Dewey and Duguit were particularly singled out as harbingers of fascism in its mature form. Elliot said Duguit and Dewey had between them "prepared a philosophy whose logical criteria are fit for Fascism's deeds." (Elliot 1928:57) Even more strongly, he wrote, in their hands, pragmatism had become "the philosophy of Fascism." (Elliot 1928:306)

In what way did Elliot associate Duguit and Dewey with fascism? In relation to Dewey, you might recall his conclusion was that the future role of the state was to adjust and regulate the relations between voluntary associations. For Elliot, this suggested that Dewey (as with Duguit), had embraced an organic conception of the state "...which leads from pluralism to Fascism, because it leaves no place for the political rights of responsible personality but bases its social ethics upon fear and force." (Elliot 1928:304)

The point that Elliot was making was that Dewey, in handing
over to the state the final power to control the groups whilst at
the same time denying the possibility, on psychological grounds,
of a social mind (social solidarity being a product of organised
habit and custom rather than a fusion of wills), was to lay the
groundwork for fascism. Elliot, in contrast to the radical
pluralists, certainly believed that the state should be an
umpire; but for him, its umpiring role could only ultimately be
derived from a collective will. It was this which provided the
ethical basis for the state. Without this, the state would be
cut off from any restraining moral sentiments; fear and force
would thus become its sole currency and survival its sole end.

But we must turn to Elliot's criticisms of Duguit to understand fully how this argument was applied. As we have seen
Duguit denied the existence of subjective rights and argued for
the existence of objective laws based on the fact of organic
social interdependence - it was these laws which obliged
government to provide public services and individuals not to do
anything to undermine the social order. (Duguit 1919:50 Elliot
1922:642)

The danger of Duguit's theory, so Elliot's argument went
(and this refers back to a point made in the previous chapter)
was that inevitably the state will come to define these objective
social needs and functions. In this context, the principle of
social solidarity and the need to protect it from disruptive
influences becomes a rhetorical device invoked by the authorities
when they wish to crush all political opposition or extract
services from the community. Indeed, Elliot noted how Duguit's
droit objectif (or something similar) had been applied successfully by Mussolini in his fascist corporate state. (Elliot 1928:307) In fact, Elliot claimed that this idea had become a useful tool of reaction throughout the Western world in the 1920s, wherever the public services were threatened by strike action.

But what Elliot was condemning mostly in the writings of Duguit (and Dewey) was the use of certain biological or organic analogies in order to describe society and the state. He argued that the functionalist programme, whatever scientific or positivistic pretensions it may have had, was really only a variation on that analogy. Similarly, the Australian philosopher A. Boyce Gibson wrote that the functionalist aspects of fascism were a consequence of its "quasi-metaphysical" conception of the state as an organism. (Gibson 1934:122ff) Like Elliot, he believed that this analogy corrupted political thought because it denied the individual any intrinsic moral worth; individuals become passing phases in the enduring life of the state. In this context, Gibson cited the programme of the National Fascist Party of 1921 which stated: "The nation... is an organism embracing an indefinite series of generations in which each individual is but a transient element." (Gibson 1934:132) (1)

1. In relation to the relative unimportance of the individual Mussolini wrote that: "The key-stone of the Fascist doctrine is its conception of the State, of its essence, its functions, and its aims. For Fascism the State is absolute, individuals and groups relative. Individuals and groups are admissible in so far as they come within the State." (Mussolini 1935:37)
For Elliot, even Cole's guild socialism could not be prevented from succumbing to this logic of development. He argued that this was precisely because guild socialists conceived of society as an organic whole comprised of a range of functions. Guild socialism therefore, could not avoid the gradual transition from pluralism to "solidarism" and from thence to fascism. (Elliot 1928:213) (1) Since individuals were absorbed into groups and groups were absorbed into the state Elliot wrote that all the pluralist had done was substitute the "functional state" for the juristic or "representative state-person." (Elliot 1928:431)

This journey from syndicalism to fascism was seen as describing exactly the process which took place in Italy. Elliot claimed that while in the early days of fascism the autonomy of the syndicates was preserved, as fascism matured it began to stress the principles of "organic solidarity and organisation." (Elliot 1928:307) We can see this if we examine the wordings of the Charter of Labour and the Anti-Strike legislation that was passed in 1926. The Charter of Labour stressed the importance of serving the social organism - indeed, it explicitly stated that Italian society is a social organism; while the Anti-Strike

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1. Mussolini wrote that the word guild (corporazione) expressed "one of the basic legislative and social creations of the regime." (Mussolini 1935:17) The crisis in capitalism, he wrote, would force a return to the guild system. But he said, a guild or syndicalist system would have to be integrated into a "totalitarian State" - harness all the hopes, energies and aspirations of the people - run by a single party which would ensure economic discipline. (Mussolini 1935:17:60) He called his syndicalism "national syndicalism." (Mussolini 1935:17)
Legislation, which endowed legally recognised associations with a juridical personality and dictated the organisational structure that they should adopt, stressed the obligations of the guilds to the rest of the corporate body. (Einzig 1933:125ff, 133ff)

It is also interesting to note Stewart's comparison of the fascist incorporation of functional groupings into the state organisation - described as a vertically integrated set of functions and vocations - with the way in which the Soviets were organised by the Communist Party in Russia. (Stewart 1928:857)

(1) It is these pictures which help us to understand the distinction between functional representation or the administrative syndicalism of Duguit, which held that each function must be inserted into and disciplined by a hierarchy, and the much looser and polyarchic conceptions of society that appeared in Sorel and Laski.

But as we have seen it was the internal relation between these two approaches to pluralism which the critics were interested in. For what occurred in Italy, as I said, was seen to be a natural evolution from a romantic pluralism which utilised violence towards a positivistic functionalism that relied on the legitimate exercise of force in

1. Gibson also draws comparisons between functional forms of social organisation in Italy and Germany with similar arrangements in the Soviet Union. (Gibson 1934:133ff) On this point also see Brady in which he associates functional forms of economic organisation with the rationalization movement in Germany. It is a form of organisation which he sees as being a reflection of the "functional interdependence" in the higher reaches of science. (Brady 1933:9)
order to ensure social solidarity. (Elliot 1928:117n)

This is not to suggest the role of will had been eliminated. As was suggested earlier, the will which inspired the early activities of the fascists was still manifest—except that it had become sanctified. This explains why fascism in its developed form was seen as dualistic in character. It had both idealist and positivistic overtones and could shift between them. For the image of the corporatist state as a series of functions could also be converted into an image of an individualistic will competing, in pseudo-Darwinian terms, for survival. (Gibson 1934:130) The state was thus both super-man and machine. That is, the very ambiguity of fascism lay in the fact that the corporate state or person could be seen as an impersonal administrative body or it could be viewed in terms of this idea of divine will. (1)

The arguments that I have just examined suggested that the particularistic will of the syndicalist may become the absolute will of the state. They also suggested that as a fascist this regime established by means of a revolution or coup matures it may adopt a more scientific caste. But whether or not such

1. Dewey also noted this paradoxical character in relation to Hitler’s Germany. He wrote in the 1942 edition of *German Philosophy and Politics* “There is nothing in the career of National Socialism which requires any change in the sentence of the next chapter, written over twenty-five years ago: ‘The chief mark of distinctively German civilization is its combination of self-conscious idealism with unsurpassed technical efficiency and organization.’ Only the locus of the ‘idealism’ and the agents of its organization have altered.” (Dewey 1942:37)
a regime presents an idealist or a functionalist face to the world, it will in the end collapse into fanaticism. That is, it will return to its esoteric source - be it a romantic pantheism, the will to power or some other deep-seated impulse.

This last point explains why it could be argued that fascist and Nazi states were not really scientific states - these were regimes which, despite appearances, were not true to the scientific (or philosophical) ideal of the impartial pursuit of truth. The relation between fascism and science is purely instrumental. We should also be remember the argument that the vicious exploitation of science was possible only where a positivistic science denied the concepts of truth or value any utility. Similarly, as we have seen, critics of positivism argued that positivism collapsed into subjectivism or into an irresponsible anarchism. As we saw, this was the point which Russell was making in relation to Nazism and James' pragmatic theory of truth.

Dewey also expressed concerns about the consequences of positivism. But his criticism focussed not so much on its alleged tendency to collapse into subjectivism, but on its strict separation from the field of values. He wrote that the fact that science had been compartmentalised in Germany - cut off from social and other values and influences made it so easy for Hitler to treat "all forms of science, physical, psychological, and social...[as] ...sheer tools of Nazi policy." (Dewey 1942:46)

For Dewey, there was a lesson for democracy in this, particularly for America where Dewey thought science was also on
its way to be being partitioned off from the rest of society. Indeed, it must be stressed that the criticisms expressed of the fascist or Nazi governments also functioned as criticisms of liberal democratic societies as well. What many of the critics were in effect doing was warning their own compatriots that their society would be endangered if society went too far down the positivist or functionalist path. Fascism, in particular, served as a grim reminder of what might happen if liberal democracies went too far in either of these parallel directions.

Hence, what Dewey wanted to tell members of his society was that they should not worship science as in Germany. However, nor should they fear it. Science, he wrote, must become a normal part of social intercourse - if this were so, the processes of communication would become "genuinely intelligent", avoiding the twin dangers of "mere opinion" and final authority. (Dewey 1942:46-7) It is interesting that Dewey's criticisms of the social dangers posed by a narrow positivist understanding of science were reminiscent of the criticisms Elliot made fourteen years earlier of Dewey's own instrumentalism.

7. Pragmatism and the Common Will

How do we respond to these various criticisms of pragmatism and pluralism? First of all, it was suggested that the world of the pluralist and empiricist is one that falls into discontinuous bits and pieces, destroying any sense of social cohesion and thus preparing the ground for fascism. The other complaint, one which specifically referred to pragmatism, concerned the consequences
of applying instrumental or economic criteria to political life. In particular, it was argued that politics as instrumentalism easily becomes, in the hands of an authoritarian state, a means of imposing a personal tyranny.

Can pluralist or pragmatist theory be saved from these twin fates? Most critics were agreed that many pluralists went too far in seeking to undermine the state and that to implement their programme would be to invite social strife. Indeed, it was argued that those pluralists who called upon pragmatism to support their political beliefs were not really being true to that philosophy; that they were not being pragmatic enough. (Follett 1918:263ff) Many pluralists, it was argued, had not paid close enough attention to the development of pragmatism beyond its earlier phenomenalistic phase; or where they had (as in the case of Laski), they had accepted only a partial account of its metaphysics and had ignored its tilt towards panpsychism.

(1)

As I pointed out, James had moved beyond his earlier particularism and had embraced profusion rather than economy as

1. Hsiao explained the shift in James' position from his earlier radical empiricism to something more tolerant of the absolute by reference to James' "conversion to Fechnerian panpsychism...not only does he finally admit the possibility of the hypothesis of an absolute but he recommends the confluence of finite selves in a vast conscious stream as a most acceptable metaphysical assumption." (Hsiao 1927:200) Hsiao cites James as saying in a A Pluralistic Universe that "every bit of us at every moment is part and parcel of a wider self." (Hsiao 1927:201) See Chaper IV-"Concerning Fechner" in A Pluralistic Universe, (1977) pp. 63-82.
the key to reality. But it would seem that in making a macrocosmos out of immediacy he did not exclude any degree of oneness from the realms of the many. In fact, James also saw rationality or coherence as being contained within immediacy. James said in *A Pluralistic Universe*: "May not the flux of sensible experience itself contain a rationality that has been overlooked." [James 1977:38] Furthermore, for James, all the connections that we observe in experience are real and concrete and are not simply inventions of one mind or many - although the element of plasticity in things ensures that mind can "reorganise and reconstruct" reality. (Aliotta 1914:179)

Empiricism then becomes not just the study of private experiences or pure immediacy but the totality of things and their relations - all of which are evolving. In summary, we can say that this reconstruction of James' universe tells us that each piece of experience throws out tentacles which attaches it to other pieces; furthermore, these points of connection between the various pieces of experience are real and not just the product of mind.

James borrowed a word from Peirce in order to describe his sort of pluralism; the word was "synechistic" and it was used order to stress the continuous aspects of experience. (James 1977:147) In James' universe there could be, as Barker once put it, a "oneness" without there being a "transcendent one." (Barker 1957:161) (1) Thus, James wrote:

Our 'multiverse' still makes a 'universe'; for every part, tho it may not be in actual or immediate connexion, is
nevertheless in some possible or mediated connexion, with every other part however remote, through the fact that each part hangs together with its very next neighbours in inextricable interfusion. The type of union, it is true is different from the monistic type of *alleinheit*. It is what I call the strung-along type, the type of continuity, contiguity, or concatenation. If you prefer greek words, you may call it the synechistic type. (James 1977:147)

We can see here why pragmatism was given the title "philosophy of reconciliation"; it enacts or attempts reconciliations between discontinuity and continuity, the many and the one and pluralism and monism. (Hsiao 1927:205, Follett 1918:272)

It is, of course, a matter of emphasis as to how much unity and how much multiplicity is contained within James' universe. Some have stressed the partial character of its unity - arguing that difference is at the essence of his system. James himself, in Lecture IV "The One And The Many" of his *Pragmatism* pointed to both the lines of continuity and discontinuity in the universe. (James 1907:127ff) Perry, and later Morris, both seemed to think it is the imperfect character of that unity which is important for James.

Hsiao argued similarly to Perry. However, unlike him, he regarded James' failure to achieve a comprehension of the whole as revealing a fundamental weakness in his philosophy. He argued

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1. Perry noted that synechism was a term used by Charles Peirce "for a theory which affirms continuity." (Perry 1938:109n) James also ascribed synechism to Bergson. (Perry 1938:108) Morris wrote that of all the pragmatists James was closest to the British empiricists. However, he differed from that tradition insofar as he recognised a "much wider range of the contents of experience - as including relations as well as the particulars
that James was reaching for some sense of oneness, and while offering his readers occasional glimpses it, failed to wholly realize it. (Hsiao 1927:208) Indeed, Hsiao argued that as a philosophy of reconciliation pragmatism failed often by revealing an "empiricist partisan spirit". Hsiao also said pragmatism did not give enough credit to its monistic or rationalist opponents. In fact, Hsiao raised doubts about whether the reconciliations which James attempted to give effect to were at all possible. (Hsiao 1927:205)

In contrast to this, Follett saw James as moving towards something akin to the idea of a general will. Indeed, Follett claimed that James was much closer to Hegel than many pluralists realised; they had failed to realise this because they had misunderstood both Hegel and James, mistakenly attributing absolutism to the former and radical pluralism to the latter. (Follet 1918:266)

In order to rescue James from the pluralists, what Follett did was to seize James' "trailing and" argument (which appears, as we have seen in, A Pluralistic Universe as well as in his Pragmatism) back from the pluralists, who had used it to argue that one can never have a unified state because all our differences could never be included in one unified whole; hence, James' claim that the conjunction "and" trails or strings along

which are related, and continuities as well as discontinuities." Further to this, James did not see experience as a purely mental thing. "The cosmos as a whole became simply the totality of 'pure experience'" (Morris 170:112-3)
after every sentence. (Follet 1918:302) This is James' "strung-along" universe where the connections between things are weak because they are external. In this case, things are indeed "with" one another but that is all - they in no way at one with each other, something that would involve a deeper form of union.

But in Follett's text, James' "trailing and" rather than being seen as the last word on the matter, was seen as providing both the incentive and basis on which to form more profound unions between things. That is, she argued that it is precisely because of the constant addition of the conjunction "and" or the never-ending appearance of differences that we must seek to unify; otherwise the differences might overwhelm us and our world would fall apart. Furthermore, she argued that the "trailing and" not only makes unity a necessity, it also provides the very precondition of the unifying process. That is, it is because of the presence of differences that we are able to enter into multiple new and intimate relations with each other. (Follett 1919:302)

On this account then, multiplicity becomes the very condition of the unifying process; difference itself becomes the means by which "infinite unrelation" can be transformed into an infinite variety of relations. (Follet 1918:302) (Although I think this argument is logically weak to the extent that it proposes difference as the solution to the problem which is difference itself.) Follett's solution to the problem of the one and the many in social life was to pose a situation in which all our differences are swept up into a single whole, a whole that
encompasses and is enriched by the inclusion of these differences. (Follett 1918:40) Follet's idea of a general will or community spirit was thus modified to the extent that it was not complete oneness that she sought; rather, she posited a Jamesian conception of multiplicity in unity although I think she went further down the track towards oneness than did James.

It is not surprising that Bergson figured prominently in this modification of James' pluralistic empiricism. (Follett 1919:583) (The conception of life that I have just outlined sounds very much like Bergson's understanding of life as a great evolutionary army containing all sorts of novelties and diverse forms.) Indeed, Follett explicitly adopted Bergson's vocabulary in order to stress both the continuous and open-ended aspects of life. She argued that the world must remain open; that the élan vital must have "free-play." (Follett 1918:99) But she also writes that each durée does not come to an end but rolls on into "the new durée endlessly." (Follett 1919:582) (1)

In Bergsonian terms community then is process; but it is also a unifying process. (Follett 1919:581) How is this continuing expansion towards unity to be achieved? We should recall here Bergson's argument that it is by an act of will, and not by the application of reason, that we can reconnect ourselves with the vital force and rediscover our vital powers. Similarly for Follett, personal freedom can only be enhanced by active willing; in this case, willing oneself into a wider community - by blending or interweaving our consciences. (Follett 1918:266)
Pragmatism in her hands thus provided the basis for a politics of reconciliation. In her eyes, it was a means of reconciling all political or social differences—differences between public and private or collective and distributive interests; between the interests of capital and labour and more grandly, differences between nations. We can, she wrote, will a family of nations. Indeed, Follett wrote that this was the impulse behind the creation of a federal League of Nations and it is this that will see an end to international conflict. We are all truly then part of the one and the same world history. (Follett 1919:577,583) When conceived in this way, James and Bergson certainly do sup with Green and Bradley rather than Sorel. (1) (Of course, Follett was writing before Mussolini came to power and a few years before the criticisms of Elliot and others began to appear. However, she was writing concurrently with those who saw Bergson as giving inspiration to syndicalism.)

But pluralistic or Bergsonian touches remained. She did not posit any final end in her teleological account of history. She

1. Follett’s use of Bergson in this way was an isolated case. McDougall too also spoke of a willing process in relation to overcoming difficulties in the international sphere and in this context he appealed in the same breath to Bergson, Hobhouse and Bradley. (McDougall 1920:300-1) We should note however, that he specifically excluded Hegel and Bosanquet from this group. Muirhead however, found McDougall’s embrace of Bradley rather strange given that much of his text was in fact devoted to an attack on that other Oxford idealist Bernard Bosanquet. (Muirhead 1924:174f) Like Bosanquet, Muirhead wrote that criticism of idealist theory flowed from a misunderstanding of Hegel and his expositors. The point of Hegel’s theory he wrote was not to seek the imposition of a common will but to have all come to will the common and good will. Muirhead argued that pluralist critics failed to acknowledge the distinction between the authority of the sovereign state and the authority of ideals which the state
wrote, for example, that the one and the many are in "ceaseless interplay". (Follett 1919:582) It is this activity that generates new discontinuities and differences but it ensures the possibility of new connections and continuities. Thus the act of willing for Follett ensured not only unity but also growth that is rich and vibrant. (Follett 1919:583ff)

While this language might be unusual compared to the language used by most scholars at that time when writing on political theory, it was really nothing more than a recasting of the organic analogy to support federalistic political arrangements. Federalism was implied because it allows the unifying process to take place; but at the same time, it could accommodate all our differences.

There was a notable feature of Follett's text which might explain why Morris Cohen referred to it as a work of social philosophy. Despite her use of the sometimes magical or lyrical language of Bergson and James, Follett asserted at the beginning that the unifying process was a psychological and not a mystical is supposed to embody. He cited as evidence for this point—the arguments of Bradley in the chapter entitled "My Station and its Duties". Bradley wrote that the "external is already is part of a reflection of the will of God." (Bradley 1876:187) And "Leaving out of sight the question of a wider society we may say the state is the home for that synthesis of choices in which in the main — a man's state and its duties fall" and which "partly by its laws and—institutions, but still more by its spirit, gives him the life he does live and ought to live." (Bradley 1876:174) Bradley of course, was not the main or even necessary target of pluralist criticism. One would have to show that these sentiments equally applied to Hegel and Bosanquet in order to reconcile them with Bergson and Hobhouse as Bradley already appears to have done. As suggested earlier, Bosanquet's introduction to the second edition of The Philosophical Theory of the State seems to have gone some way towards that.
process. Here she appealed to Freud as well as James in arguing that we are self-unifying centres—we constantly integrate our impulses, experiences, desires and wishes. (Follett 1918:76)

This provides the basis for what she called the law of interpenetration and it was a law that applies to us in our relations with both groups and the wider community. And it is only this law which makes federalism possible. (Follett 1918:344, 20) (In Laski's case, psychology seemed, to the contrary, to provide for a law of disintegration.)

Nevertheless, one should not take this pretension to social psychology too seriously. Bosanquet, who otherwise applauded the text, certainly did not. He wrote that Follett's arguments sounded very much like those of T.H. Green and saw her idea of active willing as being close to his own conception of the general will. (Bosanquet 1965:lv) He asked whether perhaps it was inspired in part by his own writings. Although we should note that this was in the second edition of his Philosophical Theory of the State in 1919—where he is attempting to defend his own philosophical theory against charges of absolutism. (Bosanquet 1965:xvii) Follett herself spoke of Bosanquet as a true interpreter of Hegel. (Follett 1918:267) Above all the importance of Follett's text for Bosanquet was that it revealed the sharp distinction between an Austinian theory of sovereignty based on force and one emanating from the will of all—a theory he ascribed to himself and Bradley. (1) (Bosanquet 1965:livff)

1. Bosanquet claimed that Follett understood Hegel's intention much better than did James. (Bosanquet 1965:lviii) He also made the point that Follett goes overboard in distancing herself from mysticism and claimed that her analysis of the willing process is purely a psychological one. (Bosanquet 1965:lxii)—See Follett
ceases to be something to be feared but becomes the very process to which we owe our loyalty. (Follett 1919:576-582 Follett 1918:49) (1)

Wilbur Urban made a similar point in this regard. He wrote that denying the reality of the state as an ideal does not mean one has to deny the common will or the idea of community. In fact, he wrote, in situations where political leaders have grown away from the community, denying the state becomes a means of reasserting these values. It is for this reason that revolutions are followed by republics or rather the creation of states which can represent the real will of the community. (Urban 1919:556) (2)

8. Pragmatism and Democracy

Follett's use of James to develop the idea of a community spirit may seem surprising because James was seen as tending to p.272, where she insists the question of the One and the Many should be worked out on a metaphysical not a scientific basis. (Follett 1919:272)

1. Follet also noted that Laski was actually approaching the same conception. (Follet 1918:315) In the Grammar of Politics (although written a few years after Follett's book), Laski writes that while there is no a priori unity — "no plane on which the differences can somehow be coerced into unity" we can still share experiences and discover "kindred purpose" with each other. We can find "sameness in difference" and via these social harmony can be forged. (Laski 1948:261) Indeed, we should also draw attention in this context to Elliot's own co-organic system. Co-organicism was the notion that social unity would arise from the community's coming to possess a common mind. Sabine wrote in a review of Elliot's book that the author saw in his co-organicism the true "via media between pragmatism and an idealist theory." (Sabine 1931:213)

2. Urban wrote that it is for this reason that revolutions are seldom followed by the establishment of an autarkic system. This is because unitary sovereignty was not just a means of enslavement but may also be a condition of freedom. (Urban 1919:556)
favour the individual over the collective good. In relation to this we should note Perry's argument that James' individualism was not a selfish one; Perry said it was "inclusive" rather than exclusive because it respected the rights of others. (Perry 1938:133) Nevertheless, it was Dewey rather than James who was seen as being more sympathetic towards the communal ideal. As I said earlier, it is this sense of social holism which fed into his faith in the use of science for social betterment and welfare. As I also noted, it was because of this faith in science that he was charged with scientism. Nevertheless, and contrary to what Elliot claimed, Dewey did not simply see science as providing an instrument or set of techniques for the management of men and things; nor did he conceive of society in purely functional terms. For example, in Reconstruction in Philosophy Dewey also elaborated his moral conception of democracy. He wrote of the purpose and meaning of social institutions in a way that was similar to the British philosopher Thomas Hill Green, whom he had studied closely. He wrote that the purpose of social institutions is to:

...set free and to develop the capacity of human individuals without respect to race, sex, class or economic status. And this is all one with saying that the test of their value is the extent to which they educate every individual into the full stature of his possibility. Democracy has many meanings, but if it has a moral meaning, it is found in resolving that the supreme test of all political institutions and industrial arrangements shall be the contribution they make to the all-round growth of every member of society. (Dewey 1957:186)

It is this moral conception of democracy which to some extent defies Elliot's description of Dewey as a functionalist
and champion of organic solidarity. I would argue that Elliot overlooked the flexibility of the organic analogy in reference to this. As can be seen with Follett it can be used for many different purposes. In fact, Elliot calls his own ethical state co-organic.

Perhaps the reason why the ethical element in Dewey's social theory does not always seem very striking is because of the emphasis he placed on the use of experimental methods in achieving moral ends. Indeed, democracy in itself was often described by Dewey, as with other social institutions, in instrumental terms - albeit as an instrument for achieving the good life for all.

Further to this, we should note that Dewey often defined the good solely in terms of growth. It is this which marks Dewey off from the ethical idealists insofar as he did not point to any final ends to which growth should proceed or any absolute criteria against which it should be measured. The role of social institutions (and social scientists) is then to assist the growth of each individual and to help remove blockages to growth wherever they appear. It was precisely because of this emphasis on growth as the only end of society that Dewey's political philosophy was "new, radical, democratic." (Merriam 1924:350) At the same time, this focus on growth is also what allowed Dewey to his account of social development sound so scientific. This emphasis on the idea of growth allowed Dewey to approach the study of society from the point of view of the experimental
scientist. That is, studying society is very much like studying nature. (Schneider 1924:350)

Hence we see with Dewey a number of strands being pulled together — strands taken from both ethical idealism and from the experimental sciences. It is not surprising then that he was charged with scientism and a lack of scientific rigour at the same time. Although it would seem that in his 1942 work _German Philosophy and Politics_ his naturalistic tendencies were less in evidence.

This discussion of Dewey's political thought serves to further underline the strong conceptual association that was seen to exist between democracy and pragmatism. (1) Both democracy and pragmatism were seen to stand for openness and growth. James himself had described pragmatist philosophy as being of a democratic temper. As we have seen, he was fond of using political metaphors in order to elaborate on his philosophical beliefs. Of pragmatism he wrote:

> But you can see already how democratic she is. Her manners are as various and flexible, her resources as rich and endless, and her conclusions as friendly as those of mother nature. (James 1907:81)

In the 1930s, this relation was reasserted. Jacques Barzun, for example, claimed that pragmatism was the authentic philosophy of democracy and James its native philosopher. (Barzun 1939:42)

In Barzun's text, _Of Human Freedom_, the link between pragmatism

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1. J. E. Creighton wrote in 1916, in reviewing Dewey's _Democracy and Education_ (1916) that he was sceptical of pragmatism's "exclusive claim to be a philosophy of democracy." (Creighton 1916:739) For further assertions of the relation between pragmatism and democracy see also comments by Morrow 1920, p. 109 and Wiltse 1936, p.328.
and democracy is their common emphasis on experiment, tolerance and flexibility, all the things that James held to be central to his philosophy of pragmatism.

We should also place Barzun's depiction of the relation between pragmatism and democracy against the backdrop of the Second World War. It is interesting to see that whereas some were viewing pragmatism in the 1920s and to a lesser extent in the 1930s as contributing to political instability and even tyranny, others were contrasting the pragmatic attitude, and its much vaunted tolerance and adaptability with the doctrinaire and/or barbaric character of totalitarian states. This is precisely what Barzun did in *Of Human Freedom*. Barzun contrasted pragmatism and democracy, both of which embraced the richness and diversity of life, with the "dogmatic rigidity of Rationalism", which he argued produced highly uniform, centralized and hierarchical political forms such as existed in Nazi Germany. (Barzun 1939:36)

In relation to this, I find it interesting that that Perry, writing in his 1938 book *In the Spirit of William James*, only mentioned indirectly those concerns he expressed a few years earlier about the association that was asserted to exist between James and Mussolini. Indeed, he argued in his 1938 text that James had in fact predicted the crisis that the world was now facing in relation to German Nazism and Italian Fascism, because he had previously sensed that democracy, being sceptical and flexible like pragmatism itself, could prove weak in the face of more passionate and compelling political doctrines. Hence, James' search for what he called a moral equivalent to war.
this regard, Perry added that while James had predicted the present crisis, he had also provided a way out of it by showing that it was possible to march with the same sense of "solidarity" and feel the same "elan of combat" in defence of liberalism and democracy. (Perry 1938:154-5)

James thus gave inspiration to what Perry described as "militant liberalism" - and it was this quality that the democratic countries so desperately needed as the war with the totalitarian governments (Germany, Italy and Japan) loomed. (1) It was precisely this militancy, evident in such texts as The Moral Equivalent to War and The Will to Believe, that Stewart had ten years earlier described as giving inspiration to Mussolini. (Stewart 1928:862)

Thus, a pragmatic conception of democracy, to the extent that it implied a willingness to compromise, a toleration of difference and a commitment to the worth of the individual, could be contrasted favourably with some of the other political systems operating in Europe and in Asia. Dewey wrote in German Philosophy and Politics of the American "working philosophy" of democracy as something which involved "back-and-forth give-and-

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1. Perry noted that the problem that faced liberal social movements is that they did not possess this same will to believe as contrasted with adherents of communism or fascism. Those who organise these movements "seek to inspire their adherents with a faith in their cause, even when that cause is, other things considered, most precarious." (Perry 1938:194) See Chap. IV in Perry, In the Spirit of William James, 1938. For criticisms of this idea of a militant liberalism see Passmore, J.A. 1940 Review of Ralph Barton Perry, In the Spirit of William James, AJPP, vol. xviii, no.1, June, pp 85-8.
take discussion until the final decision represented a workable consensus of the idea of all who took part." (Dewey 1942:45) This he thought a far superior method of achieving social unity than the brutal discipline that was imposed by the Nazis. Demonstrating this fact was the task he set himself in that book. (Dewey 1942:6) But we should also note that when pragmatism was discussed in this regard, its relativistic or voluntaristic strains were de-emphasised. Indeed, pragmatism was presented as a political third-way; something which bridged the gap between absolutism and relativism or between political monism on the one hand, and radical pluralism on the other. As we have seen, sometimes fascism and Nazism were treated as examples of voluntarism, rather than a dogmatic rationalism and in these cases pragmatism could be said to be mid-way between their will to power and the rationalism of the communists.

9. The Collectivist Tide

But if pragmatism, in its association with the democratic cause, began to be seen as a philosophy which encouraged the construction of social unity — where did this leave its pluralistic or particularistic string? In political terms, by the 1930s the collectivist tide had overwhelmed the pluralism that had been so current in the 1920s. Explaining this is not difficult. As I have noted, Laski had once written that we are bundles of hyphens in terms of our allegiances — yet he had added that when two or more of these come into conflict we must choose. Or as Urban put it in an earlier critique of pluralist
politics, monistic theory is born in crisis and whenever there are crises as a result of internal or external threats, it is natural that the community as a whole will come to be upheld as a higher value. (Urban 1919:554) Indeed, it was precisely this sense of social crisis in the 1930s and 1940s that saw, as Partridge observed, "the spread of the ideology of social planning. Along with the growing popularity of the notion of a scientific control of social development." (Partridge 1945:90)

(1)

This transition from pluralism to collectivism can be witnessed in the career of Laski. (2) As we have seen, Laski began by admitting to an interest in polyarchic or federalistic political arrangements - his concern in this context seemed to rest primarily with the question of freedom. But Laski was also concerned with the issue of economic equality. At first, he seemed to be suspicious of the state as an organ of equality, as in his dismissal of the "special status" which Elliot accorded the state in his own co-organic theory. He wrote that Elliot's view of the "modern State as essentially an umpire in the social conflict was inadequate because it assumed the impartiality of

1. In an earlier article Partridge made a similar point. He wrote that: "Ever since the war began there has been considerable talk of planning the peace, of post-war reconstruction, of the deliberate creation, when once we have disposed of the apostles of violence, of a secure, free and genuinely rational society." (Patridge 1941:236)

2. From Pluralism to Collectivism is the title of an excellent study of the development of Laski's political thought by Bernard Zylstra, Van Gorcum, Assen, 1968.
its agents." (Laski 1948:282n) He made similar comments about John Maynard Keynes' views on economic policy, suggesting that Keynes like the Fabians tended to overlook the class bias of the state.

Despite this, Laski did come to accept that the state had a role to play in the reduction of class inequality. Beloff wrote that already in the late 1920s he was moving towards a position of compromise with the state. In that context, Laski began to argue that labour could admit the complete sovereignty of the state if the state were on the side of labour. (Beloff 1950:381)

In relation to this, we should remember that pluralist politics was in many respects a disguised way of talking about the politics of class and in fact had little to do with dreams of a pluralistic society. The aspirations of some of the syndicalists for example, especially those inspired by the Bolsheviks, were closer to communism than to pluralism. It is also telling, in this regard, that Laski wrote in his Grammar that the goal of pluralists "must be the classless society." (Laski 1948:xii) And as we have seen, the reason for the hostility towards pluralist theory was partly because it was often used as a surrogate for the advocacy of violent class struggle.

Given this interest in the importance of economic equality it is not surprising that by the 1930s Laski had become a strong supporter of the idea of the collectivist state. (1) For an

1. Indeed, there are intimations of this shift in his 1930 work Liberty in the Modern State. (1930) He wrote: "A compulsory training of the mind is still compulsion, it is a sacrifice of
explanation of this gradual transition we can cite a number of factors. As we have noted, Laski was critical of the Bolsheviks for their rejection of democracy as well as for their opportunism. (Hawkins 1945:383) Yet, Beloff writes, at the same time he, like many of his generation, was affected by the image of the Russian Revolution; also like many others of his generation, he was after that event propelled towards the study of Marx. (2)

Other factors also intervened which explain his transition from pluralist to collectivist; from someone with an over-riding interest in liberty (which Beloff argued never really left him) to someone mainly interested in the issue of equality. Firstly, there was the great economic insecurity of the 1930s and secondly there was the rise of fascism and Nazism. Both of these developments appear to have enhanced the status of collectivist and social democratic ideals. (Hawkins 1945:378) Thus, Ramsay MacDonald’s point in the early 1920s that fascism was the

Some liberty to a greater freedom when the compulsion ceases." (Laski 1937:56) Not only does this sound very much like the arguments that Mannheim was to put forward in his Planning for Freedom some years later but also, as one writer remarked, it went "perilously" near those idealist views of liberty he otherwise repudiated. (Shaw 1942:88) It is interesting to note that some have argued that Laski’s individualism was ultimately derived from an ethical presumption in favour of the individual conscience. James’ radical empiricism only really augmented this early bias. It is this ethical individual that links Laski—up, many respects, with idealist notions of the self. Indeed, Lewis Zerby has argued that Laski’s idea that governmental policy should be geared “towards the integration of personality, the self-realization and happiness of all those to be affected by it” had a "Tory flavour." (Zerby 1945:143f)

2. Laski published a book on Communism in 1927 in which he spoke of it as essentially a spiritual rather than economic creed.
reply to syndicalism had seemed persuasive. For Laski argued in 1933 in *Democracy in Crisis* that socialism was the reply to fascism. Indeed, Laski was to be found defending the Soviet Union in the 1940s during a period in which it was heavily under Nazi attack. (1)

Laski went further than many of his peers in believing that collectivism was the answer to social problems. Nevertheless, as I demonstrated in chapter two, the 1930s and 1940s saw an increasing interest in the idea of the scientific planning of social development. Pragmatism fitted into this mould, and we should note that advocates of social planning often appealed to the pragmatic criteria. It was this pragmatism that was evocative of the instrumental methods of science - and perhaps also tinged with a sense of social holism - which, as I have noted, was often implicit in arguments in favour of social planning.

But pragmatism, as a term describing a living philosophy, slowly disappeared from academic discussions in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Morris writes that in American intellectual life pragmatism was overtaken in the late 1930s by other intellectual trends emanating from Europe - logical empiricism,

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1. See Laski in *Faith, Reason and Civilisation*, Victor Gollancz, London, 1944. pp. 158-9. One should note in analysing the writings of Laski and his transition from pluralist to collectivist the point made by Hawkins: after 1931, when he began to move closer towards the Marxist position, Laski had become a pamphleteer as well as a scholar. It was as a result of his views on Marxist-Leninism that he was frequently branded an agent of bloody revolution and totalitarianism. (Hawkins 1945:391) Beloff, however, denies this charge noting the Laski supported Labour's war-time coalition in 1940 against the pure Marxists. (Beloff 1950:379)
(Morris 1970:144) However, Morris suggested that while these intellectual movements developed independently of pragmatism, they also had much in common with certain tendencies within the pragmatist tradition of thought. (Morris 1970:144f)

But what of political pluralism? We do find discussions in journal articles of the late 1930s and early 1940s of such things as administrative participation, regional decentralisation and municipal government. But these hardly constitute pluralism of the kind which Laski had earlier advocated, and were usually incorporated into a broader organisational framework — sometimes incorporating the idea of rational planning and control. (1)

But whatever democratic elements were incorporated, the idea of planning the state tended to drift towards idea of rational guidance and control. We might recall that in the last chapter, the very complexity and differentiation of function that was characteristic of modern industrial society was used to argue that pragmatically speaking pluralism was necessary. However, in the 1930s, this same complexity could also be put forward as one reason (again, by appealing to the pragmatic test) against extensive participation of the community in the government and management of society. (1) Thus, by the early 1940s we begin to

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1. As an example of the push to include both popular participation and scientific guidance in the growing administrative arm of government, Fries cites the example of the Tennessee Valley Authority. The Act establishing the TVA was signed by President Roosevelt in May 1933. (Morison 1965:960) Horace S. Fries wrote that at the TVA employees and citizens were trained in the methods of the natural sciences and had become "active participants in administrative committees and plans" applying their intelligence to the "shaping of general plans." Here indeed, he wrote, was the "idea of the citizen-scientist in the making." (Fries 1943:564)
hear about what James Burnham called the "managerial revolution", something which bore a strong resemblance to what had been called administrative syndicalism more than twenty years earlier. (1) As we saw in chapter two, the aim was to take all the instruments of production and distribution out of the control of the political executive and place them into the hands of well-trained functional representatives (administrative engineers, supervisory technicians, plant coordinators, government bureau heads, commissioners and administrators) who would form a "professional oligarchy." (Ogg 1942:5) According to this theory too, the industrial societies were about to witness the reduction or decline of democratic institutions. (Ogg 1942:5)

(2) But the fact that control would be held, not by the political executive, but by managers was seen as distinguishing this form of social organisation from totalitarian ones.

10. Criticisms of Rationalism

It was in this context that there began to appear criticisms of rationalism in politics. The criticisms that began to emerge are familiar to anyone who has read Oakeshott's Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays. Two Australian critics were P.H.

1. See James Burnham, The Managerial Revolution: What is Happening in the World, (New York, 1941). On this topic see also Henry C. Link, The Rediscovery of Man, Macmillan, London, 1939. Where he warned of the dangers of extensive social planning. This he argued rested on a mechanistic conception of society and tended to assume that man was a weak and passive being. To adopt this perspective he wrote, was to prepare the basis for fascism because the fascist could take advantage of the passivity of the citizenry. (Link 1939:38:47) For a review of this book see Gibb, 1941, pp. 78-89.

Partridge (a graduate of the London School of Economics where "rationalism" was seen to flourish), and John Anderson, the Scottish-born Professor of Philosophy at the University of Sydney. We should note here, in relation to Partridge and Anderson, that the rhetoric of scientific planning was particularly strong in Australian academic circles in the 1930s and 1940s.

Partridge saw this faith in the social sciences a reflection of the more general belief that "history can be made to proceed according to formula." (Partridge 1941:248) Further to this, there was a tendency among social scientists to believe that they were able to "perform more skilfully and more disinterestedly" the role of political leader. (Partridge 1941:251) Anderson had also put this view criticising what he described as these "partisans of 'scientific' helpfulness" for viewing themselves as "above the battle...on the side of pure sapientia." (Anderson 1940a:68) These descriptions help convey the tone of much of the literature on social planning and manage to parody well the sometimes outlandish claims being made in relation to the scientific management of social development. However, they are also to some degree caricatures.

Not all of the advocates of social planning can be so swiftly dismissed as rationalists. Karl Mannheim for example, then at the London School of Economics, was charged with being a rationalist by Partridge. (Partridge 1941:251) As we saw in the

second chapter, Mannheim did speak of the elimination of politics, and did express the hope that the sphere of the rationally controllable in social life was growing and did speak of the use of rational techniques as a response to "naked passion". (Mannheim 1951:48) Nevertheless, Mannheim did not appear to hold to a sharp dichotomy between the rule of reason and the sway of emotion. He wrote, for example, citing Dewey, that the "power that can overcome" irrationalism (he mentions Sorel as an example of an irrationalist [Mannheim 1936:122ff]), was not mere rationalism, but was refined passions. (Mannheim 1951:303)

Further to this, and despite the references to scientific control of social development we also find him referring to James and Bergson. Once again, it is the language which is telling. Mannheim wrote that reality is in "constant flux", a "process of becoming." (Mannheim 1936:86:135) Mannheim wrote that it was the error of ideologists to believe that humanity could ever reach a final resting place because reality "is ever on the move". (Fox 1938:205) For this reason A.C. Fox wrote, in an article in the Australasian Journal of Psychology and Philosophy, that Mannheim could sometimes read "like a passage from Bergson." (Fox 1938:12)

1. Mannheim wrote that the call for a final "synthesis" was a reflex of the "static world view of intellectualism;" whereas, he wrote, all things are ever in a "process of becoming...the only adequate synthesis would be a dynamic one which is reformulated from time to time." (Mannheim 1936:135) Although it should be noted, that Mannheim made it quite clear he did not think that the reality of flux implied pure unintelligibility as he claimed Sorel thought. (Mannheim 1936:122-4)
We have therefore two contrasting approaches to politics and time between which Mannheim sought to steer. At one extreme, we have the approach of those irrationalist groups who saw history as pure flux and at the other, we have those rationalists who sought to transcend time and history and come to rest in a state of scientific equilibrium. How then should we relate Mannheim to these two positions? At times Mannheim seems to come close to a position which holds out the possibility of the abolition of politics and its replacement with scientific or technical government. At others, we find Mannheim speaking of both knowledge and politics in a way that suggested some Bergsonian influence.

Mannheim is also interesting from the pragmatist point of view because he too was elaborating a philosophy, or rather social theory, of reconciliation. He was attempting to avoid the extreme positions which placed an undue emphasis on either the role of the rational or the role of the irrational in social life. While Dewey presented his political approach as mid-way between a policy of laissez-faire and the totalitarian state, Mannheim branded his political theory as the "third way"—something which avoided the "one-sidedness" of communism on the one hand, and individualism on the other. (Mannheim 1951:127)

I do not want to over-emphasize the pragmatic strains in Mannheim's thought—at least, I would not want to identify him

too strongly with the sceptical side of pragmatism. Mannheim remained confident in the ability of intellectuals to direct and control social life. Indeed, as a German intellectual very conscious of the Nazi experience he saw rational planning as absolutely essential if social strife were to be avoided. (1) This is one of the reasons that planning for freedom was so important to Mannheim and this was to be contrasted with the limits imposed on the free expression of human energy and spontaneity by the plans of totalitarian states. As I suggested in chapter two, in the hands of planners the role of the state was seen as a modification of Green's prescription that it should be a "hindrance of hindrances to the good life"; that is, the function of the public service state lay in the "facilitating of facilities." (Gibson 1934:121)

To the extent that Mannheim was optimistic about the role that intelligent planning can play in social life his attitude can be contrasted with the political "realism" of E.H Carr—which was also being developed at this time. Indeed, the criticisms of "rationalism" were often conducted from a realist perspective—one which discounted the role that intellect, and more specifically, policy could play in social life and emphasised the play of social forces. (2)

1. Dewey noted, and this echoes points we have made in an earlier chapters, how it was German writers like Karl Mannheim in Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction (he is also probably thinking also of Rauschning as he refers to his The Voice of Destruction a number of times in the text) who pointed out how mass-democratization unleashed "irrational elements which have always existed in human nature but which had been kept under control, or at least under cover... Hitler obtained mastery in Germany by procuring for these primitive and irrational elements an organized outlet." (Dewey 1942:5-6)

2. On this point, see Partridge, 1941, pp. 245-7.
Carr's realism was mainly identified with the study of international affairs. We noted in the first chapter that Carr was contemptuous of those who saw the Great War as some sort of aberration from the true course of history - especially those who formulated the utopian or idealist approach to international relations. He believed that utopianism had led to misguided and naive visions of a new international order - the consequence of this belief, he thought, was an inability or unpreparedness to deal with real conflicts when they arose.

In reacting against those internationalists who had predicted the growth of the moral sphere in international politics after World War One, he argued that morality (and also deliberate policies aimed at the melioration of social conditions), could only play a subordinate role in political life. The pursuit of power, self-interest and the eruption of sub-conscious impulses were what ultimately determined the course that politics would take. Indeed, what was called morality in the field of politics, was often no more than a rationalization of the self-interest of the powerful. In political life then, morality could only be "relative not universal." (Carr 1946:21)

Quite clearly, there is little room for a sense of common rationality or social purpose in a world depicted in this way. Yet, Carr did recognise that there were both practical and conceptual limitations to the realist position so presented. Thus, he wrote, that one could not rest "in pure realism" because it could not supply us with those motivations or "springs of
action which are necessary even to the pursuit of thought." (Carr 1946:89) Carr wrote that intelligent thought, utilises "purpose with observation and analysis. Utopia and reality are thus the two facets of political science." (Carr 1946:10)

But Carr remained enough of a realist to deny to that there can be any real harmonising or balancing of the utopian and realistic elements in political life; at best one can only achieve what Ronald Niebuhr called "tentative and uneasy compromises" between them. (Carr 1946:100) Indeed, Carr wrote that the very excitement and tragedy of political life springs from this process, where realism and utopianism are constantly seeking to invade and dominate each other. (Carr 1946:93) Given the limited scope which he accorded social purposes or policies, one would have to say that the role he accorded to the intelligentsia in directing social life was far more limited than that hoped for by Mannheim or Dewey.

This brief discussion of the ideas of Carr shows that his realism, like the supposed rationalism of Mannheim, must be qualified. It would be rather difficult to set up these two thinkers and their approaches in stark contrast to each other. This is because Carr's espousal of the relativity of morals in The Twenty Year Crisis was inspired by Mannheim's historical relativism in Ideology and Utopia—an intellectual debt Carr acknowledged in the preface to his text. (Carr 1946:ix)

But contrasting their ideas is to some extent a useful exercise. In a sense, Mannheim's rationalism and Carr's realism
can also be seen as standing at the opposite ends of the pragmatist spectrum with Mannheim placing greater emphasis on the role of intelligence and Carr placing greater emphasis on the role of will. I would not, however, want to push this point too far - there are significant differences between Carr's realism and pragmatist philosophies of will on the one hand, and between Mannheim's "rationalism" and instrumentalist or experimentalist approaches to social planning on the other. Carr was more of a determinist than a voluntarist, and Mannheim appeared to have a stronger commitment to the truthful character of the social sciences than an instrumentalist would have - to the extent that the instrumentalist might see scientific laws as only conventionalised patterns of adjustment.

What is most interesting from the pragmatist point of view, is that both of these scholars present their own theories, in terms of the conceptual and political worlds that they inhabit, as compromises between extremes. Although, it is important to stress that the extremes between which Mannheim and Carr hover, while bearing some symmetrical relation, are not reducible to each other. That is, it is the rhetorical tactic of compromise between what are presented as false oppositions, as we have seen with James, Dewey, Barzun et al., and not just the types of oppositions that are selected, that these writers have in common and which enables one to see them as to some degree in sympathy with the pragmatist tradition.

Contrasting Mannheim and Carr also demonstrates the way in which the pluralist attempt to push for greater internationalism
alongside a more federalistic system had dissipated in intellectual circles by the late 1930s. By the 1940s we can say that there was something of a return to those very conceptions of domestic and international society which the pluralists had opposed. That is, while rationalism or collectivism came back into fashion in relation to the domestic arena in the 1930s and 1940s, realism or particularism once more received prominence in international thought.

11. The Pragmatist Political Legacy

I have shown how pragmatist political thinkers brought together both metaphysical and naturalistic theories in order to build a politics of pluralism, in order to provide new answers to questions concerning the individual's relation to the state. I have also shown that while this pragmatic political programme was connected with liberal thought, in some areas it was highly unstable, revealing a virulent strain of activism in the form of the syndicalist and fascist movements which drew upon its voluntarism. To further complicate the picture, it has been argued that an essentially irrationalist and romanticist fascism also had an impartial, functionalist aspect and this too was said to reveal the influence of pragmatism.

That somehow pragmatism and pluralism could be taken to contribute to such varied political phenomena needs to be explained. In part, the answer pertains to the nature of the criticism of pragmatic and pluralistic political thought. That is, the complaint was that it was not so much that this or that
pragmatist or pluralist advocated political evil but that their theories could lead to or embolden the politically violent and vicious. In one sense James' philosophy had simply been perverted, in another sense, it was the "fruit of pragmatist philosophy pushed to its logical extreme." (Sabine 1931:213)

The argument here is that pragmatism had failed its own working test; it had degenerated into anarchy and this was followed by fascism. (Elliot 1928:x)

Most of the criticism operated at this level. This is one reason why the criticisms of pragmatism and pluralism are often ambivalent on the one hand condemning writers such as William James for the potential dangers their theories could unleash, while on the other hand conceding that most pragmatists and pluralists were of a politically moderate temperament. Thus, what was being attacked was often pragmatism or pluralism rather than any particular author or text. (1)

But an additional explanation can be provided. I would argue that the fact that pragmatist politics could hide behind so many masks flows from the slippery quality we have constantly attributed to that philosophy. Pluralism too, as a political creed, was obviously very adaptable. One would have to say then that both pragmatism and pluralism were bound to provide ample material for a number of political movements.

1. This explains why on the one hand we see many writers, including the critics of pluralism, acknowledging that most pluralists, with the exception of the syndicalists, were of a moderate political temperament, while at the same time expressing concern about pluralism. (Ellis 1927:585, Barnes 1925:141, Elliot 1924:267, Elliot 1928:431)
But one would have to baulk at the suggestion that a pragmatic pluralism possessed an internal logic that, when put into action, unleashed an unstoppable political process that would ultimately terminate in fascism or even Nazism. We recall here that it was really the Jamesian or Bergsonian strain in pluralism that some found objectionable. (Although we should remember how Follett found in their philosophies something quite different.) It was the pragmatist philosophy of will, more so than pluralism, that was seen as possessing this internal logic which would push political life to the brink of tyranny and domination by dictators or powerful business interests. And this was because that philosophy was tentative or evasive on the matter of philosophical foundations.

Yet if a reluctance to connect one's political theory or system to any solid foundation guarantees the descent into either chaos or dictatorship, then few theories or systems can escape unscathed. It should be noted that what is a solid foundation for one thinker proves too flimsy for another.

Indeed, as we have seen, pluralists themselves were all too ready to accuse both historical and contemporary figures such as Hobbes, Austin and Bosanquet of somehow contributing or leading to an authoritarian state and resultant international conflict. If Laski could condemn Hegel for creating Bismarck (or rather, Bismarck as he was depicted by his critics) then Laski must take responsibility (according to the logic of Elliot's argument), for Mussolini. But such a suggestion would be ludicrous. Too many other factors intervene to establish a direct link between a
political theory and political violence and domination. We should also note that in the midst of intellectual arguments positions are often misunderstood. This is why much intellectual discussion about the nature of the state in this period was a debate between straw-men. The putative enemies of pluralism were to some degree fabrications - as were the depictions of pluralists and pragmatists as giving enthusiastic support to violent political acts.

These points should not stop us asking questions about the role of theory and philosophy and its relation to politics - an issue that has come up repeatedly in this study. We may ask, although with some reservations, whether theory or philosophy should be made safe for liberalism or democracy? It remains true that some ideas can be, and are sometimes intended to be, dangerous to or subversive of the existing social order. Richard Rorty, a philosopher greatly interested in the pragmatist tradition of thought, has in this regard recommended in Contingency. Irony. Solidarity. (1989) some sort of intellectual division of labour.

Rorty would have those philosophers who speak of social solidarity or justice assigned the role of public intellectuals; while those whose main interest is in the pursuit of self-creation (and whose ideas may prove unsettling or inappropriate when injected into the political arena) would be asked to "privatize" - their activities. (Rorty 1989:197) But Rorty's solution seems both odd and politically naive. Odd, because his
idea of what should or should not be a matter of public interest seems somewhat arbitrary. Naive, because ideas have a habit of jumping out of their box, as Arthur O. Lovejoy long ago observed. This is not to reify ideas and see them as swimming freely through social waters; it is simply to say that people talk. Conversation is carried on and during its course certain ideas, perhaps taken out of context, are absorbed into the social matrix and come to have a life outside the academy.

Rorty is right, however, in stressing the point that practical or political problems require practical solutions and that they can never be solved by theories in themselves. This is, in many respects, a restatement of what pragmatists or the pragmatically inspired were saying in their discussions of politics, jurisprudence and economics back in the early part of this century.

Yet this injunction to be pragmatic or experimental when it comes to political or social affairs may beg as many questions as it answers. I say this because, as I have demonstrated, there was no single nor clear-cut pragmatic response to social and political problems of the inter-war years and beyond. Pragmatic solutions ranged from calls to political activism to calls for the introduction of techniques of social and economic management.

What then can we say about the pragmatist legacy except that it is manifold? I said earlier that it has been described as a philosophy of reconciliation. But I think that I have demonstrated that it failed to hold the philosophical or
political centre which many claimed for it. In this context, Papini's description of pragmatism as a "corridor" philosophy is perhaps more accurate; for as a philosophy it is the point of intersection of any number of other strands of thought. To enter into the world of pragmatist thought is to have any number of conceptual doors opened - doors which branch off in all sorts of unexpected directions.

It is not surprising then that pragmatism could proceed in many strange political directions. Perhaps all that the pragmatic approach to politics could demonstrate, however inadvertently, was that it is in the nature of political life, as Roberto Michels once wrote, to be caught between the "extreme limits" of freedom and authority: between these the "pendulum oscillates unceasingly." (Michels 1927:772)
Chapter 7: Pragmatism and Economics

1. The Problem of Rationalism

A discussion of the impact of pragmatism would not be complete without mentioning its importance to developments in economic thought and policy. In America the influence of pragmatism in the area of economic theorising was evident in the early 1920s. Indeed, we could go back even earlier in the case of Thorstein Veblen. The American economist Frank Knight noted in 1923 that there was a push by economists to interpret the "vogue of pragmatism". (Knight 1923:61) Sabine several years later observed that pragmatism "acted as a ferment" within the discipline of economics, just as it had in the area of legal theory. (Sabine 1930:865) The adoption of the pragmatist point of view, as well as more generally terms and metaphors drawn from the areas of process metaphysics and modern physics, was important for some economists in helping them reconceptualise economic reality. Furthermore, pragmatism was also of assistance to some economists in their challenge to what they saw as an undue preoccupation with theorising. But before I directly address these topics, and in order to enhance our understanding of how "pragmatist" economics developed, I need to make a few brief comments about the more general social and methodological contexts which the discipline of economics inhabited in the 1920s and 1930s.
I pointed out in the last chapter that the influence of pragmatism had dissipated by the late 1930s and early 1940s. Certainly, its pluralistic strain had all but disappeared in the midst of the rush towards social democracy - an ideal which, as I have previously mentioned, grew increasingly attractive given the mass economic insecurities of the 1930s. There were very pragmatic reasons for supporting this ideal. As Keynes observed, it was necessary to make capitalism more efficient in the provision of social goods in order to decrease the attractions of communism and fascism; social efficiency, he argued, was all the more important in a world in which existing social arrangements were no longer seen to have the blessing of God. (1) In addition to this, the social democratic ideal was central to the rhetoric of governments during the Second World War; the "promise of a better future" had to be made in order to inspire the community in its struggles against the enemy. (Burton 1943:34)

Nevertheless, I did suggest that there were still pragmatic nuances to be found in those authors and intellectual movements which began to achieve prominence in the late 1930s. There were traces of pragmatism's scepticism and its emphasis on will to be found in a range of intellectual trends, from the political "realism" of E.H. Carr to existentialism. In the case of social scientists, however, it was pragmatism in its more sober and

1. Robert Skidelsky cites Keynes as saying that economic intervention was necessary if "irreligious capitalism is ultimately to defeat religious communism". (Skidelsky 1983:15) A similar point was made by an Australian scholar, W. G. Duncan, who wrote, "great economic inequalities." jeopardized the maintenance of democracy and freedom because they prevented the "attainment of kindred ideals". (Duncan 1934:13)
scientific mood that was mostly in evidence in the English-speaking world at that time. So sober in fact, that pragmatism in this form could also be referred to as rationalism—something against which both James and Dewey had usually positioned themselves.

But the rationalism that we begin to hear so much about in the late 1930s does not really refer to the pragmatist's old metaphysical foes—these being the monistic block-universe and Newtonian conceptions of science. For when Partridge, Oakeshott and others began to talk about rationalism what they were describing was not only an intellectualist belief in the commanding power of reason but also a more general, although related, political disposition. That is, a rationalist was one who averred that social forces are amenable to rational guidance and control. More importantly rationalism entailed the belief that society should be ruled only by those who have the capacity to reason correctly. Thus, when we speak of rationalism in this sense, we are not so much designating an epistemology but invoking a political term of approbation or abuse.

The danger of treating rationalism in this context as purely an epistemology is that traditionally rationalism and empiricism are often opposed to each other because the latter relies on deductive modes of reasoning while the other appeals to raw experience. Yet many so-called rationalists whom we find among social scientists in the 1930s were very keen to display their empirical credentials. One example was the so-called "rationalization movement", which advocated the scientific
planning of industry and society and which appealed explicitly to empirical procedures. (Brady 1933:3-6)

However, if we simply treat rationalism at least in this context a description of the belief that a government run by armies of experts (be they priests, philosophers or social scientists) can somehow make society both more equitable and equable then this contradiction disappears. For whether such a system is designed under the stimulus of inductive or deductive modes of reasoning may be irrelevant; what we have in either case is essentially a formulaic approach to the running of society.

The second point I want to make in this regard, is that some of those who claimed to be positivistically or empirically minded were only empiricists or positivists in the weak or loose senses of those terms. We are not speaking here of the positivism or radical empiricism which Mach and Poincare developed, which James imbibed and which could be so subversive of the scientific ideals of certainty and impartiality. Indeed, as I noted in chapter two, being a self-declared positivist might mean nothing more than asserting the need for research to become positive, factual or empirical.

There was little immersion in the detail of empiricist or positivist epistemologies by the would-be social scientists who used this vocabulary of factual research. This is shown by the way in which words such as the real and the empirical could be jumbled together as if they entailed the same thing. They did not, as I have suggested in previous chapters. The serious or
consistent positivist or empiricist refused to speak about reality because reality was a metaphysical concept for which there could be no test. It is curious then that the terms positivism or empiricism are sometimes now used as pejoratives, referring to an unsophisticated belief that knowledge is accumulated as a result of a disinterested examination of the real; whereas we are all supposed to know that, to repeat that popular but vacuous phrase of the 1920s, everything is relative.

This understanding of positivism or empiricism is the legacy of earlier and repeated corruptions of the meanings of these terms. In particular, the these terms were used in order to dress up rather crude pseudo-scientific methodologies.

This is not to suggest that the received image of positivism or empiricism is a complete fabrication. Empiricists, as I have noted, were often tempted to seize the realist crown and thus shifted from making claims about experience to making claims about reality. And positivists, especially logical positivists, often did sound arrogant in their dismissal of metaphysical issues and normative values; logical positivism did turn into something which looked like the cult of science. As we have seen, James was not inclined towards this version of positivism and later developed a much broader conception of what the empirical could entail. Nevertheless, the rational did meet the empirical in his writings to the extent that he adopted verificationist methods in order to test experiential material.

To the extent that pragmatists embraced experimental or
scientific methods, and here Dewey is more relevant than James, they sat close by the positivists. Indeed, by the late 1930s we can say that both pragmatism and radical empiricism had been tamed under the steady hand of the later positivism. The importance of this point in relation to our final discussion is that it is precisely this sort of pragmatism which was being embraced by economists and all those with an interest in the administration of social affairs in the 1930s.

The preceding comments should not be taken to suggest that the other side of pragmatism which I have explored (the side which stresses the role of will and impulse and conceives of reality as process) was not important to economic thought. In fact, it is the influence of this sort of pragmatism on economics which I want to examine in this chapter. Indeed, what I want to show is that in order for economics to become pragmatic in the more conservative or scientific sense of the term, it had to first embrace pragmatism's more metaphysical aspects. I shall explain why as we proceed.

2. The Economics of Crisis

My previous discussions suggest that economics was by no means the only social science in which we can see the imprint of both of the major aspects of pragmatism. But it was economics, above all, which provided the gateway through which pragmatist ways of thinking entered into policy-making circles. This intermingling of pragmatist philosophy with economic thought adds a further dimension to our study in that it demonstrates that
pragmatist philosophy had some impact on day to day life. This becomes clearer when one considers that in the 1930s economics became one of the main tools of the statesman — and therefore became a dominant language in political circles. What we are witnessing here then is a redefinition of what political activity should involve. Morgenstern wrote that "economic policy is essentially politics in the real sense." (Morgenstern 1937:141)

As we saw in chapter two, some went even further in depicting politics as an essentially irrational activity and something which could and should be eliminated by sound economic management.

Here I would also draw attention to Keynes' prediction in an essay appearing in the *Political Quarterly* in April 1932 in which he said that economists, whom he said were at the time among the most incompetent scientists, would become "the most important group of scientists in the world" in the post-war era. (Keynes 1971:91) That they would become so Keynes saw as partly dependent on their grasp or understanding of a less than perfect economic reality — one which rendered their older models illusory. (Keynes 1971:92)

In this judgement Keynes was proved right — training in economics did come to be considered a very important qualification for public service in the post-war era. In relation to this I would argue that pragmatist ways of thinking played a not insignificant role in the incarnation of the economist as prince. Mainly, because pragmatism helped economists to adjust or adapt their vocabulary in ways that made their
discipline better able to explain practical difficulties.

But perhaps we should stop at this point and ask why it was the economist who was able to assume the mantle of prince. Or to put it less obscurely, why did economists achieve such prominence in policy and political circles in the 1930s? The obvious answer relates to the economic problems experienced by industrialised nations during those years. One thing that stands out in this regard is that in the late 1930s in the English-speaking world the word crisis increasingly seems to have been defined in economic terms or was related to economic difficulties. There was talk of economic, financial and monetary crises with great frequency in both newspapers and journal articles.

I am not suggesting that this was the only context in which the term was used - my discussion of the use of the term in chapter one would contradict such an assertion. In particular, the term had deep resonances for European intellectuals - as we have seen in the examples drawn from Husserl, Valery and others. Indeed, the dark undertones that the word had in their works lingered on in intellectual circles in continental Europe well after the Second World War was over. I also pointed out in chapter one that this more profound understanding of crisis was also evident among intellectuals in English-speaking countries. But the important point here is that in the midst of depression in countries such as America, England and Australia crisis largely came to refer, sometimes without qualification, to
economic crisis. (1)

I also pointed out in chapter one that the Second World War had generated a lot of crisis literature; but in the English-speaking world at least, this literature did not seem to be tinged with the same sense of hopelessness and despair that accompanied similar material which grew up around the Great War. I think this is partly because intellectuals in Britain and America and elsewhere felt that the war against Germany and her allies was backed by a much greater degree of moral authority than was the war of 1914. (Ogg 1942:3) Partly for this reason, the term crisis, when used to describe the Second World War (again I am here only speaking of English-speaking countries) was often intended to refer to a very serious but nevertheless passing phase rather than to the end of civilisation. The fact that promises of a better future were being made to the citizens and soldiers of the allied countries is also I think testimony to that. (Ogg 1942:15)

The rhetoric of economic crisis was also characterised by hope rather than despair. When economists spoke of crisis they usually presumed that it was passing or that with the right sort of treatment it could be overcome. For example, Keynes’ four articles entitled "The Means to Prosperity" (which appeared in

The Times in March 1933), while underlining the seriousness of the economic situation did express a certain confidence that with the aid of intelligence difficulties could be overcome. (Keynes 1983:335ff) This underscores the importance of the greater emphasis on empirical methods and statistical techniques by economists. These allowed economists to give shape to the crisis. Furthermore, by expressing it in terms of measurable magnitudes the way was left open for crisis to be spoken of as something to be managed and whose course could be plotted. We can contrast this with the much more elusive understandings of crisis that were being spoken of by philosophers and theologians and which were obviously rather difficult to translate into actual policy - even where they were intended to be. Thus, I would argue that it is precisely because economists could plausibly explain current difficulties and offer a way of overcoming them that economics became a dominant mode of political discourse.

But in order to achieve this elevated position the discipline had to undergo changes - at least this was the perception. As I have suggested in chapter two, economics was being strongly condemned from both inside and outside the discipline for not being practical enough and for not paying enough attention to experience. Economists were accused of suffering from some sort of theoretical affliction which rendered them incapable of coming to terms with the real world. This affliction also prevented them from keeping up with developments in science - the very area they fought so hard to emulate. It is precisely at this point that the influence of pragmatism is
paramount because of its repertoire of arguments which asserted that theory should only be an instrument of practice. The Austrian economist Oskar Morgenstern wrote in his *Limits of Economics* that if economics was to earn the right call itself an empirical science then it had to contribute to "the mastering of practical life." (Morgenstern 1937:4)

What this meant was that all the old economic models and metaphors had to be (to use a pragmatist term) unstiffened. That is, before the economist could really capture and explain crisis there had to be an actual expansion and stirring up of the meanings the economist gave to economic life - something that happened in part under the stimulus of pragmatist philosophy.

This is why the pragmatist influence in economics was also manifest in contests over metaphysical ideas (such as the notion of the will and of the plasticity of the universe). Thus, at the centre of debates about the philosophy of economics throughout the period there were often attempts to pull economics away from a static and deterministic metaphysics towards one that is indeterministic and dynamic. Although of course, these moves were only intended to loosen the boundaries around the discipline rather than to cause its wholesale collapse.

3. Pragmatism, Ethics and Economics

We could argue that pragmatism and economics are natural allies. As we saw, Elliot described Dewey's pragmatism as an economic philosophy because it upheld the biological values of survival and efficiency. To explain this we should note that
even James’ philosophy can be said to have “economic” objectives, insofar as it is concerned with the fulfilment of wants and desires. As for the pragmatic method, it can be seen as a rule of economy or efficiency—a means of maximizing happiness whilst avoiding pain as much as possible. Indeed, it was because pragmatism was purely an “economic” philosophy that Elliot thought it a philosophy of fascism, because on his reading fascist modes of social organisation were aimed solely at the survival, growth and efficient running of the social organism. It is also for this reason that pragmatism was so often called the philosophy of the businessman. Thus, whether the pragmatic approach underpins a liberal or collectivist society—whether it is used to serve the interests of the individual or the collectivity—its values and methods remain essentially the same. In summary then, pragmatist philosophy and economics are comparable to each other because both aim at the manipulation of the external environment to obtain some end; both embrace the notion that utility is the best means by which to assign value.

Clearly, from what I have said in previous chapters, this restricted understanding of pragmatism is not one that I can support. Dewey, for instance, did not set out to design a philosophy fit only for ruthless businessmen and demagogues. As we saw, Dewey’s point was that if philosophers or ethicists neglected the realm of practical activity then it would be overrun by precisely such people. (1)

1. Again, pointing to this stress on ethical impulses would seem to contradict Elliot’s claim that we are here dealing with a purely “economic” philosophy. Indeed, Elliot’s own definition of what constitutes “economic” values suggests a rather too limited
Furthermore, one of the reasons for making economics pragmatic (as was also the case in similar discussions of politics and jurisprudence) was to make prescriptive claims about how an economically just or fair society should be organised. That is, adopting a pragmatist stand could sometimes be a way of placing the values of love and charity at the centre of economic arguments.

When framed like this, the critique of traditional economics could begin to sound like something flowing from the pen of a late 19th century new liberal or ethical idealist. Dewey certainly argued that the role of economic institutions, be they private or public, was to assist in the growth of the human personality, as we saw in chapter six. Although we should recall that Dewey saw this growth as ongoing rather than as proceeding to a final goal. (Dewey 1957:186)

One of the advantages of pragmatism as an approach to things was that it allowed one to quietly and convincingly slip in and out of a range of arguments. In attempting to refute laissez-faire economics, pragmatists did not have to rely (or have to be seen to rely) solely on arguments which rested on the basis of principle. Equally, to the extent that they presented themselves as being scientifically-minded, they did not have too careful about sounding disinterested. Nor did they have to run shy of practical or political criteria in putting their arguments.

understanding of the origin and development of the discipline itself. That is, its development in relation to moral philosophy and as what Adam Smith described as a branch of the science of the legislator. See Adam Smith, Wealth of Nations, Book IV, Introduction.
Pragmatism, if one likes, provided a covering law for argumentative flexibility and eclecticism. It allowed one to mix empirical, moral and political criteria all together.

However, I should stress that the emphasis on the moral failures of laissez-faire was not as common amongst social scientists as amongst philosophers or religiously committed intellectuals. We should recall here my discussion in chapter two of the fact that great stress was laid on scientific or empirical refutations of the policy of laissez-faire. (1) Supposedly scientific or factual arguments in favour of socialism or social democracy were at times seen as pretentious. It was the empirically minded arguments which were seen at least by social scientists as being the most persuasive in relation to arguments in favour of social planning. (2) Whether they were as important for politicians and the populace is, of course, another question.

4. Science, Economics and Pragmatism

We should note that there had been in the 1920s a movement of reaction against the treatment of economics as a positive science (and more generally the conflation of "intelligent conversation" with scientific discourse) precisely because it led to the exclusion of moral considerations from the realms of economic thought. (Knight 1922:456) Such an exclusion meant that economics was, like positivism generally, reduced to an "ethics

1. See Morgenstern for an argument against the "scientific" nature of both socialism and liberalism. Morgenstern, 1937, Ch. III.
of power' a la Nietzsche, that is, the complete rejection of any true 'ethics.'" (Knight 1923:613) As we have seen, pragmatists were also accused of descending to this level of amorality. Yet, once more, we find Dewey rejecting such a narrow understanding of pragmatism and instrumentalism. He too noted how economists, having been told that "their subject-matter was merely material", seemed to think that they "could be 'scientific' only by excluding all reference to distinctively human values". (Dewey 1930:283) Like Knight, he thought the social consequences of this were disturbing. Dewey wrote that a utilitarianism which treated ends as "merely instrumental" denied value, and resulted in an "obnoxious materialism" which brutalised economic life. (Dewey 1957:171)

But the responses to this value problem varied. Knight, for instance, attempted to refute the claim that economics was a positive science which could or should exclude references to human interests or values. His argument was that while science in the natural sciences required data that stayed put, this was not true in the nature of economic data. In explaining this point, Knight wrote that the data of economics were not merely material; economics dealt with wants and utilities and these were above all values. And like all values, these were things which grew and changed; they were fluid and could not rendered as scientific datum. (Knight 1922:456)

For this reason, Knight wrote, economists would be better served if they expressed their arguments in the form of aesthetic criticism; by means of "suggestion rather than logical statement,
in figurative rather than literal language"; he wrote that the principles of economics should be apprehended by means of "sympathetic interpretation" instead of pure "intellectual cognition." (Knight 1922:481) (1)

Another American economist Allyn A. Young argued similarly saying that economics should become more like literary and historical writings. (2) Young wrote that economics, like historical knowledge, should provide us with "judgement and insight" - those sorts of unconscious and intuitive forms of knowledge which cannot be expressed as rules. (Young 1925:158)

Young also doubted the worth of the discipline's scientific aspirations, if this meant that economists should be value neutral. A functional or pragmatic economics, he wrote, was one where research was driven by both intellectual curiosity and human interests. Economists, he suggested, had overlooked the actual processes of scientific endeavour where the motivations which lay behind research were never purely intellectual. Indeed, he wrote, bias could even serve as an "energizer" or "catalytic agent." (Young 1925:152,161) It could lead to an understanding of one's subject matter that no "tautologically sterile" nor

1. In relation to this point Knight wrote that the "tough-minded" are really the weak-minded for the scientific view of intelligent discourse is unable to convey true understanding. (Knight 1923:616)
2. Morgenstern made a similar point in relation to the social sciences as a whole. He wrote: "Strange as it may seem, the relevance of the artistic turn of mind is particularly great in the social sciences where they are concerned with the understanding and control of human behaviour." (Morgenstern 1937:5)
"aridly descriptive" account could provide. (Young 1925:162) (2) In this context, the importance of pragmatism for Young, moreso than for Knight, was that it demonstrated that morality and science were not incompatible; for it had demonstrated that pure science, was a "fiction" fit only for the "Academy of Laputa." (Young 1925:162)

Quite obviously economists did not for the most part give up their scientific pretensions in order to become literary critics; they saw themselves as dentists (to use Keynes' description) rather than artists. In a sense, the art versus science dichotomy became superfluous. As we have seen with Dewey, it became possible, especially after 1927 when Heisenberg's physics was being imported into philosophy and other areas, to argue (however illegitimately) that in science as well the data were not stable and the observer was no longer neutral to the results of his experiments. Indeed, as I have already suggested, this dichotomy became unnecessary precisely because the nature of science was being reconceptualised in ways that brought it much closer to those forms of knowledge which Knight and Young were talking about.

Nevertheless, as I have suggested in relation to social scientists as a whole, there was a degree of ambivalence on the part of economists in relation to questions of value. For with the community increasingly turning to economists for answers they had to show an active interest in social affairs. There was, we should remember, a great deal of criticism of the discipline
in the public arena for its aloofness on matters of public policy and its failure to provide practical business advice. (Morgenstern 1937:8) Yet economists also had to maintain an air of wisdom and authority if they were to be listened to; an explicit appeal to human values or a declaration of one's own interest would threaten to undermine their image of impartiality and hence their credibility as community advisers. This was a dilemma common to many social scientists at this time, in particular to those entering the bureaucracy and becoming part of a new expert elite. (1) The need to overcome this dilemma is precisely why we hear the ridiculous claim at the time by advocates of economic planning that they were scientists rather than Socialists.

This dilemma must have particularly concerned economists, for a great deal of methodological literature began to appear, especially during the depression years. Morgenstern suggests that methodological controversies over the place of values in economics, the status of economics and the relation of economic theory to practice preoccupied economists in the 1930s. Morgenstern states that this was demonstrated by the fact that methodological discussions were usually included in the introductory chapters of most standard works and text-books at this time. As well as this, methodological controversies also inspired a body of more specialist works (Morgenstern 1937:153ff) It is also worth noting that these debates about the relation

between theory and practice and between facts and values continued well into the 1940s when the vast plans for economic reconstruction were being or were about to be put into place.

(1) However, unlike some of the arguments which appeared in the 1920s, some of which I have just examined, in the 1930s the tendency even among those critical of orthodox economics was not to reject scientific modes of discourse wholesale but only to modify them. There did of course, continue to appear in the 1930s works which radically challenged positivistic conceptions of economics or which claimed that economic researchers could not entirely exclude questions of value; however, what we also find frequently appearing, especially in the war years, was the rather more cautious assertion that the economist as social planner was

simply putting his expertise in the service of the commonweal. Why this increasingly became the case I will later discuss.

5. The Relevance of Economics

As suggested in the preceding passages, aside from the question of values the other most pertinent and pressing issue was the asserted irrelevance of economics to political problems. Paul Homan (who wrote on the American institutional economists Veblen and Wesley C. Mitchell) offered what sounded very much like a pluralist argument against monism when assessing the relevance of economics. He wrote in the Quarterly Journal of Economics that there was a growing "sense of inadequacy" on the part of economists in meeting the problems generated by the "increasing complexity of economic life." (Homan 1928:337)

The reason why economics was perceived to be so irrelevant to modern industrial life was because it still adhered to those mechanical metaphors derived from Newtonian physics. These metaphors had been adopted so that economics could "achieve scientific form". (Homan 1928:337) (1) As we saw in chapter two, it was these metaphors that were seen to give economics what Young called its "bad metaphysical odour." (Young 1925:156)

The argument was that these metaphors led to the view that the economic system was a machine governed by universal laws. It

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1. On this same point see Dewey, 1930 p. 221 and Sabine, 1930, p.869. Note also that this criticism persisted well into the 1930s and 1940s. J.O. Shearer in a review of T.W. Hutchinson's The Significance and Basic Postulates of Economic Theory wrote of the lack of "functional significance" of economics' "glittering edifice." (Shearer 1939:136) Partridge was writing in 1945 of how economic methods were still haunted by the ghost of a "rational", "a priori" science composed of "pure deductive systems." (Partridge 1945:96)
was a system which possessed, as Keynes derisively put it, "inner harmony" and was "self-balancing". (Keynes 1932:92) Of course, to the extent that these mechanical abstractions were only intended to be regulative ideals there was no problem. But the argument was that economists had taken what was only an analogy to be an actual description of what normal economic life should actually be. All other forms of social life, Sabine wrote, had thus come to be seen as "as mere variants or aberrations of the type." (Sabine 1930:869) But as I said, the new view was that the sharp contours of economic theory no longer fitted the now somewhat fuzzy world of economic practice. Economics, Sabine wrote, had come to move in a world of "unreal abstractions and mythological entities." (Sabine 1930:869)

The criticisms of the pragmatists were not entirely disinterested. Dewey, for example, objected to mechanical analogies to the extent that they were used to give scientific justification to the political doctrine of laissez-faire. Dewey even argued that "Laissez-faire was the logical conclusion" of economics' Newtonian heritage. This was because that science depicted the world as a machine which ran by itself. (Dewey 1930:212) If the economy were such a machine then it followed that any interference it its natural workings or sequence could only be harmful. (1)

1. Morgenstern wrote of the "unfortunate" tendency among those who approach economics using the a priori method "to identify economic theory with a particular system of economic policy." Whereas he argued that given that such theories could neither be confirmed nor refuted empirically, such a conflation was illegitimate. "The limits to the use of the a priori method in economics", he wrote, "must be strictly drawn and strictly observed." (Morgenstern 1937:10)
Changing the direction of economic thought and policy involved dislodging those metaphors which had become so ingrained in the mental habits of economists. It was this task, that pragmatists and many others set out to undertake. The metaphorical creations which were being rejected were described by the Swedish economist Johan Akerman as the economic law of recurrence or periodicity symbolised by the pendulum (and as expressed in David Ricardo's "cast iron wage level" and Thomas Malthus' law of population) and the belief that the economic system has its own natural sequence which results in equilibrium or the stationary state (as with the planetary system) as symbolised by the scales. (Akerman 1932:7ff)

It was the classical economists Malthus (in his Essay on Population 1798), Ricardo (in his Principles of Political Economy and Taxation 1817) and John Stuart Mill (in his Principles of Political Economy [1848]) who were seen as responsible for confusing the laws of physics with the laws of economics. They had cast what should have been specific working principles into veritable laws of nature untouched by human will. They became, as the Harvard scholar Ralph M. Eaton wrote, "inescapable" determinants of social behaviour. (Eaton 1921b:385) He saw these mechanical abstractions as irrelevant because they so greatly simplified economic life, and as dangerous because they encouraged pessimism and fatalism. Eaton wrote that "social fatalism" was the "policy of laissez-faire." (Eaton 1921b:380)

1. Eaton's essay called Social Fatalism was an explicit attack on classical economics from the pragmatic point of view. In
One might of course, dispute this reading of these thinkers' works. For example, one could argue that Malthus, Ricardo and Mill were not the complete pessimists that they were claimed to be. Furthermore, these thinkers were not completely divorced from the realm of practical affairs. Ricardo, for example, was a member of the House of Commons. (Although Alfred Marshall would write that despite this the exposition of his principles was "abstract and unsystematic." [Marshall 1920:813]) (1)

Again, we are to some extent witnessing the construction of straw-men. And of course, the point of constructing straw-men and knocking them down is to apparently clear the way for the particular, his objection was that classical economics denied human beings a choice and the consequence of this was fatalism. He wrote that the significance of the mechanical analogy was that society comes to be seen as an "abstract entity" governed by certain laws and principles "which exercise compulsion upon the human beings who compose it", because "at any time in its history" they "must obey one, and only one set of laws." (Eaton 1921b:381) The consequence of this analogy was "Malthusian pessimism" which haunted social thinking in the nineteenth century; the fatalism of Ricardo's work in the field of distribution and Mill's social dynamics. (Eaton 1921b:384) For Eaton Mill's work resulted in a kind of "economic entropy" - something which bore "witness to the exactness with which he followed the mechanical analogy", for his notion of the "'irresistible necessity that the stream of human industry should finally spread itself out into an apparently stagnant sea'" was seen as a "necessity like that of the second law of thermodynamics." Eaton noted that this law was not invented at the time Mill was writing but the fact that he had come up with something similar, he wrote, showed only how closely he had followed the mechanical analogy. (Eaton 1921b:384)

1. Marshall cited a letter Ricardo wrote to Malthus in May, 1820 which he notes was the same year that Malthus released his Principles of Political Economy considered with a view to their practical application. The letter stated: "Our differences may in some respects, I think, be ascribed to your considering my book as more practical than I intended it to be. My object was to elucidate principles, and to do this I imagined strong cases, that I might show the operation of those principles." (Marshall 1920:813)
rearrangement of intellectual and political priorities. This is exactly what we witness in the 1920s and 1930s. As I suggested, what we see are more and more depictions of the existing discipline as out of touch with a new and complex reality. This was sometimes attributed to the too zealous application of physical analogies, sometimes to a false conception of science and sometimes to political motives.

That economics had little to say about the real world was a point which became particularly laboured in the 1930s. The failure of governments to deal with the economic slump was attributed to a preponderance for abstract economic theorising among economists as well as their adherence to out-dated analogies. Economic theory had come to be seen as rationalism par excellence - and a useless rationalism at that. We should note that this was as much a political as an intellectual struggle. Challenging the direction of economic thought was also part of a challenge to those who pushed for a return to policies of laissez-faire after the First World War. This was a debate which became both intellectually and politically heated with the onset of the depression. (1)

Thus, Akerman wrote that eliminating these old ways of thinking and restoring free-will to its rightful place was crucial in the face of economic crisis. (Akerman 1933:185f) The

1. See for example, John Strachey in The Coming Struggle for Power in which he wrote at the end of a chapter entitled "Back to the Market?": "Even the ghosts of these ideas do not walk. They are laid for ever. For the epoch of human history and the material conditions which alone gave them life have passed away down the irreversible stream of time. Only the least historically minded men on earth, only English economists, could dream of their resurrection." Cited in Souter, 1933, p. 123n.
Australian economics professor and adviser to governments E. Ronald Walker, who also described himself as a pragmatist, wrote that the "fictionary state" cannot provide a foundation for serious economic studies as it ignored the "ugly reality" of economic life. (Walker 1929:117 Walker 1936:131) Herbert Von Beckerath, of the University of North Carolina and Duke University, wrote an essay in the Philosophical Review called "Economic Thought and Economic Evolution". In it he said that a "positivistic and pragmatic world" had largely "lost the use for, and the interest in, neat and comprehensive philosophical systems, either of an idealistic or rationalist scientific kind." (Von Beckerath 1937:584)

This is not to say that there were no economists intent on insisting on the scientific exactness of the discipline. Figures such as Lionel Robbins in An Essay on the Nature and Significance of Economic Science, (1932) and the Austrian economists F. A. von Hayek and Joseph A. Schumpeter (Robbins discusses these Viennese economists in his own text) are notable examples and it was they who were subject to attack by pragmatists and the more generally sceptical. (1) (Morgenstern, for example, did not describe himself as a pragmatist - he did however, show an interest in Whitehead's philosophy of science.)

One thing that is interesting about the debates between Robbins and his opponents is that they were in a sense debates about which sorts of metaphors are appropriate to a scientific

study of economics. Of course, this was implicit rather than explicit - and depended to a great extent on what figures were actually seen as metaphors. Of course, consideration of the role of metaphor in economics predated these debates. In the 19th century Nassau Senior called for the elimination of antique organic analogies because of their metaphysical resonances; mechanical metaphors, however, did not seem to be seen in this light. But in the 20th century, both Robbins and Schumpeter were arguing for the elimination of all metaphors and fictions from economics, including terms such as statics and dynamics - terms which have mechanical significance derived from Newtonian mechanics, but which also came to refer in the late 18th and early 19th century to things called "social forces". [Eaton 1921b:380] Some of the opponents of Robbins and the mathematical school, on the other hand, began to insist that biological, or more specifically, evolutionary metaphors should be the basis on which economics is built; this argument was put not only because biological metaphors were seen to have greater descriptive power, but also because it was believed that reality was in essence a vital force. (1)

1. On these points see Ralph William Souter, Prolegomena To Relativity Economics, Columbia University Press, New York, 1933, Chapter V, especially p.22n, where he discussed the role analogies in economics and Schumpeter's attitude towards them. See p. 98 for related comments on the attitude of Hayek and Robbins to the role of fictions in economic theory. Note that similar confusions arose when in an attempt to avoid biological analogies the word "organisation" was substituted for social organism when both share the same biological origins. (Souter 132:36n)
6. New Metaphors for Old

As the preceding comments suggest, placing the biological metaphor at the centre of economic thought was one way in which the discipline could be rebuilt from the ground up. Indeed, Homan wrote that one of the key signs of the great changes that the discipline of economics was supposed to be undergoing was the introduction of the language of biology and the rejection of the mechanical analogy. (Homan 1928:337)

Of course, biological metaphors were not new to economics. They and mechanical metaphors have a long history of inter-play in that discipline. Statics and dynamics have a mechanical significance but they have a biological significance as well. In addition to this, the biological or organic metaphor is highly flexible. It may be deterministic or it may not. For example, Eaton wrote that in the late 19th century biological metaphors were reflected in talk of such things as "'super-organic evolution', social adaption, and the 'social organism'", following the work of Lamarck, Spencer and Darwin. (Eaton 1921b:380) In this context, the organic analogy could become as equally fatalistic as the mechanical one. For it could lead to the belief in a biological law which states the inevitability of the struggle for survival. (Eaton 1921b:387) (1) Of course, evolutionary theory could also be used to make the ethical point

1. Eaton cited the example of Benjamin Kidd’s Social Evolution, Macmillan, 1895. Kidd wrote: "The law of life has always been the same from the beginning - ceaseless and inevitable struggle and competition, ceaseless and inevitable selection and rejection, ceaseless and inevitable progress." (Eaton 1921b:387)
that industrial life is not a mechanical aggregate of discrete parts but is organic or co-operative in nature. It could also be used, in conjunction with this, to insist that society was evolving towards a final perfection. But even where the organic analogy was used for the purpose of promoting social welfare and harmony in defiance of forms of social fatalism, there remained a tendency towards finalism. That is, Eaton suggested, the biological analogy remains deterministic to the extent that evolutionary theory is used to tell us that history can only move in one direction (progressive or regressive), at any given time. (Eaton 1921b:380) Whether this pre-determined path leads to misery or happiness, Eaton's claim was that it still denied human beings the ability to choose.

However, by 1920 the organic analogy was being developed in an entirely new way by Alfred Marshall. His usage did not suggest fatalism or the inevitability of strife, but was more suggestive of the possibilities and potentialities that life opens up. This conception appeared most famously in Marshall's statement in the preface to the eighth edition of his *Principles of Economics*, in which he wrote that:

The main concern of economics is thus with human beings who are impelled, for good and evil, to change and progress. Fragmentary statical hypotheses are used as temporary auxiliaries to dynamical — or rather biological — conceptions; but the central idea of economics, even when its Foundations alone are under discussion, must be that of living force and movement. (Marshall 1920:xv) (1)

1. Also note Marshall's other comments about the importance of the biological metaphor and the relation between statics and dynamics. He wrote: "The Mecca of the economist lies in economic
While many economists at the time might have regarded this metaphorical flourish on Marshall's part as a sign of his lack of theoretical rigour, it was a conception of economic life that certainly excited some interest among economists in the 1920s and 1930s - notably Keynes. It was a conception that could also derive philosophical support from all those theories of creative emergence and evolution that are identified with the works of Whitehead, Alexander and Bergson. It was also a conception that was sometimes identified with James' metaphysics. Thus, the biological metaphors that were important to economics from the 1920s onwards are those which emphasised the importance of process in reality. Insofar as mechanical analogies (such as supply and demand curves) could be admitted, they were seen, as the Australian scholar Herman Black put it, as abstractions from what was in reality an "organic economic evolution." (Black 1934:295)

We should note here too that in the case of dynamics we can demonstrate how the mechanical analogy is similarly flexible. Although this was not often explicitly recognised because mechanism was so often identified with the dull and lifeless. Nevertheless, when a word such as dynamical was used to describe biology rather than in economic dynamics. But biological conceptions are more complex than those of mechanics; a volume on Foundations must therefore give a relatively large place to mechanical analogies; and frequent use is made of the term 'equilibrium', which suggests something of statical analogy. This fact, combined with the predominant attention paid in the present volume to the normal conditions of life in the modern state, has suggested the notion that its central idea is 'statical', rather than 'dynamical'. But in fact is is concered throughout with the forces that cause movement: and its key-note is that of dynamics, rather than statics." (Marshall 1920:xiv)
the economic system it could suggest an entirely different conception to that associated with equilibrium theory - perhaps a much faster and more turbulent economic machine.

Furthermore as we have seen, mechanical analogies could be recast, as they were by Dewey who described them as instruments or tools rather than as objects of sheer wonder; they may be regarded as mere instruments which are used for specific purposes in the course of practical activity. This conception, which is derived from the Bergsonian and pragmatic depiction of man as a tool-making animal, casts a whole new light on the place of economic theory. For in this case, economics becomes something of which we should neither fear nor worship - it is another tool for living and something which is the product of our creative powers. This goes to the heart of the pragmatist arguments in relation to economic theorising and suggests that, rather than pragmatism being a subset of economics, as Elliot suggested, it is economics which is a subset of pragmatism. We should also note here that it was with this functional understanding of economics that the pragmatist was able to reconcile or bring together the biological and mechanical dimensions of life - although the organic remains, as Marshall's description suggests, the well-spring for our mechanical conceptions.

7. Institutional Economics

Both mechanical and biological analogies were used to emphasise the uncertain, complex and willed character of economic life in the institutional economics of the Americans Thorstein
We should note that institutional economics, like pragmatist philosophy which it was seen as an expression of, possessed both scientific values (having its origin in the British empirical tradition) and metaphysical values (with its sometime emphasis on the role of human will in a plastic universe).

That is, institutional economists attempted very detailed and strictly factual descriptions of the workings of specific institutions (relying heavily, in Mitchell's case, on the use of statistics). Yet they also imagined these institutions as springing from the same evolutionary source and emphasized the importance of the human will, in varying ways, in creating an economic reality.

Veblen is a case in point. His work was highly descriptive or factual at times, yet he also placed at the foundation of his economics the concept of organic evolution. Furthermore, he appeared to regard economic institutions as the creations of mind. Veblen's treatment of the activity of mind was, however, cast in psychological terms and he regarded his evolutionary analogy as descriptive of a real material process.

In so far as it is a science in the current sense of the term, any science, such as economics, which has to do with human conduct, becomes a genetic inquiry into the human scheme of life; and where, as in economics, the subject of inquiry is the conduct of man in his dealings with the material means of life, the science is necessarily an inquiry into the life-history of material civilisation, on a more or less extended or restricted plan...Like all human culture this material civilisation is a scheme of institutions - institutional fabric and institutional growth. (Veblen 1919:240-1)
Others found in Veblen's work the traces of an idealist metaphysic precisely because he regarded institutions as "settled habits of thought". (Veblen 1919:239) Young described his theory of economic evolution as a series of "systems of thought built up by the unfolding and the synthesis of preconceptions"; to this extent he regarded Veblen's theory as Hegelian philosophy dressed up in a "modern patois". (Young 1925:176) (1)

What we are really talking about in the case of Veblen's mind-dependent economic reality is actually a product of certain physiological and psychological characteristics. These characteristics include our instincts, which set limits on how we respond to the external environment, and most importantly, our ability for creative adaptation to the environment. (Sabine 1930:868)

In this context, perhaps Bergson's theory of creative evolution or the instrumentalism of the pragmatists would make for a better point of comparison than Hegel's philosophy of mind. Indeed, Veblen did read Dewey and we see traces of his instrumentalism in Veblen's emphasis on our capacity to modify our environment at will. It is this which most interested Veblen, for this capacity is the main catalyst for change in the economic system - other things like instincts and the material environment remaining relatively stable. (Sabine 1930:868) It is this process of habituation to outside pressures that creates our

1. Interestingly, in terms of what we have said of the relation between economics, art and pragmatism, Young described Veblen as being like an impressionist artist "painting" pictures of the economic world as he saw it - pictures which revealed that in institutional economics, just as in "modern stagecraft...a slight difference in lighting changes the whole scene." (Young 1925:183)
economic institutions. Indeed, for Veblen, institutions are in a sense a manifestation of our psychological activity in the sense that they reflect habits of thought which have congealed into regularised patterns. For Veblen, the institutions which determine economic behavior were really a "mass of accumulated and socialized habit." (Sabine 1930:868-69)

But it must be stressed that this mass of habit does not harden into an absolute category. The human mind and body keeps up its activity. In the course of human development we witness the accretion of new skills, bodies of knowledge, forms of taste and modes of organization. No equilibrium point is ever reached; in economic life Veblen wrote in 1925 "things endlessly grow and change." (Veblen 1934:8)

Any society at any one given time in its history is thus made up of a network of these dynamic institutions. Thus, we have the image of a moving economic galaxy composed of a constellation of economic habits or institutions all of which flow into each other and which are all constantly undergoing change. Clearly this depiction of the economic world as made up of a multiplicity of cultural accretions and habits parallels those pluralist theories which held the political world to be moved by the dynamic interactions of group forces. But again, it is not a radical pluralism; each institution melts at its edges into other institutions, and to this extent we can see the same relations of both continuity and discontinuity that we saw in much of the pluralist theory and in the analogies on which it was based.
The relations I have just outlined also operate within each institution as well. Economic institutions grow out of the interactions of individuals, but as these interactions harden into collective habits, they also come to shape the behaviour of individuals within them. What we have here then, in terms of the relation between the individual and the institutions he inhabits, is the same image of give and take between self and surroundings that pragmatists held up as the image of man's relation with nature. The point of economic theory then, was to explain these changes in economic behaviour which result from the complex of forces - "physical and social" - which interact to create new habits and therefore modify economic institutions." (Sabine 1930:867)

I think there was also a creative evolutionary metaphysic being implied here. There was the suggestion that sweeping through all our economic institutions is an underlying energy or activity - an evolutionary flow. Sabine argued that taken together each of these particular economic constellations constitutes "the stream of human culture or civilization." (Sabine 1930:868) But, as with Bergson's creative evolution, while the activity contained within this stream is purposive, as a whole the stream follows no pre-ordained path; it has, Sabine wrote, "no end and it has no single cause." (Sabine 1930:868)

Mitchell did not construct anything like Veblen's holistic vision. He concentrated on a description, in which he used both statistical and quantitative methods, of the course of a particular evolutionary economic institution - namely, the
business cycle. Nevertheless, we should note the centrality of the evolutionary metaphor to Mitchell's understanding. The business cycle is just one manifestation of a more general process of social evolution. Most importantly, it is because it is evolutionary that the business cycle cannot be frozen into a series of time sequences or snapshots as some mechanical analogies might suggest; there is nothing normal in economic life except change. Mitchell wrote of the business cycle, just as Veblen wrote of the stream of human culture, that it begins "at no particular point and ends at no point, but runs together in a continuous motion picture." (Sabine 1930:874)

Thus we have the all-important depiction of the economic world as malleable. It was this point that Mitchell's instrumentalism was brought to bear in his analysis. Sabine claimed that Mitchell took Dewey's instrumentalism more to heart than did Veblen. (Sabine 1930:871) But Mitchell's was not a narrow instrumentalism, despite his positivistic emphasis on statistical techniques. Furthermore, it was one that placed an importance on the growth of the human personality. --Mitchell wrote:

Whether economics is to us a subject of thrilling interest or a dismal pseudo-science depends upon ourselves...If we come [to economics] thinking of man's long struggle to master his own fate, then the effort to solve economic problems seems a vital episode in human history...Seen in this perspective, economic speculation represents a stage in the growth of mind at which man's effort to understand and control nature becomes an effort to understand and control himself. (1)

Mitchell did not—however completely dismiss mechanical analogies where they were useful. This was especially so, he wrote, when economists were examining "static" problems which, as abstractions or inventions of the mind, could "be given a quasi-mechanical character." (Mitchell 1927:186) Nevertheless, he too thought that they could be "dangerous guides"; for example, in the case of the business cycle, the disturbances which do occur are not static in character. If one had to use a mechanical analogy, the best one can say is that there exists in a business cycle (especially one undergoing dynamic changes) "an equilibrium among numerous forces which are constantly changing, changing at different rates and speeds." (Mitchell 1927:186) Mitchell was not the only one to attempt to point to the inadequacy of static analogies in giving expression to conditions of economic turbulence. Another example is the Russian economist N. Kondratieff, who also spoke of the limits of static analogies because they could not give expression to what both he and Mitchell saw as an underlying "dynamics of phenomena"; Kondratieff added that a dynamic theory of economic life presupposed a reality where things were "always changing, perpetually in a state of flux." (Kondratieff 1925:575)

These comments further illustrate two points I have already made. Firstly, that mechanical analogies are flexible to the degree that they can be made suggest change rather than rest; that is, they may be suggestive of kinetic movements which have unpredictable outcomes. Secondly, they further demonstrate how difficult it can be become to disentangle the mechanical from the
organic - when concepts of evolutionary activity and dynamic phenomena are intertwined. Indeed the word dynamism itself is originally a biological conception being derived from the Classical Greek dynamis meaning power or energy.

8. The Economics of Time

The substitution of organic analogies of evolution and terms such as flux in order to escape statical or mechanical analogies leads us to another important aspect of the change in the terminology of economists in the 1930s. That is, the crucial recognition and invocation of the time element. (Von Beckerath 1937:582) Time and duration became central words in many works critical of abstract schematisation in economics from both within and without the discipline. (1)

It was argued in this context that economists had evaded the problem of time and change. (Black described this evasion as being "neurotic" [Black 1934:295]) They had assumed that in a mathematically conceived system of universal equilibrium all economic forces (all of which were reciprocally conditioning) moved and came to rest not only at the same time but also in the blink of an eye. To this extent, there was no scope for real time, in the sense of passage; nor was there any conception that different economic activities take different amounts of time or rather change at different rates of speed. (Note here the two

1. See also Black who wrote that the "systematic explication and development" of the concept of time was an "inescapable prerequisite" of any genuine appreciation of the economic problem." (Black 1934:294) Again, this stress on time was traced back to Marshall's influence. See Redvers-Opie, "Marshall's Time Analysis", The Economic Journal, June, 1931. different concepts of time; in the first case time is conceived
different concepts of time; in the first case time is conceived in psychological terms, in the second case it is conceived in spatial terms.) Furthermore, even where disturbances or frictions were allowed to enter the system (caused by the impact of "new dynamic elements" regarded as lying outside it) they were treated as if they were absorbed almost instantaneously "into an enlarged statically conceived system." (Von Beckerath 1937:580ff) (1)

There was a great deal of economic literature in the 1930s which contrasted the static conceptions of economics with the reality of transition and change, both of which had their source in "temporal duration." (Melville 1936:4 Walker 1936:131) Akerman wrote that the hour-glass, rather than the pendulum or the scales was the most important and fundamental symbol of economic life. Akerman wrote that the Heraclitan statement that all things are in a "state of flux" should be taken as the "motto for the economic investigator" because economic life is eternal movement and ceaseless flow. (Akerman 1932:1f)

As we have seen with Mitchell, this was not to suggest that there was no stability in economic processes and that statical analysis (along with mechanical analogies) should be completely

1. As an example of this, Akerman referred to the French economist Leon Walras who, he wrote, was able to "describe the whole of economic behaviour by means of a comprehensive system of equations. Prices, wages, interest, all have their place in this spacious building resting on the foundation of a universal equilibrium...We have here a circulation system too, but the notion of equilibrium in this case followed out to its utmost limits. No alteration in the price of goods or in production can be conceived without its affecting the entire system; all hang together like the links in a chain, all the factors, are, as we say, "interdependent". But it is to be observed that this reciprocal influence is supposed to take place in a moment. There
jettisoned in favour of dynamics. Nevertheless, one can detect a tendency on the part of some to over-state the fluxational character of economic reality and the consequent inapplicability of static models. The British economist Roy Harrod, for example, insisted that economists must learn to "think dynamically" to give expression to the "changing, progressing and fluctuating economy"; to think statically, he wrote, was to think "stale, flat and unprofitable." (Harrod 1939:15)

That occasional or even frequent overstatements of this view occurred in this context is not surprising. As many observers of so-called intellectual revolutions have pointed out, in trying to undermine supposed orthodoxies denunciations of the old order tend to be somewhat shrill. In addition, assertions as to the "newness" of the theory that would replace traditional modes of thought tend to be somewhat overstated. We have seen this in the case of pragmatists and their challenge to monistic theory and we have seen it in the case of pluralists and their challenge to the juristic theory of sovereignty. It was no less true in the case of economics in the 1930s.

More importantly, we should be able to see that in economics too the vocabulary of pragmatism and process metaphysics became

is no place in the equation for the passage of time, and, what is most serious of all, there is no consideration of the creation of new means of production, that is to say, of new capital. It is timeless barter that is under investigation, but not the formation of capital." (Akerman 1932:15f) See also L.C. Melville, "The Place of Expectations in Economic Theory", Economic Record, Vol. xv, No. 28, June, pp. 1-16 on this point.
prominent. We have seen that there was an emphasis on the practical nature of knowledge and on the role of time in relation to human conduct.

What should not surprise us in relation to this last point is that we also see the deployment against static theories of some terms and images derived from modern physics. As I said earlier, it was not wholly necessary to argue against the presentation of economics as an exact science solely by stressing its humanistic or interested character. One could argue, as we have already seen in the case of Dewey and others in relation to philosophy, that science simply was not exact anymore and further, that the physical analogies that one could draw from it were of a different kind to the ones drawn from pre-Darwinian conceptions of science.

So we have a number of things taking place here. First, we have a case of metaphorical substitution (that is, the organic for the mechanical). Second, we have the recasting of organic and mechanical analogies, and third, we also see an attempt to bring to bear the new analogies draw from the physical sciences upon economics. This last move was very important. The biological analogy was still the object (whether in its Spencerian or Marshallian form) of some derision. But it was much more difficult to proceed with a form of economics built on a Newtonian framework - one which invoked universal and invariable laws - when that framework was no longer regarded as absolute and final. It was more difficult to claim one's economics was scientifically exact when science itself appeared to be much less
so.

As in some of the other cases I have mentioned in this regard, I am not suggesting that what we are seeing here is an exact representation of what modern physicists were actually saying. Indeed, clearly one could not find agreement even among physicists themselves on this topic. Nevertheless, the important thing is that a group of intellectuals were able to use the developments in modern physics to support their own conception of what economic activity might be. (1)

Thus, it is not surprising that we find economists announcing that modern science had undermined the concepts of traditional economics. An Australian economist, E.C. Dyason wrote that science's "older hypotheses based on abstractions, permanence and certainty" had dissolved into a "world of complexity, change and doubt." (Dyason 1932:149)

More specifically, the physical conception of relativity was introduced into economic debate in order to deny the absolute nature of the quantities and laws that economics dealt with. Thus, in another article, Dyason wrote how Keynes had, in his Treatise on Money, (1930) reduced money to a mere relative

1. When I say the word "use" I do not intend to mean that physical theories were picked up and manipulated in a cynical fashion to suit a set of intellectual priorities; rather, the fact that these terms were picked up and used suggests a belief that developments in physics had genuine conceptual ramifications elsewhere. While I do not agree with that notion (at least I do not think there is a necessary relation between physical and economic theories), as I said earlier, developments in physics certainly had a metaphorical significance for economists given that classical economics had partly been erected on a Newtonian base.
in accordance with the fashion for Einstein's theory. Dyason wrote that the Treatise had exchanged the search for economic quantities or the "fruitless search for index numbers that will measure 'real' wages, 'real' output, and 'real' capital" for a "technique which deals not so much in economic quantities themselves as in the significance of the ever-changing relations between them." (Dyason 1931:227)

Indeed, for Morgenstern the word "relative" was far more applicable to economics than to the natural sciences where there were still some "constants". (Morgenstern 1937:8) Yet another example was the Australian economist L.G. Melville (who was also an important policy-maker in Australia in the early war years), who wrote that equilibrium theory was "two-dimensional, lacking a time dimension"; introducing time was what was Keynes' great achievement. (Melville 1939:2)

One of the most interesting texts I have come across in relation to this use of physics to destabilise economic orthodoxies was written by Ralph William Souter, called Prolegomena to Relativity Economics: An Elementary Study in the Mechanics and Organics of an Expanding Economic Universe. (1933) (The title was suggested by Eddington's The Expanding Universe (1932) - a study of the significance of contemporary physics.) Souter, a philosophy and economics graduate of the Universities of Otago and Columbia, was a keen student of Professor Mitchell.

Souter's text is presented explicitly as a challenge to what he calls a "mechanical pseudo-'rationalism'" in economics which
excluded dynamic change as opposed to static adjustments from the realms of economic causation; that is, dynamic changes were treated as exogenous factors while static adjustments were seen as endogenous. (Souter 1933:59) He sought to place dynamics at the core of economic life. Marshall's description of economic life as living movement was pivotal for him in this regard. In addition to this, he sought to overturn the positivistic separation of fact from value and more generally discredit the view of science promoted by economists. (Souter 1933:vii)

Souter began his argument by stating that positivism had collapsed (this was an assertion rather than a statement of fact), because the notion of scientific truth was becoming increasingly problematic as shown by Heisenberg's theory of indeterminacy. [Souter 1933:147]) (Obviously the term positivism here did not imply radical empiricism - but meant the exclusion of metaphysics and problems of value from the realms of scientific investigation. [Souter 1933:2n])

As with some of the examples I have listed above, Souter invoked relativity theory in order to describe what he saw as the true nature of economic relations; furthermore, he simultaneously made the point that what we are dealing with here is not an analogy. In fact, he claimed that the term economic mechanics was of equal rank with the term physical mechanics as it "implies...the kinetics of concrete organic growth and adaptation", something which he saw as equivalent to the "general categories within the field of 'mechanics'". (Souter 1932:22n) Hence, he was stating that relativity is not in this case a metaphor at all but accurately describes the relations between
economic phenomena. This was a description of economics which he claimed predated the appearance of physical relativity, because it was present in earlier editions of Marshall's *Principles*. (1) Souter explained what he thought was Marshall's concept of economic relativity as follows:

It is naive and inadequate to try to segregate 'static adjustments' from 'dynamic changes'; in the last resort, this distinction is purely relative to the standpoint and assumptions of the scientific 'observer'. It has no meaning except in terms of the 'frame of reference' which, in the employment of the method 'not quite accurately called the statical method', the economist has temporarily selected as 'the centre' of the economic universe. (Souter 1933:21)

One thing that Souter was suggesting was that statics and dynamics were not necessarily in opposition to each other - especially where physicists had themselves broken down the opposition between time and space. And in economics, as in physics there was a space-time continuum - an "economic space-time (price-quantity-time), continuum." (Souter 1933:21f) (2)

1. The statement by Marshall that Souter drew upon appears as follows in the Eighth Edition of his *Principles*: "We thus approach by gradual steps towards the difficult problem of the interaction of countless economic causes. In the stationary state all the conditions of production and consumption are reduced to rest: but less violent assumptions are made by what is, not quite accurately, called the statical method. By that method we fix our minds on some central point: we suppose it for the time to be reduced to a stationary state; and we then study in relation to it the forces that affect the things by which it is surrounded and any tendency there may be to equilibrium of these forces." Marshall, *Principles*, p.369.
Souter's text is interesting for us not just because of this use of the Einstein's theory but also because combined a number of the themes I have been exploring in relation to intellectual life in the 1920s and 1930s. What we find being brought together in this text are the metaphysical theories of Bergson and Alexander (that is, the view of reality as creative evolution or emergence); the pragmatism of James and Dewey as well as developments in modern physics (the theory of relativity and the doctrine of indeterminacy); and the interpretations of these developments by philosophers of science such as Whitehead and Eddington. (1)

The way in which Souter explained the relation between organics and mechanics was very Bergsonian and pragmatic. As I noted earlier, in the pragmatist and Bergsonian schema it is life and the creative impulse that is foundational for everything else. They are, prior to and foundations for mechanism. Hence the priority of biological or rather vital conceptions and metaphors over mechanical ones. Thus, static analysis (and this

1. Souter's text is sprinkled with references to Whitehead's *Adventures of Ideas* in which he wrote that "The Certainties of Science are a delusion...Whenever some new mode of observational experience is obtained the old doctrines crumble into a fog of inaccuracies." (Souter 1933:198,100). For an example of Souter's use of Alexander's *Space, Time and Deity* see p.111; for his use of Eddington's *The Nature of the Physical World* p. 114f. Bergson and Dewey are referred to on p. 117. Souter was aware of the controversy over the meaning of relativity. He noted the differences between Einstein and Planck - who continued to hold to the "universality of the principle of causation" - and Schroedinger and Heisenberg and their followers. He wondered whether both groups were "right in the abstract. The scientific difference between them may be merely one of optimism and pessimism." (Souter 1933:147)
is a point that comes out in a number of writers we have examined including Mitchell) merely abstracts from the underlying dynamics or flux - which themselves are manifestations of the life force. Thus, statical analysis is only "the abstract mechanics of organic economic evolution." (Souter 1933:38)

The other important reason why it was necessary to emphasise the organic character of economic activity was of course, to stress social or organic inter-dependence. Although here, the creative aspects of the evolutionary analogy could be played down. That is, we are not so much talking here of the creative power of particular individuals or groups (which was how Sorel used Bergsonian philosophy) but the creative powers of whole communities working together. Hence, Souter counterposed the ideal of a "cooperative commonwealth" to both "mechanical individualism" as well as atomistic dynamics - the latter, as I said, being a way in which the syndicalists approached dynamism as a political doctrine. (Souter 1933:98) But I should stress that the foundation does not rest on the functional necessity of organic interdependence as we saw with Duguit. Rather, Souter's conception of a co-operative commonwealth is closer to Follett's ideal society which I examined in the last chapter. For his commonwealth would appear to also have its basis in psychology. He also relied on James' suggestion that individual experiences do spread out and interweave or blend with each other. (Souter 1933:107n) (Although again, I would suggest that this vision is more holistic than James himself might allow.)
It would be impossible not to ask where Keynes fits into these conceptions of economics. He above all was seen as providing that new vocabulary which was required in the face of the 1930s equivalent of J.C. Pocock's Machiavellian moment. As I noted, Keynes himself (whom Souter described as a "super-pragmatist" [Souter 1933:98n]) considered biological metaphors highly appropriate to descriptions of economic life. Indeed, he wrote in his *A Treatise on Money* (1930) that biological analogies were superior to physical analogies when explaining dynamic phenomena at the later stages of economic reasoning. (1) Souter claimed that Keynes was only following Marshall whose equilibrium theory Keynes had wrongly interpreted as having an "essentially static character." (Souter 1933:98) (Marshall himself denied the notion that his central idea is statical. [Marshall 1920:xiv]) Nevertheless, Souter saw Keynes as assisting in the birth of the ideal of the cooperative commonwealth — although he was prevented by his own liberal bias from seeing it. (Souter 1933:95f) (2)


2. In this regard note Keynes' oft-quoted statement in an article in *The New Statesman* 28/1/39 where he wrote: "The question is whether we are prepared to move out of the nineteenth century laissez faire state into an era of liberal socialism, by which I mean a system where we hope to promote social—and economic—justice whilst respect and protecting the individual—his freedom of choice, his faith, his mind and its expression, his enterprise and his prosperity."
But what most concerns us is the fact that some saw Keynes as failing to fully embrace economic dynamics. Melville saw Keynes' *General Theory of Employment Interest and Money* as an attempt to express "two conflicting ideas, the one static and the other dynamic". (Melville 1939:2) It was the static view which Melville considered to have won out in that text. He wrote that the dynamic approach was "struggling for expression" in discussion of such things as the principle of effective demand, savings and investment, the propensity to consume and the marginal efficiency of capital. It even burst forth "triumphantly" in the discussion of expectations and employment. But Keynes surrendered to the static or "equilibrium view-point in formulating his statement of the general theory." (Melville 1939:2) Thus, Melville concluded that while Keynes had made a "brilliant start in formulating a theory suitable for a dynamic world" he had remained imprisoned by old ways of thinking. (Melville 1939:2)

9. The Psychology of Time

We should note here that consideration of the time element in economic activity required an understanding of the processes of human psychology. At any given moment there are all sorts of intimations about what the future might bring. But we are, as Leonard Webb said, neither "omiscient" nor "even abreast of the knowledge of the time". (Webb 1926:436) The time element, while it may suggest appropriate courses of action, also may conceal the "true" forces at work at any given moment in history. This situation can be contrasted with the mathematical depictions of
an ideal market which involves perfect, instantaneous and frictionless inter-communication amongst all traders. (Knight 1923:591) Furthermore, we should note that at any given moment the progress of time also involves the "unmasking of the immediate past." (Morgenstern 1937:14) The result is the inter-related phenomena of expectations and uncertainty. Time permits us to have expectations about the future but simultaneously pushes uncertainty upon us. Thus, in the field of economic activity, time also holds out both danger and opportunity.

As an added factor, our uncertainties and expectations about the future play a part in shaping what will happen; that is, each action that we perform in this regard, be it physical or verbal, may alter the shape of economic phenomena even before that action has been completed. It is this too, and not just the fact of ignorance, that makes uncertainty or unpredictability an existential condition and expectations, insofar as on this view we have the capacity to reorganise experience, a real possibility.

Of course, there were different ways of approaching uncertainty. It could be regarded, for example, as disruptive rather than ruinous. Hence, as Mitchell noted, the "fruits" of this uncertainty (concerning, for example, what people will buy and at what prices) may simply be prudent action. However, Mitchell also noted that uncertainty (which he regarded as "all-pervading" [Mitchell 1927:156]) may become manifest in "emotional aberrations of business judgements and competitive
illusions", both of which go to explain the course of the business cycle. (Mitchell 1927:157)

Indeed, Knight wrote that because of the fact of uncertainty and our irrational responses to it, the economic system, when "left to itself... 'collapses' at frequent intervals through violent oscillations" rather than achieving equilibrium. (Knight 1923:601) Thus time, in conjunction with human psychology, may complicate or disrupt what would otherwise be a smooth path towards economic equilibrium; economic development becomes both discontinuous and indeterministic. (Morgenstern 1937:106)

Not everyone saw human responses to uncertainty as being so irrational that economic collapse was inevitable. Nevertheless, there was a degree of emphasis placed upon human irrationality. One of the intellectual causes of this interest was the developments within the area of psychology. For example, the psychological notion of the herd instinct was used to explain why the business cycle tends to oscillate so sharply. Psychological theories were quite important to those challenging conceptions of the all-knowing and utility maximising self (as we have seen in relation to contract theory). Eaton, for example, cited McDougall's Social Psychology where he dismissed classical political economy and its hedonistic postulates as a "a tissue of false conclusions drawn from false psychological assumptions". (Eaton 1921b:385) (1) Young also cited McDougall, 1. See McDougall, Social Psychology, p.11. Cited in Eaton, 1921b, p. 385.
noting that he rejected these postulates in favour of a broader range of "instinctive propensities" which included such things as fear, panic, excitement and sympathy. McDougall argued that our minds or instincts had created all our social and economic habits and institutions. (Young 1925:176 McDougall 1920:11:24f)

Furthermore, while classical theory may have been applicable in times past when these instincts were few - under the pressure of modern life they had proliferated. Economically speaking people were seen as complexes of selves or instincts. What this meant was that men, Young wrote, now had many different ways of "feeling, thinking, and acting in their market dealings with each other", thus adding further to economic uncertainty. (Young 1925:176) (Although we should note that this last point might contradict the social psychologist's notion of the herd instinct.)

It was in the 1930s in particular that psychological factors began to be widely incorporated into economics, although they had been important to the Austrian subjective school of economists. The main psychological factor considered in the 1930s was the dominance of expectations. In this context, Keynes' work was exemplary. Keynes, in his essay "The General Theory of Employment" put centre-stage words such as "utter doubt", precariousness, panics, hopes and fears. (Keynes 1937:222) (1)

Partly as a result of the impact of Keynes' work, others began to write in a similar vein. Melville claimed that any dynamic and "realistic" economic analysis would treat the "minds of individuals" as an integral "part of the economic environment". (Melville 1939:4-12) Further to this, Melville wrote that demand curves are the expression of subjective thoughts or particular mental outlooks and that their shape can quickly be changed for both "rational" or "irrational" reasons. (Melville 1939:10)

At this point, we can ask whether this foregrounding of instinct, temporality and uncertainty might leave us with a rather bleak form of economic nihilism where any form of action is impossible or futile. We could ask whether we can have any economic system at all. (Morgenstern 1937:28)

Alan Coddington would later make a similar point in relation to the *General Theory*. In its embrace of both economic statics and dynamics Coddington argued that it gave expression to the conflict between the principles of order and chaos. This was because, as Melville suggested, it sometimes lurched towards nihilism and at other times reached for a system of order. (Coddington 1973:162) Indeed, Coddington has noted the way in which what he calls "fundamentalist" Keynesians have elevated the "indefiniteness" contained within economics "to a methodological principle", the result being an economics of process where no model of the economic situation can be fully specified. (Coddington 1976:1263)

1. See also Morgenstern on these points. (Morgenstern 1937:104:158)
In this context, we should also note here how Piero Mini, in a fascinating study of the origins of economic philosophy, compared Keynes' notion of "animal spirits" and propensities to Bergson's *sans* and Schopenhauer's will. This was because he thought all of these notions gave expression to the indeterminant character of life while also suggesting we remain aspiring creatures. (Mini 1974:254)

Mini does not suggest (for he too views Keynes as a pragmatist in the philosophical sense) that Keynes leads us towards utter nihilism and scepticism in relation to economic affairs. (Mini 1974:228ff) For if his sort of economic pragmatism in one guise uncovers the problem of contingency, in another guise it also offers a way out. That is, as a pragmatist economist one might well begin by positing plasticity but then one would have to proceed onto the instrumental phase and look at ways of moulding or shaping experience in accordance with our needs. One would thereby seek to build stability within a process of change.

Indeed, according to Keynes we cannot help but seek stability. Mini writes that in Keynes' theory the search for order is forced upon us by a combination of the pressure of necessity and our own "animal drives" which force us to act conventionally - to overlook the "awful fact" of ignorance and act "as if" behaviour were determined by rational calculation. (Mini 1974:264) (This coupling of psychological and biological imperatives also sounds rather like Duguit.) It is through
acting conventionally that we introduce some degree of order and certainty into the system. In this context, as Mitchell wrote, we can look at the whole of an economic system of co-operative endeavour as something which has evolved "under the pressure of uncertainty" - an attempt to introduce stability and order into a generally inhospitable environment. (Mitchell 1927:157)

Mitchell explained how a modicum of order and predictability is achieved in his examination of the various functions served by the price mechanism. He wrote that prices help direct our otherwise plastic energies and impulses. That is, prices dam up our productive energies; they connect and direct them in certain ways "amidst the million channels into which these energies might flow." (Mitchell 1927:116) As a related point, we should note that prices make public or solidify our wills and desires and establish hierarchies of values. As such, the information that they bear provides some basis or firm ground for rational action because it allows "control of economic activity by accounting." (Mitchell 1927:116)

10. The Function of Theory

There are two points which we should return to at this stage. First, there was a complaint that too often the pragmatic origins of economic theory had been, due to a metaphorical confusion, elided. Rather than being seen as a tool to help us along in practical life it was theory itself which came to be seen as truth underlying the economic system; economic life became the pale imitation of shimmering theoretical forms. Morgenstern parodied this attitude among certain economists in
saying that a priori theorising would only work if one were able to ignore the flux of experience and "lock oneself in a room and invent the world of facts, adopting the attitude that if theory and reality did not then agree, so much the worse for reality." (Morgenstern 1937:10) This is no doubt hyperbole; but the point is a serious one. That is, while theory may be helpful it must occupy a subordinate position in the field of practical activity. That these points needed to be made and were made frequently shows that economics and economists had begun to play a significant role in public life. Truth, or what was deemed to be correct behaviour according to economic theory, thus came to have a social significance that it did not have in the area of philosophy. It was for this reason that there were so many vigorous attempts to challenge it. (1)

Second, there is the point that those who called for a pragmatic approach to economics were doing much more than simply demonstrating the practical origins of the theory in the struggle for survival. For it is not simply the fact that our impulses shape the economic environment that is at stake here. What the pragmatically-minded economists wanted to do was to substitute "creative imagination", "active planning" and "thought" for impulse; to place these motivations "within the very processes of experience." (Young 1925:169:170n) (2)

2. Eaton makes the same point in relation to economic policy - that it is only by overcoming fatalism and introducing active planning that man can go on to seize the "social struggle for his own ends." (Eaton 1921b:389) (1)
These same points about the purpose of economics and the role of active planning continued to be made throughout the 1930s and into the 1940s. In 1942, for example, E.E. Erickson was asking, following James and Dewey, what "difference would it make" to society if we viewed economic life as something that was amenable to our intelligence instead of something which had developed independently of our intelligence, governed by natural laws which the masses must inexorably obey however unpleasant their consequences. (Ericksen 1942:135-6) The answer to this question was that the difference would be that we could work together to make a better world. What form the world should take is another question again.

11. Pragmatism and Economic Planning

The beginnings of economic planning then owed much, not only to the idea of the scientific co-ordination of all the factors of production and distribution, as articulated by the rationalization movement, but to pragmatic conceptions of active willing. In either case, the point of these plans was, as the British economist J.R. Hicks noted in a review of Keynes' General Theory, to introduce "determinateness into a process of change." (Hicks 1936:241) Indeed, it is the very fluid character of life, in conjunction with the potential for human irrationality in response to uncertainty that makes some planning necessary.

But how much determinateness could be introduced was a matter of debate. Sabine wrote that pragmatism could not not provide one with certainty; it could only claim that "methodical
experimentation is surer procedure than fumbling or the mere drift of circumstance. (Sabine 1930:875) Furthermore, we should note that the ideal of social efficiency does not have to be defined in a mechanical way. As the American thinker Stuart Chase once wrote, the application of reason to social affairs "does not call for a hard, bright, regimented efficiency - except in the minds of soap manufacturers. It calls for the life more abundant - for living instead of existing." (Chase 1928:276) Indeed, according to one student of administration, it was this type of understanding of efficiency which called for Bergson's *vital* to be introduced into Australian public administration. (Wood 1939:161)

Nevertheless, when the pragmatic approach becomes too confident in its instrumental methods and its efficient procedures it can begin to transform itself into rationalism. After which it eventually stultifies. Others would argue from the facts of uncertainty to the need for complete scientific planning. Akerman began with a depiction of economic reality as flux but also argued the case for economic planning and implied that it could be quite extensive in its scope. (Akerman 1932:17) Here the expectation of the degree of determinateness which active planning can introduce into social life was greatly increased. In this case planning, premised on uncertainty, did begin to sound like attempts to rationalize society - that policy which seeks to introduce into society (albeit, within the limits of its framework) "absolute regularity, uniformity, and accuracy". (Brady 1933:21:33) The other thing which followed
from this was the tendency to hand over the reins of government to those with specialist knowledge or skills. Hence, Von Beckerath wrote that once uncertainties are seen to be pervasive then it becomes necessary to rely on the “will, insight and abilities” of the few persons who are in dictatorial command of the whole society. (Von Beckerath 1937:595) (1)

There was a problem in this for the pragmatist. For to move too far in the direction of planning society would seem to be quite out of touch with pragmatism’s philosophical roots. The idea of complete planning or socialism exhibited all the same intellectual rigidities that had been complained about in relation to Newtonian mechanics and monistic theories and the social policies which flowed from these. It assumed, as the pragmatist never would a “static world where needs, processes and resources remain unchanged. The opposite is of course the fact.” (Masey 1934:91) Furthermore, the concept of extensive

1. Knight had earlier made the same point. He argued that precisely because human beings are so irrational there needed to be a significant reduction in individual freedom. He wrote: “It [laissez-faire] is a confessed failure in the field of promoting many forms of social progress, and its functions in this regard are being progressively taken over by the social agencies.” (Knight 1923:595f) For further examples of this view see Sidney and Beatrice Webb in Chapter V "Labor" of Whither Mankind, Charles A. Beard (ed.), 1928, p. 134, in which they write. "No economist, throughout the wide world, to-day puts his faith in laissez-faire. Instead of everything being complacently left to the arbitrament of the individual seeking his own advantage, it has become accepted that deliberate action needs to be taken, by governments and legislatures, or some collective agency, for the promotion of the interests of the community as a whole, for the future as well as the present." (Beard 1928:134) Keynes too spoke of the need for "collective intelligence" or "intelligence and deliberation at the centre must supersede the admired disorder of the 19th century." (Keynes 1982:86) Although we should note that he was by no means a socialist in the context of the times.
planning goes beyond that pragmatist emphasis on responding to the demands of the hour rather than the laying down detailed plans for the future. (1)

Yet what we have to explain is why, given pragmatist philosophy, the pragmatic approach to economic policy did tend towards rigidity. I have stressed that pragmatism as a philosophy was subject to a number of different pushes and pulls. As we have so often seen in areas such as philosophy and politics, pragmatism could both depict the world as plastic and also as something amenable to control; it could accommodate an emphasis on impartial techniques as well as on ideals; and finally a pragmatist could be someone who was in equal parts a scientist and an activist. All of these pragmatic elements were visible in discussions about economic thought and practice in the 1920s and 1930s. But if the major thesis examined in the last chapter was that pragmatism inevitably descended towards irrationalism, here the argument—would seem to be that—it inevitably ascended towards rationalism.

The more policies or instruments of intervention seemed to "work" in pragmatic terms, the greater was their status as a set of neutral techniques for social manipulation and control and the greater was the status of the economist as scientist. It was this fact that explained the erasure of the very premises of uncertainty and the ethical motivation—which underlay the pragmatic approach to economic management. (It also explains why the practical origins of classical economic theories were also forgotten)
As we have seen, Keynes' work was seen as reflecting the tension in the realm of economics between the will-to-order and the will to chaos - although this is overdramatising it. He can also be seen as reflecting the tension between scientific values and moral values within the realm of economics. Keynes wrote in 1932 that it was the main task of economists "to discover, and then to do, what is economically sound. This temporary concentration on the practical is the best contribution which we of today can make towards the attainment of the ideal." (Keynes 1971:92) This is a very pragmatic statement because it suggests the use of practical means for ideal ends. But the problem, as we noted in relation to the syndicalists, is that the distinction between means and ends is unstable. Means too easily become ends - whether those means entail direct action or statistical description. The complaint here might be that a temporary concentration on the practical can lead to the complete forgetting of the ideal. It was the perceived cleavage between human interests and instrumental techniques of social management, one which I think Keynes unintentionally foreshadowed, that would concern so many intellectuals after the war.
CONCLUSION

This thesis has investigated some of the intellectual debates which took place in Western countries during the interwar years. In that context, I isolated a number of themes. First, I discussed the preoccupation with crisis and uncertainty after the disillusionment caused by the Great War. Second, I examined the promotion of social scientific control as the most direct answer to crisis. Third, I examined what was called the idealistic reaction against science, and discussed the ways in which modern physics was seen as giving support to the metaphysical views of certain philosophers. I also noted how modern science was seen as endorsing the instrumentalist method of the pragmatist. Fourth, I discussed the philosophy of pragmatism and the attempts of its adherents to bridge the gaps between philosophy and science, and morality and science. Fifth, I discussed the development of pluralist political theory and its relation to pragmatism. Sixth, I addressed what were seen at the time as a number of important political implications of both pluralism and pragmatism. Finally, I looked at the application of pragmatist approaches to economic thought and action.

This thesis has attempted to characterise the interwar years in terms of certain intellectual preoccupations and also to trace the development of these. I have not suggested that these preoccupations are peculiar to the period. My references to material lying outside the period provide evidence that many of the ideas current during the interwar years were also current in
the periods which preceded and followed it. However, I have suggested that these themes were more prominent in the interwar years than they were either before or after. My evidence, in this regard, has been textual. It has been gathered from a broad range of books and prominent journals that were published in the English-speaking world during the interwar period.

I think the numerous statements found in these texts, that the Great War marked the end of an age of progress and certainty, indicates that there was a widespread perception of crisis among Western intellectuals during the interwar years. Other textual evidence enables me to say that a strong desire amongst many intellectuals to apply science to social life continued throughout this period. More specifically, the particular debates that I have considered about science and politics allows me to say that there was a great deal of academic controversy surrounding the philosophy of pragmatism during this period. This was by no means a simple controversy. Assessing the claims about the dangers posed by pragmatist philosophy, in particular the political and moral dangers that it was alleged to have let loose, has been one of the most difficult parts of this thesis.

I have endeavoured to test the claims that pragmatism gave rise to an irrational pluralist politics (seen as being embodied by the syndicalists) against the actual history and development of syndicalism and of pluralism in general. In assessing the political implications of pragmatism I have also been forced to examine in some depth the complexities of pragmatist epistemology and metaphysics, and to determine the significance of
developments in modern physics for intellectual discussions in the interwar period. Furthermore, I have tried to assess the claim that even where the pragmatist placed less emphasis on the role of will and placed more emphasis on scientific technique it still gave encouragement to such things as the political programme of the fascists.

Perceptions of crisis and uncertainty provide the context for much of the material that is dealt with in this thesis. As I have pointed out, the most obvious response to uncertainty was the attempt to secure society on the basis of science. The more complex and interesting response, however, was the response of the pragmatists. For them crisis was not due solely to a lack of morality or solely to a lack of scientific knowledge. For them crisis was the very gap which existed between morality and science. It was a gap they claimed they could close with the help of their pragmatic method. In promoting this method the pragmatists were greatly assisted by the claims that developments in modern physics showed truth to be purely instrumental. Pragmatists proved persuasive partly because they could claim the authority of science for their own approach to philosophical and social issues.

But not all audiences viewed pragmatism as the source of salvation. Indeed, I have examined in detail the arguments of those who saw pragmatism as yet another cause of intellectual and social crisis. This was because firstly, its metaphysical descriptions of the universe as plastic and pluralistic were seen
as lending philosophical authority to the political pluralists. Pragmatism was attacked as a recipe for social chaos, and the activities of the syndicalists were used as evidence for this. But pragmatism was also attacked because of its method. The belief that truth does not inhere in things in themselves but is constructed by groups or individuals was seen as justifying the behaviour of the politically or commercially ruthless. Even where the pragmatist advocated a unitary state, he was held to be creating the basis for fascism because he did not endow his state with a moral purpose.

I am not suggesting that this was the only view of pragmatism. Nor am I suggesting that pragmatism was a major aspect of the fascist movement. Nevertheless, there is sufficient evidence to argue that these were points of concern and for that reason any historical study of pragmatism cannot overlook them. Firstly, these arguments were being published in respected journals. Secondly, as I pointed out in chapter 6, the fact that Ralph Barton Perry in 1935 sought to refute the claims of Elliot and others about pragmatism demonstrates that these arguments must have been influential to some degree. Indeed, the asserted relation between pragmatism and fascism was only a permutation of the description of pragmatism as the philosophy of the businessman. This was a description which dogged pragmatism throughout its development and one which pragmatists were constantly denying.

In many respects, this study has been a history of the idea of pragmatism since its appearance in the late 19th century. I
have displayed the various meanings given to the term in the course of its career. I have illustrated that the term achieved widespread popularity in intellectual circles alongside notoriety. Furthermore, I have also charted its gradual decline. I have shown how pragmatism, by the late 1930s, was shorn of its richer meanings and had become a method or approach identified with the social planner. It would seem that the debasement of the term proceeded apace in the 1940s, so that by the end of that decade Laski could suggest that pragmatism, instead of giving people the power to act and to reshape their world, had become an instrument of social reaction. This he blamed on the fact that neither Dewey nor James had made the true meaning of their philosophy presumably clear. He wrote that both James and Dewey had:

Restrained themselves from such explanations as might cast doubt on the general validity of things as they are. They had, in part, a fear of putting their own thoughts plainly before the people because they did not know what might be the consequences of popular understanding...That is why, as doctrine, it either yielded society no results at all, or became like Royce's in America, or Bosanquet's in England, part of the defensive mechanism of a privileged order. (Laski 1948:727)

In relation to Laski's point we should recall that for the critics of pragmatism its message was all too clear, to the extent that critics thought it placed too much emphasis on the role of human will. This point aside, it certainly was true that the word pragmatism increasingly came to be used in political and commercial contexts to indicate the qualities of ruthlessness and toughness.
One could argue that the pragmatists' attempts to end the divisions in intellectual and social life were futile. To the extent to which such divisions existed, they were not widely perceived to be a problem or a cause of social breakdown in the post-war era. Certainly, the perception that there were gaps in Western civilisation persisted in the post-war era. However, this view was largely confined to small pockets of intellectuals in liberal-democratic societies who were critical of existing political and economic arrangements.

In relation to this last point, we should note that the belief that social crisis has its roots in divisions within the area of knowledge or in the failure to bring to bear the wisdom of philosophers or scientists on social problems is a peculiar preoccupation of the intellectual. But whether such beliefs have any foundation or not, it would also seem that they only gain a wider audience when they are backed by considerable evidence of social and economic turmoil. That is why whatever crisis literature did appear in the post-war era did not achieve anywhere near the same prominence and currency as did the crisis literature of the interwar years.

The debates of the period are also testimony to the persistence of the belief that nature has a special place for man. Many of the ideas being put forward at this time must be read as part of a reaction to the scientific reduction of man's place in the scheme of things. This, alongside the development of a more secular culture, helps explain the reactions against science which I have discussed and which were expressed in
Bergson's theory of creative evolution. It explains why philosophers hungrily scanned modern physics for spiritual revelations or for evidence of the fact that human beings are free to make and remake their world. It also explains why pragmatists were so keen to marry science and morality. Even Dewey, despite the claims that he reduced man to a mere function of the environment, suggested that both nature and man were animated not just by the same physical energies, but by the same spiritual energies as well.

Dewey's pragmatism, while described by Hook as scientific, is also clearly evidence of the need philosophers felt to rethink their relation to the society in which they lived. We have seen that scientists were seen to be replacing philosophers as the standard-bearers of wisdom. We have also seen that philosophy was deemed to be irrelevant to social problems. Furthermore, its traditional concerns appeared to have been superceded. It was possible to ask what role could traditional philosophy serve in a universe without mystery? Under these conditions, it is not surprising that considerations of the nature and purpose of philosophy arose. It is not surprising that something called social philosophy, a conception that was abhorrent to many a practising philosopher, was taken seriously.

This period was also notable for the prestige accorded science in intellectual circles. If science had not been so well regarded one would never have seen philosophers attempting to interpret it in ways that gave justification to their own
theories. As a related point, I think that from an examination of these debates one would have to insist that the distinction between the physical sciences and other forms of knowledge is quite sharp. The differences between them are differences of kind and not just of degree in relation to their respective capacities to verify hypotheses and to predict future events.

Misinterpretations of modern physics allowed philosophers to greatly exaggerate whatever similarities did exist between the methods of the physical sciences and the methods of the social sciences. Physical science could be depicted as providing just another picture or image of the world with no more veracity than that of the poet. I think this belief was and is misguided. The methods of the physical sciences are more precise than those of the philosopher, historian or the social scientist. But this is precisely because they deal with inert material. Bergson was at least right to argue that it was much more difficult to predict in the realm of life. From this it follows that physical science and philosophy (or history or the social sciences) are different kinds of knowledge. One should not expect one to do the work of the other.

The debates of this period also reveal a great confidence in the power of both individuals and governments to improve the lot of humankind. For alongside the talk of crisis there was also a significant degree of optimism about man's ability to control the course of events. Indeed, as I have pointed out, talk of crisis was often no more than a preamble to proposing favoured social solutions. In particular, the period is notable for the belief
that successful adjustments of social relations can be achieved where the administrative arm of government is occupied by scientifically trained personnel. It is in this context that critiques of this new rationalism began to make their appearance in the late 1930s.

The debates of this period also reflect a sense of unease with the principle of democracy. This was not just due to an aristocratic nostalgia for a more refined age. The ambivalence about democracy was also expressed in much more modern terms. Examples include social psychological theories about the herd instinct, the fashion for eugenics and the general belief that the masses needed some rational guidance. It think the existence of this sentiment amongst certain groups of intellectuals is well demonstrated by my discussion in chapter two. At the same time, even those who called themselves pragmatists, and who were therefore presumably democratically inclined, were not immune to this feeling.

For much the same reason that there was a degree of discomfort with the idea of democracy, there was also a degree of ambivalence expressed about the idea of politics. We see a number of different meanings being given to political activity during the period. We have, for instance, seen political activity described as essentially a rational activity implying reasoned parliamentary participation and debates. This meaning was used particularly when comparing political activity to the direct action of the syndicalists.
But we have also seen political activity described as essentially egoistic and selfish and the cause of war and social divisions. Here the term politics described more than parliamentary activity, diplomacy or administration of the affairs of state. In this context, politics became associated with irrationality rather than rationality; it was often regarded as something that got in the way of and upset social plans. Hence, we hear so much about the need to overcome politics in the 1920s and 1930s. What we also see in the latter part of this period is the redefinition of political activity as economic activity - or rather, the role of government was beginning to be defined in relation to economic management. Indeed, it was argued that good economic management was necessary in order to stop politics from erupting.

Of the more general points that one can draw from this thesis, the most obvious concerns the highly flexible character of the key terms of intellectual debate. My study demonstrates that intellectual debates in the area of philosophy or political and social theory were not nearly as directed as they might seem. We have also seen that this is a problem for the scientist, who, in attempting to describe a theory in non-mathematical terms was forced to choose from the suggestive and ill-defined language of everyday reality. When terms such as uncertainty and relativity were used to describe scientific theories, the urge to draw analogies between the physical and an apparent metaphysical realm proved irresistible. Indeed, many scientists and philosophers went further than this, believing that science really did have
something to say about a deeper and invisible reality; one that looked like the reality of the metaphysician. The results of this were not entirely futile to the extent that misinterpretations of modern physics resulted in a degree of intellectual creativity. However, I also showed that the use some philosophers made of modern physics in promoting their own metaphysical theories aroused concern. This was because it was feared that spiritual interpretations of nature, especially where they appeared to have the backing of science, could give encouragement to political irrationality.

The other thing to observe is that intellectual debates, as I have frequently stressed, are often debates between straw-men. This becomes particularly obvious when intellectual debates escalate or become intense. Part of the reason why certain debates have a tendency to escalate is because they are cast in terms of mutually exclusive categories. As I noted in chapter five, Sabine observed that the debate between the political pluralists and the political monists was unnecessarily strident because of the tendency of intellectuals to describe their own position and the position of their opponent in relation to the concepts pluralism and monism. Sabine suggested that in using such terms one was drawing lines through political and intellectual life that in reality did not exist.

We should also note how the identification of certain thinkers with general categories saw a compression of the complexity of their thought. Indeed, where thinkers become tied
and bound to certain categories they are turned into caricatures. Pragmatists were often caricatured as voluntarists or irrationalists. Equally however, the pragmatists had begun their crusade by caricaturing their opponents as monists or rationalists. Intellectual debates in the period of uncertainty between the wars were not always characterised by tolerant and even-handed discussion.

There is one other general point which I want to raise in relation to these debates. I think they bring into question the meaning of the term modernism - a term which has been used to describe the overall intellectual tendencies of the period. I think we have seen from these debates that to use such a term would be to make one word do too much work. There were too many varieties of thought and opinion and too many mutually contradictory theories articulated during this period to sum it up in one word. This is not to say that there were not links both within and between the universes of discourse which existed at that time. However, as in James' pluralistic universe, these links were often weak and tenuous. The fact that the intellectual unity which existed in the debates of this period was only partial was often overlooked. This was partly a result of the linguistic identity of many of the terms employed in discussions in science, philosophy and other areas of intellectual interest. It was, however, also a result of the strong attachment to the ideal of the unity of all knowledge.
Bibliography

Abbreviations:

AQ  Australian Quarterly
QJE  Quarterly Journal of Economics
PR  Philosophical Review
AJPP  Australasian Journal of Psychology and Philosophy
APSR  American Political Science Review
Ec. Rec.  Economic Record

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