School of Politics & International Studies

Technical Cosmopolitanism:
Systems, Critical Theory and International Relations

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1904-2004

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Introduction - the changing context of international relations

As a contribution to the sociological problem of state and modernity Habermas' work can be applied to contemporary problems in international relations.[1] The theories of communicative action, instrumental rationality, the pragmatics of communication, discourse ethics and procedural democracy pose alternate questions to those suggested by realism and liberalism. Combining elements of Kant, Marx, Weber, developmental psychology, systems theory, hermeneutics and linguistics, Habermas is irreducible to the study of international relations rooted in Hobbes and Locke.

Habermas' work is designed to combat the prospect of the administered society, first described by Max Weber and Nietzsche and subsequently in Western Marxism.[2] The exploration of the changing relationship between the world of everyday experience (the lifeworld) and the formal structures of state and power (the system) are dominant themes.[3] As Habermas writes, 'analysis must keep in mind both the emancipating

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[1] Habermas discusses modernity in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1990), hereafter *PDM*. The discussion is mainly epistemological, though a political discourse lies beneath. See footnotes below for references.

[2] Though these tendencies, as Habermas acknowledges, date back to Hegel. See *PDM*, p. 43. 'The party of Neo-conservatives stemming from right Hegelianism, yields uncritically to the rampaging dynamism of social modernity … and prunes reason back into understanding and rationality back into purposive rationality'.

[3] The concepts of system and lifeworld are described in Habermas' *The Theory of Communicative Action*, vol 2 (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), hereafter TCA 2. Habermas writes, 'I would therefore like to propose that we conceive of societies simultaneously as systems and lifeworlds', p. 118.

unburdening effects of a communicative rationalisation of the lifeworld, and the effects of a functionalist reason run wild'.[4]

Most interpretations of Habermas and international relations focus on the cosmopolitan side of this project. Andrew Linklater's is the foremost example of an approach to critical IR based around 'discourse ethics'.[5] Here emphasis is placed on processes of identity and mutual recognition required for justice and systemic adaptation.

Habermas' own interventions into the international (*The Past as Future* and *Postnational Constellations*)[6] have likewise emphasised cosmopolitan democracy. However, Habermas' cosmopolitanism is not his only, nor his most important, concern. Habermas defends the systemic adaptations of modernity in equal measure to universal communication.

In considering the relations of system and lifeworld it is necessary to consider the role played by systems in protecting and enhancing the power of the lifeworld. If cosmopolitanism depends on the construction of transnational communication it is likely that systems will play a strong supporting role. Accordingly, this paper reworks Habermas as a form of technical cosmopolitanism, to supplement moral and ethical forms which already exist.[7]

The argument proceeds in three parts. First, I discuss Habermas' own commitment to systems theory. Second, I demonstrate that critical IR, generally, has a negative view of systems. Third, I provide examples of cosmopolitan systems in IR and demonstrate that systems theory retains a link to the crucial ingredient of any Critical Theory in IR, the problem of emancipation or enlightenment.[8]

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[4] Jurgen Habermas, 'Two Conceptions of Modernity', in Habermas, *Postnational Contellations*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), p. 156.

[5] Andrew Linklater, 'Dialogic politics and the civilising process', this issue; and referemce below. On discourse ethics, see Jurgen Habermas, *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990).

[6] Jurgen Habermas, *The Past as Future*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994). Postnational Constellations cited above, note 4.

[7] For an outline of ethical cosmopolitanism see D. Jones, 'Ethics and Morality in Contemporary Cosmopolitanism', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, vol. 5, no1, February, 2003, pp. 50-73. For an account of contemporary cosmopolitanism see the work of Held and Linklater (references cited below). Alternatively, see D. Jones, *Cosmopolitan Mediation: Conflict Resolution and the Oslo Accords*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).

[8] As Nick Rengger writes, 'it is the Frankfurt-School-influenced critical IR theorists who have provided the most general orientation for Critical Theory in international studies as far as emancipation is concerned, and it is this orientation that essentially drives the critical project in international relations'. ('Negative

<u>System and lifeworld</u>

The discussion of the administrative society in Habermas takes place against the changing nature of government and state. This section documents the twists and turns in Habermas' view of system and lifeworld as he confronts various issues and policy areas.

Historically, Frankfurt school Critical Theory is rooted in a distrust of technological and administrative systems. Early Critical Theory formed a politics which resisted or dismantled systemic influences.[9] Marcuse described technology, which was a combination of 'technics' (machines and instruments) and the social forms that controlled them, as an unqualified 'instrument for control and domination'.[10] Adorno had little time for the radio.[11] In the work of Horkheimer, Adorno and Marcuse, as Habermas writes, 'the vision of an administered society is radicalised … hope in the strong individual's power of resistance now appears only as the residue of a vanquished liberal epoch'.[12]

Not all aspects of the liberal epoch were eclipsed in the dark years of totalitarian Europe, however. In the post-war context, Habermas has continued to support the relevance of what he calls, in a wonderfully evocative phrase, 'the old European dignity'.[13] What does he mean by this? First, political goals and ideals of universality, human rights and democracy won in the 18th Century. These Habermas reformulates on the basis of a constitutional Kantian deontological set of principles derived from 'discourse ethics'. Second, there is the potential created by great technological and scientific advance, the bequest of the 19th Century. These Habermas describes as the achievements of a rationalised, scientific modernity. Sometimes these forces come

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Dialectic?' in Richard Wyn Jones, (ed.), *Critical Theory and World Politics*, (Lynne Rienner: Boulder, Colorado, 2001), p. 93.

[9] Adorno's comments on the radio ham in the essay on the 'Fetish Character of Music and Regression of Listening' indicate a misplaced disdain. Adorno even writes that the radio ham 'has no luck with girls', which seems slightly extreme. These comments on the early history of radio are naïve. They ignore the positive aspects of this form of rationalisation such as heightened global consciousness created by the news media. Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt, *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader*, (Blackwell, Oxford, p.1978), pp. pp. 270-300, 'On the Fetish Character of Music and the Regression of Listening'

[10] Marcuse, 'Some Social Implications of Modern Technology' in Arato and Gebhardt, *Frankfurt School*, p. 139.

[11] 'On the Fetish Character of Music and the Regression of Listening'.

[12] 'Two Conceptions of Modernity' in *Postnational Constellations*, p 140

[13] Jurgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988,), p. 142/3.

together, sometimes they pull apart. Habermas refers to C.P. Snow's <u>Two Cultures</u> and uses the terms 'technical' and 'practical' consciousness to denote the divide. Distinctions between technical and practical consciousness, science and democracy, system and lifeworld are a central concern of Habermas' entire *oeuvre*, as I will demonstrate in the following paragraphs.

In an early, definitive essay on 'Technical Progress and the Social Life-World' Habermas draws a distinction between practical and technical knowledge. Whereas traditional statecraft is a *techne* that Aristotle and Machiavelli would have recognised, modern states are embroiled in technical problems and issues which derive from developments in science and technology and which only modern philosophy can grasp.[14]

The same point is made in <u>The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity</u>, a much later text. Habermas distinguishes the 'old European concept of politics', an 'Aristotelian tradition', from the 'conceptual framework' of modern societies, where 'the social system has been separated from the political [and] a depoliticised economic society has been separated from a bureaucratised state'.[15] This crucial insight, not widely acknowledged in Anglo-American political theory, radically changes the nature of any modern politics.[16] Instead of being a form of practical activity easily 'translated' into ordinary experience, statecraft turns to face the lifeworld like an autonomous machine uttering incomprehensible sounds.

In 'Technical Progress/Social Life-World' Habermas indicates impatience with Critical Theory for abolishing the problem he describes simply by proclaiming a premature victory for technocracy. Habermas argues that the 'thesis of the autonomous character of technical development is not correct'. He continues: '[a]s little as we can accept the optimistic convergence of technology and democracy, the pessimistic assertion that technology excludes democracy is just as untenable'.[17] For Habermas, there is a clear danger in holding onto strong visions of anti-modernity articulated by Adorno. Real

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[14] Jurgen Habermas, *Toward a Rational Society*, (Cambridge: Polity, 1987), p. 53.

[15] PDM, p. 37.

[16] Anglo-Saxon political theory would include the work of Rawls, Macintyre, Nozick, Berlin, Dunne. These authors have revived political theory in recent years but only Habermas, and perhaps Macintyre, deal with the specific issue of technology and its implications for politics.

[17] Habermas, *Rational Society*, p. 59/60.

political dilemmas are falsely abolished and the lifeworld cuts itself adrift from potentially enlightening experience.

This early attempt to distinguish modern-European critique from the Frankfurt School of the 1930s and 40s does not entail that Habermas rejects all elements of negative dialectic. In The Theory of Communicative Action (TCA), for example, he switches tack, concentrating largely on the 'boomerang' effects of system on the lifeworld, in terms of the lifeworld's capacity to reproduce itself beyond state control. TCA examines the thesis of the 'internal colonisation' of the lifeworld and cites empirical examples 'from current tendencies toward juridification' and the 'pathologies' they create in, for example, family socialisation and ego development. [18] TCA also reflects earlier arguments about the dangers of systems for modern democracies detailed in The Structural Formation of the Public Sphere and Legitimation Crisis.[19]

Despite the defence of the lifeworld and the partial recognition of the validity of Weber and early Critical Theory, Habermas is keenly aware that modernity and the systems it has created are vital to modern societies. Even in TCA he writes that, 'goal-directed actions are co-ordinated not only through processes of reaching understanding, but also through functional interconnections that are not intended … and are usually not even perceived within the horizons of everyday practice'.[20]

In Between Facts and Norms, Habermas seeks to balance system and lifeworld concerns. He mounts a defence of legal systems as the factual embodiment of lifeworld opinion.[21] Though law may oppose the lifeworld, law is, in fact, frozen moral discourse. Law lies between facts and norms as it embodies previous moral and practical learning, while acting as an empirical force or power which short-circuits societal conflict and communication creating efficiency vital for social stability and advance.[22] The very title

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[18] Habermas, *TCA 2*, p. 334.
[19] See note 12.
[20] Habermas, *TCA 2*, p. 150.
[21] Jurgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms*: *Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996).
[22] As Kenneth Baynes writes, 'in highly differentiated societies the task of social co-ordination and integration falls to institutionalised procedures of legitimate law making that transform into binding decisions the more diffuse public opinions initially produced via the anonymous communication network of a loosely organised and largely autonomous public sphere'. See, 'Democracy and the Rechsstaat', in Stephen K. White (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Habermas*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 205.

of the work - <u>Between Facts and Norms</u> - indicates the mediation between practical and technical consciousness, to use the earlier formulation.

In <u>The Future of Human Nature</u> Habermas switches back to the defence of the lifeworld against new systemic threats emanating from genetic engineering. Here the situation is more complex as one part or element of the system (the law) is used to defend against the intrusion of another part (genetic engineering) in defence of the values and autonomy of the lifeworld. Reflecting an almost Catholic perspective, Habermas refers to the German Basic Law which enshrines the inviolability of human life. Genetic engineering potentially violates the 'non-disposability of human life', an implied principle of the 'gradated protection of human life' described in Article Two, Section Two of the Basic Law. Evoking Article Two is necessary to avoid a situation where genetic engineering 'reduces the status' of a future person. This argument, in turn, is justified by the deontological norm of a discourse ethics which itself rests on the autonomous capacities of persons.[23]

Habermas equivocates in this support for the lifeworld or system, depending on the context. While the majority element might be involved in the defence of the lifeworld, there is, at least, a minority position that retains and defends the modernity of systems. This element is clearer in the early attempts to distinguish the pre- and post-war contexts. Habermas defends systems theory against Adorno, but also Adorno against systems theory, although he is critical of both Adorno and Luhmann as the main representative of modern systems theory.[24] First the lifeworld, then the system. This is a long standing method. As <u>Toward a Rational Society</u> argues, '[t]oday, in the industrially most advanced systems, an energetic attempt must be made consciously to take in hand the mediation between technical progress and the conduct of life …'.[25]

The view has been expressed that Habermas has conceded far too much to systems theory. David Rasmussen argues in <u>Reading Habermas</u> that 'cashing in on the so-called scientific benefits of systems theory occurs at the price of rendering a

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[23] Jurgen Habermas, *The Future of Human Nature*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003), p. 77
[24] Habermas, *TCA 2*, p. 314. On Luhmann and IR, see Mathias Albert, 'Observing world politics: Luhmann's systems theory of societ and international relations', Millennium: Journal of International Studies 28 (1999), 2, pp. 239-265, and Mathias Albert and Lena Hilkermeier (eds), *Observing International Relations: Niklas Luhmann and World Politics* (London: Routledge, 2004).
[25] Habermas, *Toward a Rational Society*, p. 60

participatory political system obsolete'.[26] Nick Rengger also steers towards a rejection of Habermas, preferring to support Adorno and Bernstein in a 'non-instrumental conception of culture and cognition, a nonfunctionalist conception of culture, and the harmonisation of both'.[27] For Rengger, Habermas' work 'falls short of Adorno's suspicion' as it is too instrumentalised.

Obviously, systems theory has its dangers. Habermas writes, as noted, about 'functionalist reason gone wild'. However, functionalism can be controlled by a combination of systems and lifeworlds, as Habermas' discussion of genetic engineering indicates. Furthermore, it is difficult to see how participatory democracy could become 'obsolete' just because societies are united and administrated partially by systems. This is patently absurd. Though Rengger is correct to point out that there is a genuine dilemma for Critical Theory, he is wrong to suggest that this dilemma is, as he puts it, 'fateful - and possibly fatal'. Rather, the dilemma is merely inescapable as it is a condition of modern life. Critical Theory works within the dilemma. So long as the dilemma exists then so does Critical Theory, as the latter is caused by the former. As Raymond Geuss argues, in The Idea of a Critical Theory, Critical Theory is rooted in the Marxist concept of *Ideologiekritik*, where ideas (and theories) are products of real material conditions.[28] Contrary to postmodernism, we cannot transcend the dilemma by proclaiming a premature technocratic victory.

The question posed by Habermas is a simple and a sensible one, succinctly stated in Toward a Rational Society: 'how men can and want to live under the objective conditions of their exer-expanded power of control'. He continues, 'our problem can then be stated as one of the relation of technology and democracy: how can the power of technical control be brought within the range of the consensus of acting and transacting citizens'?[29]

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[26] David M. Rasmussen, *Reading Habermas*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990). p. 47.
[27] Rengger, 'Negative Dialectic' in *Critical Theory and World Politics*.
[28] As Geuss writes, 'The very heart of the Critical Theory of society is its criticism of ideology. Their ideology is what prevent the agents in the society from correctly perceiving their true situation and real interest; if they are to free themselves from social repression, the agencies must rid themselves of ideological illusion.' Like Freudian psychoanalysis, this act has a praxeological basis. Geuss, R., *The Idea of a Critical Theory*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). p. 3.
[29] Habermas, *Toward a Rational Society*, p. 57.

Technical cosmopolitanism 1 - critical IR theory

Andrew Linklater's version of Critical Theory originates in Habermas' Kantian cosmopolitanism. Linklater supports Habermas' defence of the unfinished project of modernity, although he is concerned, principally, with the normative, sociological and praxeological basis of a 'universal speech community ... tolerating difference [and] enlarging human diversity'.[30] This Kantian interpretation of Habermas is not incorrect, to say the least. Habermas' 'Discourse Ethics' is clearly influenced by Kant and Habermas' own interventions in the 'postnational constellation' have a distinctly Kantian overtone. However, arguably, this Kantian version of Habermas' modernism is not based on the developments in Critical Theory (CT) cited above. The system/lifeworld distinction and the problems of science and society are not equivalent to the application of Kantian discourse ethics.

A crucial difference between technical and moral or normative cosmopolitanism (hereafter TC vs NC) is that the latter treats the system/lifeworld distinction from the perspective of the lifeworld, and that systems are described as having negative influences on the lifeworld. TC reverses this relationship as it involves the protection and integrity of systems and maintains that systems are vital for the lifeworld. If systems are a legitimate element of modern social structures then CT implies NC *and* TC.

Linklater, like Habermas in TCA, sees the system/lifeworld distinction in terms of the threat that the former poses to the latter. His concern is to deconstruct systemic barriers to communication and the recognition of universal identity. History is the 'overcoming' of systemic barriers. In The Transformation of Political Community, in a section on 'State Power and Modernity', Linklater writes of 'resistance to the monopolies of power.' Here, 'the moral capital which has accumulated in the struggle to extend and defend the rights of citizens is a resource that can be used to envisage new conceptions of community and citizenship which are freed from the constraints of national sovereignty'.[31]

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[30] Andrew Linklater, 'The Changing Contours of Critical International Relations Theory' in Richard Wynn Jones, (ed.) *Critical Theory and World Politics*. Also Andrew Linklater, *The Transformation of Political Community*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998).
[31] Linklater, *The Transformation*, pp. 176,8.

TC differs from NC as it is based on the idea, clearly implied in Habermas' own recognition of systems theory, that systems are, at some level, legitimate parts of any international order. TC acknowledges the legitimacy of systems and systemic modes of social organisation at an international level as it involves the exploration of the legitimacy of systems and the purposes of systems in relation to wider cosmopolitan goals. Yet what kind of IR politics and research agendas follow from a perspective of technical cosmopolitanism within Critical Theory?

Technical cosmopolitanism 2 - IR practice

An example of TC as an empirical process is described in Craig Murphy's <u>International Organization and Industrial Change</u>.[32] Murphy describes the emergence of Public International Unions (PIUs) in late 19th Century capitalism. Here the optimism and the dynamism of the Enlightenment had reached a frenzied peak. New inventions stretched the imagination. The world shrank as global transportation and communication networks sprang up between continents and across oceans. Transnationalism gained a foothold in the international system. Elite expert cultures formed quasi-private associations, which structured economic activity and forms of communication associated with it (e.g., through the telegraph). New technologies demonstrated the power and optimism of science, reason and communication. The PIUs failed to prevent the eventual collapse of the international system in 1914, but many survived two world wars to form the basis of cosmopolitan governance in the League of Nations and the United Nations.

Murphy's thesis is important because it recognises the important role played by international systems in the development of the international order. Furthermore, the PIUs were seen by their contemporaries as part of a quasi-Kantian project. Consider something like an international distress call, a product of Murphy's 'inter-imperial era'. The Morse code (SOS) and the Marconi code (CQD) are international distress calls, cosmopolitan appeals to all 'men' and to all nations to save life - a condition of universal hospitality.

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[32] Craig Murphy, *International Organization and Industrial Change*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994).

If Murphy delineates a history of TC, what about the contemporary theoretical and practical application of the TC model? What research agendas and forms of politics follow?

TC seeks to protect the integrity of systems deemed indispensable to the cosmopolitan order. This is a political issue that inevitably raises controversy. Which systems to defend? Is there a rational way of analysing this question? What types of international systems can legitimately be called forms of technical cosmopolitanism? I conclude by offering some brief examples and some conceptual criteria.

First, and most obviously, there are those systems which enhance communication across borders. Given the Habermasian interest in communication, it would be perverse to ignore those systems which facilitate transnational communication. In particular, research ought to concentrate on those systems which facilitate ordinary or everyday communication, rather than elite communication, like military and state to state communication.

Many PIUs have survived from Murphy's 'inter-imperial era' which were, and are, dedicated to this precise policy area. The Union of International Associations, for example, based on Brussels, has its origins in the 'inter-imperial era', and, surviving two world wars, has influenced both the League of Nations and the United Nations. Today, it describes its role as one of 'contribution to a universal order based on principles of human dignity, solidarity of peoples and freedom of communication'. The UIA's focus, however, is administrative and systemic.[33]

The Universal Postal Union of 1874 describes its 'mission to develop social, cultural and commercial communication between people through the efficient operation of the postal service'.[34] This may sound like a mundane activity but, of course, it is a slim thread in the fabric of civilisation, which is not an insignificant thing. Similarly, the Radio Telegraph Union of 1865 still exists as the International Telecommunications Union.[35] This organisation is a also system which manages global communication that nearly all peoples in the world have access to. The systems cited above exist in policy

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[33] See www.uia.org. The Union is responsible for the publication of the International Organisations Yearbook.
[34] www.upu.org.
[35] See www.itu.int

areas capable of being theoretically grasped by TC, as they are systems that facilitate global communication, enhancing the communicative power of the cosmopolitan lifeworld.

A second form of TC concerns those systems which protect the lifeworld from externally generated harm. Such systems are external to the lifeworld but are nevertheless internal to the wider cosmopolitan project because they protect the lifeworld. The reproduction of the lifeworld is a central concern of Habermas' and of critical, normative cosmopolitanism in general and there is no reason to assume that systems do not play a vital role in this process.

For example, all cosmopolitan theories acknowledge that an international system of justice is one that abolishes war. At an international level, there are many systems dedicated to the 'preliminary articles for the perpetual peace among nations'.[36] Take, for example, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. It is widely acknowledged by experts that effective civilian (lifeworld) defence against chemical weapons attack is exceptionally difficult to arrange. The OPCW exists to deal with this reality and the reproduction of the cosmopolitan lifeworld thus depends on the institution of the appropriate international systems and procedures.[37]

At this point a careful distinction has to be made between NC and TC systems. Habermas writes that, 'the fundamental problem of social theory is how to connect in a satisfactory way the two conceptual strategies indicated by the notions of 'system' and 'lifeworld''.[38] The most fundamental connection between the two realms relates to the process of 'rationalisation'. Lifeworlds are connected to systems via rationalisation, a process which joins the two together.

There are many systems that protect the lifeworld, for example human rights systems. Thus protection of the lifeworld alone is an insufficient criterion to differentiate NC from TC. However, many systems are best studied via the NC (outlined by Linklater) as they concern matters of rights and duties. Such systems cannot be

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[36] Immanuel Kant, Perpetual Peace.

[37] Hugh D. Crone writes, 'It is a popular fallacy to believe that it is more difficult to protect against chemicals than against conventional weapons … Good equipment and training will provide protection against large quantities of toxic chemicals, but the equipment must be faultless and the training unimpeachable. Therein lies the weakness of chemical defence.' (Hugh D. Crone, *Banning Chemical Weapons*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 54.

administered by practitioners not versed in the art of a statecraft rooted in deontology. Something like the CWC, however, is not about rights and duties but the effective operation of administrative control. Of course, even a human rights regime involves administrative issues. However, the difference is that these are subordinate concerns in NC policy areas while being the superordinate in TC policy areas. Thus a peacekeeping system or human rights system (such as an international criminal code) is a mixture of administrative and normative rationality, but the administration is clearly subject to, or contained within, the moral. As it is embedded within the system, it is impossible to administrate NC without an intrinsic understanding and orientation towards the moral end. With a system like the CWC there exists a moral end, the prevention of the use of the weapons. However, this moral end does not have to be understood by the technicians actually operating the system for the system to be effective. Unlike the case of a deontological system, a technological system has an extrinsic relation to the deontological which is intrinsically related in normative systems. There is a much greater detachment with TC as 'rationalisation' has taken place, system and lifeworld have moved much further apart, though they may remain related.

Thus TC can be distinguished from NC and from just any international system via the general application of cosmopolitan norms *plus* theprinciple of rationalisation. TC is concerned with those systems which support cosmopolitanism and which are technical in orientation.

Conclusion

Just as normative cosmopolitanism aims to protect the fabric of the lifeworld and the structure of the dialogic community, so theoretical and empirical attention should also be given to those international systems which form the hard wiring of any modern cosmopolitan order. Furthermore, this project is compatible with a traditional emphasis

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[38] Habermas, *TCA 2*, p. 151.

on emancipation within critical IR. Systems are not inherently emancipatory, just as they are not inherently oppressive. However, it is a mistake to assume that systems theory is all about technology at the expense of democracy. Often, only when systems collapse can we see that emancipation is dependent on systems. The hostile attitude towards international systems among post-positivism in IR is premised on the comforts of an international order which, to a great degree, is well served by the systems it contains. Systems theory may be a sub- or superordindate aspect of the unfinished project of modernity. While this is a matter of debate between normative and technical cosmopolitanism, it is undeniable that technical cosmopolitanism is indispensable to Critical Theory as a whole.

So far, two types or examples have been identified: those that enhance the communicative power of the lifeworld and those that protect the lifeworld from externally generated harm. There is, however, a third and final category of systems to consider in the technical cosmopolitan project: namely, those systems that a) fulfil the above criteria yet b) remain uninvented or uninstituted. These are future systems which will demand and require further lifeworld rationalisation. Habermas has described the partial rationalisation of the lifeworld, but he never states, argues or implies anywhere in his work that this modernisation process is complete. Indeed, the thesis of the unfinished project of modernity applies equally to systems theory and to normative concerns, though, Habermas, perhaps, does not stress this fact enough or clearly.

Are there future systemic developments which will require some further measure of rationalisation, where systems take over an activity now governed, either partially or completely, on a lifeworld basis? What areas of the lifeworld will be taken over? This is a difficult question to answer and one best left for future research but it is the kind of open question which gets right to the heart of Habermasian approaches, demonstrating its relevance to contemporary IR. To what extent can the lifeworld be left to govern itself? It would be foolish to assume that the rationalisation of the lifeworld is complete and that systems theory is at end. TC may also describe new and emerging systems, rhizomes, off-shoots of existing systems which will, nevertheless, legitimately change the way we think and live our lives.