CRISIS THEORY:
THE CHALLENGE TO PEACE RESEARCH

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BOULDING'S SCIENTISM

In framing a question concerning the meaning of the twentieth century, one must inevitably acknowledge a hermeneutic prejudice with respect to both content and boundary, declaring "our time" to be a time possessed of its own most proper significance. Thus, in the domain of sociopolitical inquiry as it bears upon the study of peace, we have a representative work in Kenneth Boulding's widely read *The Meaning of the Twentieth Century* (1964). In this work Boulding discloses, as the meaning of the century, the fact of "a great transition" from civilization to "postcivilization." Today, this distinction may well be termed the modern-postmodern transition as we re-examine the structural possibilities of civil society. Boulding recommends, as the appropriate comportment and strategy, "critical acceptance"; and, rather than understanding the transition as itself an ideological position, he sees the great transition from the perspective of one having "no desire to plant a standard other than truth itself." Thus, given the evident relationship in our time between the assertion of ideology and conflict, and, thus, the possible degeneration of ideological conflict into war, Boulding (in a spirit of fidelity

to truth) concludes: "Therefore, an understanding of ideologies, of man's need for them, and of the circumstances under which they can be modified, is a crucial component in the achievement of the great transition."[1]

The practical issue here, of course, is that of the very character of war, both waged and yet threatening, in this century—as Boulding puts it, "a revolution in the art of war which makes the whole existing political structure of the world dangerously obsolete."[2] Indeed, remarks Boulding, "A strong case can be made for the proposition that war is essentially a phenomenon of the age of civilization and that it is inappropriate both to precivilized and post-civilized societies."[3] If the meaning of the twentieth century is that "civilization is passing away," and war, in its genesis and prosecution, is inextricably linked with civilization, then the passing of civilization heralds the passing of war. There is, however, nothing inevitable in this process of human evolution—the transition itself is, somehow, increasingly improbable and certainly not a fate that compels. So the problem remains for us to know whether the practical issue of war at the point of transition is moved by principle or consequence or both—whether war is to be rejected in principle (then the task is to articulate that principle or those principles), or whether, given the currently ominous technological face of war (where "the limit of destructiveness," i.e., total destruction, is more than merely conceivable), therefore war is unacceptable.

It is noteworthy that, for Boulding, the passing of war does not entail the elimination of conflict. Rather, "post-civilization" calls for the management of conflict in international relations in such a way as to overcome the prevailing calculus of the well-known prisoner's dilemma with its mutually diminishing desiderata of welfare and security. It is said that through processes of integration of social relationships and mediation of dispute (third party intervention), the degeneration of conflict into war may be effectively preempted. Further, to the extent that social science may itself contribute to the task at hand, observes Boulding, "calculation, even bad calculation, is the enemy of the irrational." Thus, "If ideological struggles can be transformed even partially into conflicts of scientific theory, we have a much better chance for their resolution."[4]

In short, peace research is, in this view, essentially a matter of understanding ideologies, their genesis and, especially, "the circumstances under which they can be modified." The guiding concept here is that of peace qua negative peace. For Boulding, "negative peace is much more important [than the idea of positive peace], that is, just the prevention of war."[5] Thus, it is in no way surprising to see contemporary peace "research" developing the intricate socioscientific calculi of conflict resolution, decision theory, and just war

theory—all of which work (at least implicitly) with the negative peace orientation; but also with the implicit (contradictory?) understanding that the ground of the *jus ad bellum* is intact, hence the need for just war theory to articulate the criteria for the *jus ad bellum* and the *jus in bello*.[6] Yet, one is struck by the perception that there seems to be something fundamentally out of joint here. If I might give a summary statement of the problem as I see it, it may be articulated thus: *Peace research lacks a genuinely reflective comportment and, thus, lags behind the more fundamental movement of thought and being that determines our time.* It is this fundamental problem that I seek to illuminate here, without intending mere polemic. The hermeneutic prejudice involved in this thesis is Heideggerian, the content of which shall become clear in due course.

BOULDING ON IDEOLOGY

Peace research, it has been said, is essentially a matter of understanding ideologies, with special attention to the circumstances under which they can be modified in the interest of preventing war. Discourse on ideology is today abundant. Here I shall take Boulding's description of ideology as the focus of my remarks, precisely because Boulding has been such an influential figure in peace studies and because this understanding of ideology remains a guiding orientation in his persistent advocacy of the negative peace agenda.

By 'ideology' Boulding has in mind "an image of the world [that has] power over a man's mind and that leads him to build his personal identity around it."[7] Central to this "world-image" is the creation of "a drama"—"an interpretation of history sufficiently dramatic and convincing so that the individual feels that he can identify with it and which in turn can give the individual a role in the drama it portrays." Such an interpretation of history, however, is derived from "some view of the nature of reality and the sources of knowledge." Included in this world-image is "a value-system capable of developing principles of moral action and a standard for the criticism of behavior."[8]

From this description it becomes immediately clear that every ideology is inextricably linked to a metaphysics and an epistemology, indeed that every ideology has its metaphysical and epistemological presuppositions. In this sense, every ideology is explicitly a philosophical anthropology situated within a general ontological commitment that apparently has its grounding content and more or less delimited temporal sway. Ideologies, thus, are themselves essentially historical phenomena; and it is because they are essentially historical that they are subject to modification in the course of their encounters with rivals.

Boulding's approach to ideology is perhaps best captured by the rubric he himself uses, "normative science." As he remarks in his work *Stable Peace*, "peace research is a loosely defined subset of a much larger area of inquiry which I shall call normative science. This is inquiry, by the methods and the ethic of the scientific community, into human valuations and their coordination, into such questions as what do we mean by things going from bad to better rather than from bad to worse and, if we can come to some limitation of this meaning, what processes in society actually move things from bad to better rather than from bad to worse?"[9] While he includes among the subject matter of normative science "things like poverty, oppression, the illegitimate use of power, defenses against the abuses of power, distribution and equity," Boulding nevertheless still sees peace research concerned with the problem of negative peace. Also, while recognizing that peace research is a fledgling science, Boulding nonetheless claims that a "textbook stage" is nigh, insofar as "there is actually a considerable body of theory which exhibits at least a moderate amount of coherence." Presumably, peace research may be expected legitimately to develop into "a single, universally recognized, internally coherent body of theory."[10]

Boulding's epistemological orientation is essentially one that postulates a correspondence or structural isomorphism between the "real world" and the "image" we may have of it, coupled with both coherentist and pragmatist criteria of "truth value." Presumably, alternative images are commensurable, each subject to "testing" which then yields judgments about the "success" or "disappointment" of the theoretical content of these images. The task for normative science is a "reduction of error," "'error' being a lack of correspondence between our images and the 'real world'."[11] Boulding expresses this epistemological orientation more fully in the following passage from his work *Human Betterment* (the conflation of correspondence, coherentist, and pragmatist criteria is evident):

> A very important question in regard to human valuations is whether there is anything in human valuations that corresponds to "truth" in our images of the state and nature of the world. Our image of the world, of space, time, things, relationships, and so on, is "true" if it "maps" onto a real world—that is, has the same basic structure and pattern as the real world itself. We can never compare our image with reality. We can compare one image only with another image. But we can test our images of the world by deriving expectations from them—that is, images of the future—and then seeing if these expectations are realized as time passes and the future becomes past. . . . A "success"—that is, a fulfillment of expectations—reinforces our existing image. We don't learn anything new from it, except that our original image

of the world was confirmed and we feel more secure about it. If we have a failure or disappointment—that is, if our image of the future is not fulfilled—then either we have to revise our image of the world, or perhaps re-examine our expectation to see if it was legitimate, and there is a good probability that our image of the world will change in the direction of truth.[12]

Implicit in Boulding's description is a sense of a relationship between theory and practice that is manifest in ideology, not simply in the sense that *praxis* is derivative of a spectatorial, detached *theoria*, but in the sense that theory and practice are united from the outset. This, it is to be noted, is itself a consequence of that more fundamental movement of Western reason in which *philosophy at its completion* gives place to the beginning of ideology in just the sense captured by Boulding's description.

Philosophy at its completion is generally acknowledged by students of recent European philosophy to be represented by the system of Hegel with its grand phenomenology of Spirit (*Geist*), which comprehensively accounts for reality, and Hegel's corresponding speculative philosophy of right (*Recht*), which articulates "the rational core" of the political. This "completion," however, as is well known, was subsequently confronted by both the critical philosophy of Marx and the *Fursprache* of Nietzsche with its anti-Platonist project of transvaluation.

Marx's challenge to the legitimacy of the Hegelian theodicy contraposed a philosophy of action to that of philosophy qua theory, the former from the outset envisioning a world-historical project of social reform and human emancipation in contrast to the latter's spectatorial or detached commitment to an understanding and interpretation of reality which in the same moment legitimate the extant order. But, then, the Marxist project so represented is no inconsequential event in recent intellectual history that is now merely past. Neither is it merely what has been called a "rupture with traditional ideas" that remains limited to the domain of ideas. Notwithstanding the "practical crisis of Marxism" experienced with the collapse of the former USSR and the ethnic fragmentation of Eastern Europe, what happened here remains *quiescent* in the sense of "what is still happening even if it seems to be past," such that the "quiescence of happening is not the absence of history, but a basic form of its presence."[13]

Thus, what is problematic in the *practice* of peace research is that there is now a methodological commitment to the understanding of ideological conflict without an adequate reflection upon the fundamental questions yet at issue here. One must ask: Is it at all significant for peace research that the beginning of ideology is itself basically meaningful only in the context of

that historical event in which philosophy attains to its completion? In its self-understanding, does the transdiscipline of peace research find itself committed, tacitly if not explicitly, to one or another world-image that has lost its legitimacy?

If one accounts for the Marxist critical philosophy with its critique of religion and politics and the quest to reform that "false" consciousness which corresponds to these "sacred" and "secular" modes of human self-alienation, the whole of philosophy from Plato to Hegel is more or less rendered impotent. Thus, the traditional ground of just war theory (as articulated by Augustine) falls away, and one must ask what in principle legitimates its contemporary discourse. In the absence of a transcendent account of political obligation, such as is to be found in the concept of a *jus gentium*, it would seem that the *jus ad bellum* is effectively reduced to a wholly convention-dependent discourse, now forming the content of legal positivist conceptions of international law.

The idea of a *jus gentium*, as Roscoe Pound noted in a still instructive essay published in 1949, in its origin is linked with both the idea of universal reason and its correlative ideal of universal or natural law discovered or demonstrated by reason.[14] But, as Pound reminds, "the philosophical theory, on which the law of nature and nations rested, gave way at the end of the eighteenth century. The juristic theory lapsed in the nineteenth century and the moral-legal *jus gentium* of the seventeenth century [i.e., that developed by Hugo Grotius] lost its force."[15] Thus, when formerly transcendent principles are displaced by homocentric rationale, it is unclear that some Neo-Thomism or Neo-Idealism may be called upon to legitimate an international legal order and the *jus ad bellum* that is bound up with the logic of statecraft. It is true that with Thomism the Augustinian definition of true political society "as inseparably bound up with a Christian Commonwealth" is altered so that political society can be said to have "its own right of existence." But, even then, Aquinas found "the ultimate meaning of political activity to be in conformity to a higher universal law."[16]

Likewise, if one accounts for the Nietzschean subversion of both Platonism and Christianity, the hitherto transcendent legitimation of "the moral world order" and corresponding doctrines of truth and justice are rendered wholly problematic. Atemporal, permanent first principles (in the classic sense of some *fundamentum absolutum et inconcussum*) are at once demoted and supplanted by the very different principle common to both Marx and Nietzsche that there is no *summum ens* (supreme being) except man himself, hence the manifold and various insurrections in our time of the *ego volo* (i.e., humanity in the mode of self-assertion, the "I will"). "Plato (and Aristotle)

vs. Nietzsche," "Augustine (and Aquinas) vs. Marx"—herein, presumably, is the seat of contemporary moral and political disputations that can be said to be genuinely historical (in contradistinction from disputations that pay attention only to surface phenomena of international political history). Where now, one may reasonably ask, is that standard of "truth itself" which is said to claim our fidelity in the great transition to post-civilization and according to which ideology receives its measure? Are peace studies not likewise situated in the fundamental philosophical crisis of our time wherein one is compelled to ask: "*Whose* justice? *Which* rationality?"[17]

The basic question I am posing, then, is this: How is one to understand peace and legitimate its agenda in the midst of nihilism, when there are apparently no privileged positions in the Western philosophical tradition; when even Western reason itself is confronted with a "discourse of dissent" from representatives of "Third World" cultures not at all inclined to share in "the crisis of European humanity," and even less inclined to acquiesce in explicit or covert assertions of the hegemony of Western reason?[18] Whether the operative concept is negative peace or positive peace (or both), the ontological and epistemological context that is said to legitimate these conceptual commitments is now fully ambiguous. Peace research may very well proceed with substantive empirical investigations that are wholly consistent with the methodological commitment to "a 'scientific ideology' itself applied to society." But this very commitment betrays something of what has been called "the Enlightenment pretension to construct a science of society modeled on natural science," the very pretension "unmasked" by both Marx and Nietzsche and challenged in this century by the phenomenological critiques associated with Husserl and Heidegger, not to mention the various critiques by analytic philosophers.[19] Thus, in the absence of a reflective questioning that acknowledges that the present suffers from an insidious "skepticism toward all inherited concepts," and that, therefore, would attend to yet unresolved ontological and epistemological difficulties, peace research cannot but contribute to and sustain a measure of self-deception.

RESPONDING TO CRISIS THEORY

The stance from which I am posing these questions, clearly, is that which is now known by the rubric *crisis theory*. Anyone who adequately apprehends the situation of crisis is faced, all too suddenly, with something like paralysis. When the ground (all grounding) falls away, one stands (?) at the abyss—the *whither* and the *how* are lacking. Yet, it is to be noted that this itself is but one

interpretation of crisis, what has been termed by Allan Megill the "posttheological notion" which "comes out of the continental philosophical tradition and out of the theology connected with that tradition. Typically, interpreters in this tradition tie crisis to the collapse of the 'God of the philosophers' and of the 'God of the Bible' which they see as occurring in Kant's first critique and in the Biblical criticism of David Friedrich Strauss and other nineteenth century practitioners of historical criticism. In this view," continues Megill, "the loss of the transcendent dimension, prompted by the notion of *Kritik* as a pervasive power, leads to modern man's homelessness in the world. This is the crisis. It is the loss of authoritative standards of the good, the true, and the beautiful to which reason has access, coupled with loss of the Word of God in the Bible."[20]

The second interpretation of crisis, which Megill himself advances, is not post-theological with its recognition of a loss of transcendence, but, rather, "post-historicist" with its different (though related) focus upon "the collapse of historicism." In this view, "crisis arises not out of the early but rather out of the late nineteenth century . . . [and is] connected with the collapse, circa 1880–1920, of historicism and of the faith in progress that was the widely diffused, vulgarized form of historicism." Thus, whereas "In the theological reading of crisis, historicism is the product of crisis," in the second view "historicism is the precondition of crisis."[21]

Accordingly, if one is at all moved to respond to the philosophical challenge to peace research that issues in crisis theory, it seems that one must do so in this dual context of recognition (loss of transcendence and collapse of historicism) and thereby situate oneself in the midst of the modernist-postmodernist debate. The voices in this debate are now legion, and hardly harmonious—this itself being affirmation of crisis. Indeed, there is such a cacophony that one is either thoroughly intimidated or thoroughly convinced that to listen at all is foolhardiness rather than the better part of valor. The danger here is essentially twofold: "A sense of crisis can lead one to wash one's hands of action, on the grounds that every action will become part of the present's degradation. But it can also translate itself into an unending action, whose point is not to bring into being a new present but rather to undermine any and all extant orders, past, present, and future."[22] Neither quietism nor radical activism is an appropriate strategy, for each either sustains or enhances a destructive nihilism. It is incumbent upon us to think and to think hard, mustering even a Herculean effort to stand though we stagger. I cannot but echo Heidegger, who, in his later work, says that what matters today is that we ask the question "What ought we to do?" from the perspective of the more fundamental question "How must we think?" In this spirit,

then, let us consider (albeit briefly) a few possible strategies of response: (a) defense of modernity, (b) recovery of the pre-theoretical world, (c) restoration of Neo-Aristotelianism, (d) appropriation of a postmetaphysical thinking, and (e) dismissal of crisis theory.

A. DEFENDING MODERNITY

One may proceed to attempt a defense of the political project of the Enlightenment on the tails of a more general apology which speaks for the legitimacy of the modern age, such as that advanced by Hans Blumenberg.[23] According to Blumenberg, the inherent contradictions of the ongoing dialectic of synthesis of Aristotelian cosmology and Christian theology that was basic to the Middle Ages could lead only to some *positive* articulation of human autonomy, without this being a "secularization" of Judeo-Christian eschatology manifest in a philosophy of optimism about history. "The Middle Ages came to an end," asserts Blumenberg, "when within their spiritual system creation as 'providence' ceased to be credible to man and the burden of self-assertion was therefore laid upon him." By 'self-assertion' Blumenberg means "an existential program, according to which man posits his existence in a historical situation and indicates to himself how he is going to deal with the reality surrounding him and what use he will make of the possibilities that are open to him."[24]

Such a positive articulation of human autonomy could occur only in terms of "two fundamental positions": "hypothetical atheism, which poses the question of man's potential under the condition that the answer should hold 'even if there is no God'; and rational deism, which employs the 'most perfect being' to guarantee this human potential—the 'most perfect being' that is functionalized by Descartes as the principle of the deduction of the dependability of the world and of our knowledge of it." Thus, observes Blumenberg, "The double face of the Enlightenment, on the one hand its renewal of a teleological optimism and on the other hand its inclination to atheism, loses its contradictory character if one places it in the context of the unity of the onset of human self-assertion and the rejection of its late-medieval systematic role."[25]

The basic position that Blumenberg offers as an apology for modernity entails for peace research the programmatic orientation that follows from hypothetical atheism or rational deism. What we are to determine about peace research in principle and in consequence would have to be consistent with this guiding value orientation: The way to peace is essentially to be pursued

without any introduction of transcendent claims upon the conduct of human affairs. Indeed, such claims would be banally intrusive rather than legitimate in whatever they might say about political obligation; for, according to Blumenberg, the concept of rationality that matters now is "neither that of an agency of salvation nor that of a creative originality" but, rather, that of a "sufficient rationality" (*einer zureichended Vernunft*): "It is just enough to accomplish the postmedieval self-assertion and to bear the consequences of this emergency self-consolidation. The concept of the legitimacy of the modern age is not derived from the accomplishments of reason but rather from the necessity of those accomplishments."[26]

Peace research, thus, would be in principle homocentric, guided by a human autonomy grounded upon a sufficient rationality; and whatever expectations we are to have from human conduct would depend upon conceptions of "human nature" so derived or, alternatively, upon an existentialist ethos of human freedom which rejects the universal in deference to the uniqueness of the particular. Yet, while there could be no legitimate appeal to a transcendent account of political obligation, it would be likewise questionable merely to advocate a political absolutism which is "mirror-image" to an abandoned theological absolutism.[27]

That is, while becoming "un-Hobbesian" (i.e., by rejecting Hobbes's "assumption that the unity of a state religion, as a way of neutralizing the effect of religious energies on political reality, was not only possible but also enforceable") neither can we defensibly move in the direction of one such as Pierre Bayle, who "by the end of the [seventeenth] century . . . already saw religion as the state's insoluble problem" and therefore claimed that "only a state made of atheists could be a good and a satisfactorily functioning one."[28] The "indefensibility" of the latter strategy lies in the consequences which are today less acceptable than they were then: "the intolerability of the factionalization of absolute positions within the state was counteracted by the transfer of the category of the unconditional friend/enemy relation to the conflicts between the national states that were in the process of integrating themselves. This was why it could become a special feature of the modern age as seen by historians that the acuteness of an internal crisis could be overridden by the absoluteness of an external one."[29] For us today, it is precisely this issue of identity and difference in the logic of statecraft that sustains the agonistic character of contemporary international relations. As Blumenberg himself observes, "Three centuries after the national state took on the pseudomorphic qualities of the absolute authority, it becomes evident that the projection of the category of enmity onto the relations between states is no longer a viable procedure. . . ."[30]

When all is said and done, the comportment that issues from a defense of modernity is essentially one that abandons the notion of crisis. That is, what is abandoned is the expectation of some fundamental *moral* resolution: "When it is no longer possible to believe that the decision between good and evil is going to occur in history and is immediately impending, and that every political act participates in this crisis, the suggestiveness of the 'state of emergency' (*Ausnahmezustand*) as the normal political state disappears."[31] But, thereby, the stance taken toward the future becomes significantly relaxed, perhaps too relaxed if this is to mean merely "muddling through" while, somehow, progress is nevertheless the product.

What remains arguable, ultimately, in an apology for the modern project—even for an orientation that recasts rationality as a sufficient rationality legitimating the accomplishments of modernity—is the extent to which the idea of progress remains relevant. In an important essay the contemporary political philosopher Leo Strauss defines the idea of progress succinctly in terms of five key elements:

> [1] the development of human thought as a whole is a progressive development, certainly the emergence of modern thought since the seventeenth century makes an unqualified progress beyond all earlier thought. [2] There is a fundamental and necessary parallelism between intellectual and social progress. [3] There are no assignable limits to intellectual and social progress. [4] Infinite intellectual and social progress is actually possible. [5] Once mankind has reached a certain stage of development, there exists a solid floor beneath which man can no longer sink.[32]

As Strauss himself observed, however, "all these points have become questionable."

It seems we must conclude that the outcome of a strategy that sanctions "human autonomy" is ambiguous and seems unpromising in view of the historical events of the first half of the twentieth century, events that call into question the ideological appropriations of both science and technology. Thus, it is to be noted that Boulding's recommendation that ideological struggles be transformed into conflicts of scientific theory is premised upon something like a sanitized view of scientific rationality, even and especially when he allows for "bad calculation" as "the enemy of the irrational." In the course of an unfolding unholy alliance of science and technology grounded upon the metaphysics of modernity, scientific rationality and technological rationality become nearly, if not wholly, indistinguishable; and here one is faced not only with "the *metaphysics* of the modern age," but also with what has been called "the apex of homocentrism whose 'banality of evil' is *domination* in the realms

of the natural environment and the social order." Calculative thinking harbors its own irrationality in leading to a "cybernation of man and society"—
"the irony of technological rationality is its irrationality."[33] Thus, ideological conflicts transformed into conflicts of social science theory end up as so many affirmations that "knowledge is power" and, correlatively, that politics is to be "'manufactured' as 'power',"" this as the inevitable consequence of a doctrine of radical human autonomy.[34]

B. Recovering the Pre-theoretical World

An alternative to the foregoing strategy is to concede closure to the modern project, reject both objectivism for the "ontological illusion" that it is and scientism for the "epistemological error" that it is, and then reorient social-scientific inquiry on the basis of a phenomenology of the life-world (*Lebenswelt*). This would be a strategy consistent with Husserlian phenomenology, which "show[s] the rootedness of science in the life-world" and, thereby, "rediscover[s] the *telos* of science and philosophy for human existence."[35] In this view, philosophy as rigorous science may enable a political philosophy that recovers the *pre-theoretical* social world. As Hwa Yol Jung puts it,

> The relevance of the phenomenology of the life-world to the theory of politics is twofold. First, the life-world is the basic matrix of all theoretical endeavors, including political theorizing. It has a privileged status in the sense that all conceptual activity is founded on the pre-conceptual world called the life-world. Husserl himself regarded this everyday life-world as the most universal problem of philosophy and as the foundation of all theoretical enterprises. Second, the life-world is a historical, social, and cultural world that encompasses the whole of political reality as the object of political theorizing. The phenomenology of the life-world is a philosophy of social reality in the broadest sense of the term *social*.[36]

In the course of time, a recovery of preconceptual political reality would bring about what Jung calls a "new humanism" or the "politics of civility." The foundation of this new humanism is a "*social* or *dialogical principle*" or "ecological conscience" which "is concerned with the question of *how to dwell rightly* on earth," which thus affirms "an inextricable *nexus* of relationships *both* between man and man *and* between man and nature." The "basic existential character of man" can be properly understood only thus: "In the end, to dwell on earth with care is to belong together (i.e., appropriate) and to cel-

ebrate the sacrament of planetary co-existence among all beings and things."[37] The task, of course, remains to articulate the fuller content of this "politics of civility."

It should be noted at this point that Leo Strauss and Hannah Arendt are two contemporary political philosophers whose thought moves in the direction of reappropriating the pre-theoretical life-world of politics. This is not the occasion to expound their thought beyond brief comment related to the present discussion.

Strauss's concern is with the contemporary tendency to understand the political in terms of *science*, thus with that understanding which is scientistic.[38] One interpreter of Strauss has characterized Strauss's project in terms of a "re-birth of classical political rationalism," and to this extent Strauss's critique of political science qua scientism reasserts the political understanding of the ancients against the moderns and, thus, champions classical political philosophy.[39] Accordingly, in his work entitled *The City and Man* (which title already bespeaks "the theme" of classical political philosophy), Strauss points the way out of the "ideology" that has replaced political philosophy: "We contend that that coherent and comprehensive understanding of political things is available to us in Aristotle's *Politics* precisely because the *Politics* contains the original form of political science: that form in which political science is nothing other than the fully conscious form of the common sense understanding of political things. Classical political philosophy is the primary form of political science because the common sense understanding of political things is primary."[40] It goes without saying here, of course, that Strauss's assertion of the superiority of the classical understanding of politics allows for the reintroduction of transcendent claims, given the possibility of "trans-historical" and "trans-cultural" *knowledge* of the good.

In like manner, Hannah Arendt sees the way out of the crisis in terms of a return to the ancients and their understanding of the political and of action (*praxis*) in particular. In opposition to "the social realm" which in modern life comes about as a result of "the invasion of politics by economics"—thus from a conflation of public and private realms—Arendt would rehabilitate "the public realm" which suffered its final assault "in the theories of Karl Marx."[41] Against the Marxist call to violent revolutionary action, Arendt stresses the Aristotelian understanding of the affairs of the polis as "conducted . . . by means of speech through persuasion (*peithein*) and not by means of violence, through mute coercion," so that obedience to governing authority . . . [is] obtained by persuasion and not by force."[42]

In reasserting the autonomy of politics, Arendt would have us see that "The end of a tradition does not necessarily mean that traditional concepts

have lost their power over the minds of men." Indeed, what is positive about the crisis of modernity, says Arendt, is "the great chance to look upon the past with eyes undistracted by any tradition, with a directness which has disappeared from Occidental reading and hearing ever since Roman civilization submitted to the authority of Greek thought."[43] Putting it slightly differently, Arendt claims the way is opened up "for a re-examination of the whole realm of politics in the light of elementary human experiences *within this realm itself* and it implicitly discards traditional concepts and judgments, which have their roots in altogether different kinds of experience."[44] Such direct seeing is necessarily different from the seeing of modern scientific "theory"; for whereas the former concerns "a system of reasonably connected truths which as such had not been made but given to reason and the senses," the latter is "a working hypothesis, changing in accordance with the results it produces and depending for its validity not on what it 'reveals' but on whether it 'works'."[45] Moreover, the very concept of political action as Arendt defines it ("the beginning of something new whose outcome is unpredictable") stands in contrast to the methodological commitment of empirical science to predictive power in its theoretical constructions.

Clearly, the foregoing remarks show the existence of a united front against the epistemological commitment of contemporary empirical political science. As Hwa Yol Jung observed, "Strauss is in sympathy with Husserl's conception of phenomenology as a 'rigorous science' whose rationality goes back to the Greek notion of *theoria* and the common sense rationality of political man as the basis of conceptualization in political science."[46] With respect to ontology it is to be noted that Strauss is committed to an "ontological objectivism" or "ontological determinism," to a "version of 'human nature' which is predetermined, unchanging, and universal," for "to know *that* man is (thatness or existence) must presuppose *what* man is (whatness or essence)."[47] The point of unity with Husserl is in the latter's early development of phenomenology "as a theory of essence (*Wesen*) which is capable of extending itself from individual facts to general essences or ideal entities concerning the entire spectrum of human culture (*Geist*) whether it be religious, aesthetic, ethical, political, legal, or technological."[48]

The later Husserl, however, accounts for the life-world in a way in which Strauss does not. As Jung notes,

> Philosophical *rigor* changes its accent by focusing on the archaeology of the knowing subject rooted in the everyday life-world as the ultimate and most comprehensive horizon of meaning that constitutes the *foundation of theoria*. Like Heidegger in *Being and Time*, Husserl comes forthrightly to terms with

history and the historicity of theoretical consciousness by way of transcendental subjectivity as intersubjectivity.

. . . Husserl attempts to show and justify the everyday life-world as the ultimate horizon of meaning which is presupposed in all theoretical activity both philosophical and scientific. The life-world is the universal founding soil upon which all *praxis* is based—not only the *praxis* of everyday life but also the *praxis* of cognition and judgment. The primary task of phenomenology is to discover and show the genesis of meaning in the life-world as it is related to the "natural attitude," to the experiential infrastructure of *theoria*.[49]

The key point of difference between Strauss and Husserl is that for Strauss the "pre-scientific world" is a *historic* concept, so that "we cannot identify the pre-scientific world with the world in which we *now* live," hence his return to the ancient world of the Greek polis; whereas "for Husserl the everyday life-world is primarily an analytic rather than a historic concept." Thus, "to discover the structure of the life-world it is not necessary for us to go back to the 'primitive' or 'pre-historic' conditions of man or to engage in what Strauss calls 'hypothetical anthropological studies' . . ."[50]

Clearly, a compelling phenomenological account of the political is yet to be articulated. Strauss and Arendt argue forcefully for the return to the ancients for insights into the political that are yet relevant to contemporary problems. In this respect, their counsel is pertinent and timely. The status of conceptual categories, however, is yet to be decided. Especially at issue is the concept of the life-world in terms of the differing orientations of Strauss and Husserl, i.e., whether the concept is analytic or historic.

C. RESTORING NEO-ARISTOTELIANISM

Yet another avenue of response to crisis would be along the lines proposed by Alasdair MacIntyre, whose central thesis in his book *After Virtue* is "that the Aristotelian moral tradition is the best example we possess of a tradition whose adherents are rationally entitled to a high measure of confidence in its epistemological and moral resources."[51] MacIntyre argues that "the cogency of the Nietzschean rejection of modern moralities of rules, whether of a utilitarian or of a Kantian kind, did not necessarily extend to the earlier Aristotelian tradition"; that "against that tradition the Nietzschean polemic is completely unsuccessful"; and that "it is from the perspective of that tradition that we can best understand the mistakes at the heart of the Nietzschean

position."[52] If his account is compelling, then, contends MacIntyre, "the crucial moral opposition is between liberal individualism in some version or other and the Aristotelian tradition in some version or other":

> The differences between the two run very deep. They extend beyond ethics and morality to the understanding of human action, so that rival conceptions of the social sciences, of their limits and possibilities, are intimately bound up with the antagonistic confrontation of these two alternative ways of viewing the human world.[53]

MacIntyre, of course, is aware of the Marxist dimension of modernity's problematic, and thus aware that some critics "will deny not only that the Aristotelian tradition is a viable alternative, but also that it is in terms of an opposition between liberal individualism and that tradition that the problems of modernity are to be approached. The key intellectual opposition of our age, such critics will declare, is that between liberal individualism and some version of Marxism or neo-Marxism."[54] MacIntyre's reply here is essentially that "the claim of Marxism to a morally distinctive standpoint is undermined by Marxism's own moral history." Simply, "When Marxism does not become Weberian social democracy or crude tyranny, it tends to become Nietzschean fantasy (i.e., as in 'Lukacs's ideal proletarian' and 'Leninism's ideal revolutionary')"—in short, Marxism's own "versions of the *Übermensch*."[55]

Notwithstanding, the radical school in peace research may yet have justification in its analysis if not in its expectations from practice. There remains some truth in Marx's insight advanced in his general critique of civil society that it is "the sphere of egoism," that such egoism is "the essence of *differentiation*" in civil society which enhances the *bellum omnium contra omnes* (contrary to "the essence of community"), and that the quest for security as the "supreme social concept of civil society" is problematic precisely because it remains for civil society "the *assurance* of its egoism."

Of course, as MacIntyre himself notes, his arguments presented in *After Virtue* "presuppose a systematic . . . account of rationality," an account left unstated in the first edition of the book and touched on in comments given in postscript to the second edition. MacIntyre acknowledges that in morality, as in natural science, "there are no general timeless standards." In his view, competing and incompatible claims adduced by rival moralities are to be judged, it would seem, by the outcome of their mutual confrontation in rational argument, one party being able "to identify and to transcend the limitations of its rival or rivals" so that the rational superiority of that particular moral philosophy and that particular morality emerges."[56]

MacIntyre reaffirms this view in his later work, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* At the outset of his remarks, MacIntyre observes that "rationality itself, whether theoretical or practical, is a concept with a history." Thus, "since there are a diversity of traditions of enquiry, with histories, there are, so it will turn out, rationalities rather than rationality, just as it will turn out that there are justices rather than justice."[57] In short, "there is no set of independent standards of rational justification by appeal to which the issues between contending traditions can be decided."[58]

In observing as much, MacIntyre does not yield before either a relativist or a perspectivist refutation. "The relativist challenge," notes MacIntyre, "rests upon a denial that rational debate between and rational choice among rival traditions is possible"; whereas "the perspectivist challenge puts in question the possibility of making truth-claims from within any one tradition."[59] Against the relativist, MacIntyre argues that there can be good reason to give one's allegiance to the standpoint of one tradition rather than to that of another, that traditions *can* defeat or be defeated by other traditions:

> . . . genuinely to adopt the standpoint of a tradition thereby commits one to its view of what is true and false and, in so committing one, prohibits one from adopting any rival standpoint. . . . The multiplicity of traditions does not afford a multiplicity of perspectives among which we can move, but a multiplicity of antagonistic commitments, between which only conflict, rational or nonrational, is possible.[60]

The lesson for peace research that issues from MacIntyre's account of rationality, I believe, is clearly articulated in the following passage:

> . . . our education in and about philosophy has by and large presupposed what is in fact not true, that there are standards of rationality, adequate for the evaluation of rival answers to such questions, equally available, at least in principle, to all persons, whatever tradition they may happen to find themselves in and whether or not they inhabit any tradition. When this false belief is rejected, it becomes clear that the problems of justice and practical rationality and of how to confront the rival traditions contending with each other in the *agon* of ideological encounter are not one and the same set of problems for all persons. What those problems are, how they are to be formulated and addressed, and how, if at all, they may be resolved, will vary not only with the historical, social, and cultural situation of the persons whose problems these are but also with the history of belief and attitude of each particular person up to the point at which he or she finds these problems inescapable.[61]

D. TOWARD ESSENTIAL POLITICAL THINKING

Yet another strategy (which follows from Heidegger's critique of modernity)—a strategy as yet undeveloped and ambiguous with respect to both point of departure and outcome—is to move beyond philosophy in any sense of first philosophy or rigorous science to a postmetaphysical thinking. That is, presumably the end or completion of philosophy leads not to a total cessation of the Western quest or to a Nietzschean transvaluation that is itself an extreme form of the metaphysics of modernity; but, rather, to another mode of thinking (*Denken*), to what for Heidegger is an "essential thinking" (*wesentliche Denken*)—also called "originary thinking" (*anfängliche Denken*) or "meditative thinking" (*besinnliches Denken*). Such thinking is, as it were, attuned to that fundamental movement or "essential history" of the West which is manifest in and as the history of metaphysics, what Heidegger calls the "history of Being" (*Seinsgeschichte*).[62]

Here an "essential political thinking" takes over where political philosophy (derivative of or structurally dependent upon first philosophy) attains to its completion. To the extent that technological rationality is itself historically determined by the historical sway of the modern metaphysical dispensation, *which attains to its closure*, the future opens up to a possibility of a world order in which a planetary thinking and a planetary existence leave behind modern subjectivity and its correlative political principle of "sovereignty" which sustains the logic of statecraft. Heidegger's thought enables a fundamental comportment concerned with *planetary dwelling*, in which the "fourfold of Being" (*das Geviert des Seins*)—what he calls the essential unity of "earth and sky, mortals and divinities"—grants the measure of order (jointure) and justice, and, thus, a preserve of peace.

Heidegger's *philosophy of history* is what is essential in thinking the possibility of a future world order. It is his conception of history that leads (if only implicitly) to a conception of the unity of the threefold of planetary thinking, planetary building, and planetary dwelling as inextricably bound up with the destiny of Western history, which itself is determined in a fundamental sense by philosophy qua metaphysics. For Heidegger, "the end of philosophy" means "the beginning of the world civilization based upon Western European thinking."[63] Heidegger is not presenting us with a normative judgment and thereby himself asserting the superiority of Western reason in the interplay of traditions of discourse. Rather, for him this statement bespeaks the essential configuration of what is now happening as world history. Inasmuch as "each epoch of philosophy has its own necessity," then the present epoch or dispensation (what Heidegger calls *das Ge-stell* as the "coming to presence" of Technology; in other

words, what Heidegger sees as the technological way in which all things are disclosed and determined) has its own necessity. To the degree that philosophy has a "legitimate" completion, this completion is determined by "the development of philosophy into the independent sciences." But what seems likewise determined for our epoch, claims Heidegger, is that "the sciences now establishing themselves will soon be determined and guided by the new fundamental science which is called cybernetics." In this way, technology all the more definitely "characterizes and regulates the appearance of the totality of the world and the position of man in it." Thus, remarks Heidegger, "the end of philosophy proves to be the triumph of the manipulable arrangement of a scientific-technological world and of the social order that is proper to this world."[64]

But Heidegger's sense of the essential movement of history leads him to pose the crucial issue that at once calls into question any unreflective engagement of (or commitment to) a technocratic order: Is the end of philosophy in the sense of its development to the sciences also already the complete realization of all the possibilities in which the thinking of philosophy was posited? Or is there a *first* possibility for thinking apart from the *last* possibility which we characterized (the dissolution of philosophy in the technologized sciences), a possibility from which the thinking of philosophy would have to start out, but which as philosophy it could nevertheless not experience and adopt?

If this were the case, then a task would still have to be reserved for thinking in a concealed way in the history of philosophy from its beginning to its end, a task accessible neither to philosophy as metaphysics nor, and even less so, to the sciences stemming from philosophy.[65]

What Heidegger presents as a supposition is for him actually decided: There is a task reserved for thinking (*Denken*). Given that there is yet the promise of a "turning" (*Kehre*) from the present epochal dispensation of Technology, then the future *need* not be (though it *may* be) determined by the scientific attitude of cybernetics. Thus, especially the future of the world political order need not be so determined:

> We are thinking of the possibility that the world civilization which is just now beginning might one day overcome the technological-scientific-industrial character as the sole criterion of man's world sojourn. This may happen not of and through itself, but in virtue of the readiness of man for a determination which, whether listened to or not, always speaks in the destiny of man which has not yet been decided. It is just as uncertain whether world civilization will soon be abruptly destroyed or whether it will be stabilized for a long time, in a stabilization, however, which will not rest in something enduring, but rather establish itself in a sequence of changes, each of which presenting the latest fashion.[66]

What peace research may yet consider, therefore, is that from a Heideggerian perspective of critique (a) the systems approach to world order is *not* the same as essential political thinking; (b) world system consciousness is *not* the same as planetary thinking; (c) global homeostasis is *not* the same as planetary dwelling. To think these propositions through is part of the preparation for the "turning" from the (sometimes explicit, sometimes tacit) presupposition or prejudice of systems theory that the future is inevitably and unalterably technocratic.

E. DISMISSING "THE PROPHECY OF EXTREMITY"

Finally, one may take up a strategy such as that of Allan Megill, who directly confronts the alleged legitimacy of crisis theory. According to Megill, crisis theory logically undermines itself inasmuch as the postulates of crisis or turning in history presuppose a "directionality" in history—"the idea of history as a continuous process, history with a capital H"—which is precisely the premise of the historicism to which crisis theory responds. On "rhetorical" grounds, suggests Megill, one may argue further that "the historicist context is hardly ours" and that the notion of crisis is mere "thought-cliche," a "stale platitude" which obscures rather than clarifies our experience. Finally, observes Megill, on pragmatist grounds one may adopt the tactic of supposing a crisis and then ask the relevant question: "What difference does it make?" For Megill, the presence of crisis "makes no difference whatsoever—at least not a helpful difference." It is to be said that "quite possibly" the fact of the continual outbreak of war and the generally sorry state of the world "have nothing to do with the death of God, the crisis of values, the eclipse of authority, or the breaking of the tradition. And even if they *are* connected with these supposed events, the question remains what the practical significance of this connection would be."[67]

CONCLUDING REFLECTION

My purpose in the foregoing sections has been to pose for the community of peace researchers a question and to outline its contour. In posing the issue I simultaneously risk my own hermeneutic prejudice in dialogue with and partly against the methodological commitment of contemporary peace research. Since philosophers are notorious for raising the grand questions that elicit a young girl's laughter (as is said of Thales), the academy of peace

researchers may, in this sense, well find just cause to meet my questioning here with a bit of levity which nevertheless has its own seriousness. I have in mind the "ambiguous joke" long familiar to peace researchers, to wit:

> . . . about the drunk who drops his housekey near a telephone pole on his way home one dark night. Seeing a lamppost nearby, he goes to it and hunts carefully around it. When a passerby, stopping to help him, asks why he is looking under the lamppost rather than around the telephone pole, he replies: "The light is better here."[68]

As Berenice Carroll observes in relating this joke:

> The joke is ambiguous because, as any scholar or scientist knows, one has indeed a much better chance of finding *something*, of getting results, by looking where the light is, even if one is not likely to find what one has set out for. Peace research has in large measure followed the same pattern of looking where the light is, regardless of whether one is likely to find peace, or any way to peace, there. . . . [To] turn away from the light, to look instead into the dark, where one lost the key carries a high risk that one will find nothing at all.[69]

In a way, my counsel is to look into the dark, though not to exclude looking in the light, if that is what peace research is doing. I do not at all diminish or depreciate most of such empirically-oriented contributions (so long as they are received with some philosophical awareness as well), for they are moved by something like the always prudent Augustinian ethos which holds that "it is a higher glory still to stay war itself with a word, than to slay men with the sword, and to procure or maintain peace by peace, not by war."[70]

From my present "Heideggerian" prejudice, I remain persuaded of the reality of crisis and of a promising direction opened up by Heidegger's thought. I must confess that I am, however, simultaneously affected by the unsettling thought that ultimately a Hedeggerian strategy may merely advance a new mythology. (This question I leave to my readers to decide after they have sufficiently weighed the validity of the Heideggerian critique I advance in the following chapters.) Whatever the appropriate strategy, it is clear that we cannot responsibly engage in peace research without taking up some position on the issue of absolute cultural crisis. Articulation of these positions must issue not only from American and European representatives of the peace movement; but also from those in the developing world, whose discourse of dissent challenges the hegemony of Western reason and its "universalist aspirations."[71] Only then, I believe, can we begin to articulate a

meaningful planetary thinking in the interest of genuinely humane gover-
nance and the creation of a just world order. I submit that our fidelity to the
future is demonstrated in the proportion to which we confront the "modern
thoughtlessness" highlighted by the epigraph to this chapter. For me, as for
Heidegger, "Questioning is the piety of thinking."[72] This is all the more so in
the midst of nihilism.