HABERMAS' CONCEPTION OF MODERNITY: GOING BEYOND TRANSCENDENTALISM AND DETRANSCENDTALISATION, AN INTERPRETATION

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1. Introduction

a) Transcendentalism[1]: Habermas wants to preserve what can be broadly termed as Kantian transcendentalism. Kantian transcendentalism has been conveyed through various interrelated terms, such as freedom, reflection and subjectivity capable of initiatives and accomplishments. Broadly speaking transcendentalism is the belief that human beings are unique among natural creatures in their ability to distance themselves from their surroundings and to reflect upon what they do and think and hence maintain certain distance vis-à-vis what they know, do and feel etc. Traditionally, this has been attributed to their having the power of reason which in turn is supposed to have required freedom on the part of human beings.

b) Detrancendentalisation: However, uniquely, Habermas also considers a through going detranscendentalisation as the integral part of modernity. As against transcendentalism, detranscendentalisation is the

reassertion that human beings and their capacities are part of their environment and are formed in the context in which they are inevitably situated and located.

Habermas discusses two types of societies in connection with his attempt to differentiate modern and pre-modern worldviews: a) mythical societies, these societies are far removed from modernity and provide a real contrast between modern worldviews and non modern ones b) Habermas discusses the so called great world religions (in the context of discussing Weber's view about rationalization) and their role in the transition to a full blown modern worldview. In this latter discussion we can see how Habermas differentiates modern worldview from those presented by the great world religions and thus we can discern important differences which can be useful in differentiating the modern worldview from the one propagated by the great world religions.

In what follows we refer to both kind of societies mentioned above (a & b) in order to highlight what Habermas considers to be the defining characteristics of the modern worldview. Furthermore Habermas' criticism of the modern worldview provides the key to what he deems as yet unfinished in the modern projects hence providing us further clues about his conception of modernity.[2] In what follows we shall be tapping these three sources in order to discuss the themes of transcendentalism and detrancendentalisation in Habermas.

II Habermas' Transcendentalism

By Habermas' transcendentalism we mean following different but related things: a) Habermas' preservation of Kant's transcendental approach despite his critique of it and

transformation of it: b) His defence of the Kantian distinction between "transcendental" and "empirical' despite his critique of and abandonment of Kantian transcendental idealism: c) Habermas' preservation of the Kantian notion of subjectivity capable of accomplishments despite his critique of the philosophies of subject and consciousness: d) Habermas' sticking to the key Kantian notions of freedom, critique, self-reflection, despite his criticism of the mentalist paradigm: e) Habermas' sticking to the Kantian distinction between nature and culture and his defence of the Kantian differentiation between different reality domains and corresponding attitudes despite his defence of what he calls 'weak' naturalism which is based on the assumption of an overall continuity between nature and culture: f) In sum, his adherence of Kant despite his critique of Kant.

In what follows we will bring forth what we consider to be the defining elements of Habermas' transcendentalism by discussing the above themes briefly not for their own sake but in order to highlight what we have termed here as Habermas' transcendentalism.

Habermas describes the fusion of *facticity* and *validity*[3] as the defining characteristics of traditional or non modern societies. Habermas sees the differentiation between facticity and validity as a key accomplishment of modernity. According to Habermas in the non modern worldviews the notion of validity is still confused with empirical efficacy. The distinct notion of 'causality of reason' has not emerged in these worldviews. Thus speaking of the mythical worldviews Habermas writes:

"Evidently there is not yet any precise concept for the nonempirical validity that we ascribe to symbolic expressions. Validity is confounded with empirical efficacy. I am not referring here to special validity claims . . . But even the diffuse concept of

validity in general is still not freed from empirical admixtures. Concepts of validity such as morality and truth are amalgamated with empirical ordering concepts, such as causality and health. Thus a linguistically constituted worldview can be identified with the world order to such an extent that it cannot be perceived as an interpretation of the world that is subject to error and open to criticism. In this respect the confusion of nature and culture takes on the significance of a reification of worldview.[4]

Habermas is saying a few very important things in this passage. On the one hand he is claiming that in non modern worldviews there is not yet a concept of validity "which is freed from empirical admixtures." A notion of validity which is free of such admixtures is for Habermas a notion that is not based on the notion of "empirical efficacy". A unique concept of 'rational efficacy' is needed for the emergence of the notion of validity as distinct from facticity.

For Habermas a notion of validity free of "empirical admixtures" a notion of validity that is not based on the notion of "empirical efficacy" is a singular achievement of modernity. It is with modernity that we arrive at a notion of 'rational efficacy' which is distinct from the notion of 'empirical efficacy'. Given such an important role that the distinct notion of validity and its emergence plays in Habermas' understanding of modernity it is small wonder that Habermas spends so much time and so much of his energy in trying to differentiate the illocutionary force of speech acts from perlocutionary effects in developing his theory of meaning.

But why is such a clear distinction between validity and empirical efficacy so important for Habermas' understanding of modernity? The answer to this question lies in Habermas' argument that linguistically constituted worldview can be

identified with the world order to such an extent that it cannot be perceived as an interpretation of the world that is *subject to error and open to criticism.*

For Habermas it follows from the fact that in the premodern worldviews there is no clear distinction between validity and empirical efficacy that in those worldviews a) there is no distinction between "a linguistically constituted worldview" and "the world order as such" b) Thus in the absence of any distinction between validity and empirical efficacy the notion of any alternative world interpretations becomes impossible and c) consequently the notion that a worldview or an interpretation of the world is subject to error thus fallibility loses its importance d) Furthermore, the notion of interpretations of the world being open to criticism and hence open to alternatives remains incomprehensible. The notion of inherently open added worldviews is an alien concept to worldviews which are unable to make a clear cut distinction between validity and "empirical efficacy."[5]

Thus the distinction between facticity and validity for Habermas is related to important conceptions like fallibility, critique, openness and reversibility. Moreover, it is the basis for Habermas' distinction between a "linguistically constituted worldview" and "world order" as such. In order contexts Habermas refers to the same distinction as a distinction between world and innerworldly, which is based on a key Kantian distinction between 'empirical' and 'transcendental'. If our interpretation of the world is the only possible interpretation,[6] we can not differentiate between the world and the innerworldy and consequently, between 'empirical' and 'transcendental'.[7] On the other hand, for Habermas the distinction between world and innerwordy is a key Kantian insight which must be preserved at all costs, since it is the basis of all other key concepts mentioned above.[8]

Thus if the distinction between world and innerwordy is the basis of concepts like fallibility, critique, openness and revisability, which are obviously key concepts for any modern worldview and if the distinction between world and innerwordly is itself based on the prior distinction between facticity and validity, then defending such a distinction becomes akin to defending modernity itself. Thus it seems appropriate that Habermas distinguishes modern worldviews from non modern worldviews: a) on the basis of a distinction between facticity and validity b) and tries to establish a conception of non empirical efficacy which is essential for establishing any conception of validity distinct from facticity.

Thus the difference between 'facticity' and 'validity' is the basis of modernity and a) only with such a distinction can the difference the "world" and the "innerwordly" be preserved and b) consequently only with such a distinction can the distinction between 'transcendental' and 'empirical' be maintained.

The question then arises, what is it in the distinction between 'validity' and 'facticity' that grounds the distinction between:

a) 'empirical' and 'transcendental'
b) 'worldly' and 'innerworldly'
c) World order as such and its interpretation

Also, on this distinction depends the following related propositions:

a) The whole notion of alternatives and open ended worldviews which are prone to error and, therefore, revisable.

b) The whole notion of critique as principled resistance to the factual and arriving at something different than the case.

Now what Habermas is claiming is that the above is impossible without:

a) The emergence of a clear distinction between facticity and validity.
b) Such a clear distinction (a) requires further a notion of non-empirical efficacy.
c) Such a conception of non empirical afficacy is to be found in modernity only.
d) Thus what differentiates modernity in a crucial sense from pre modernity is the notion of non-empirical efficacy.

Now the conception of 'non-empirical efficacy' or what Habermas, in other contexts terms, the unforced force of reason is nothing else but the Kantian notion of the 'causality of reason.' How does the notion of empirical ground the distinction between 'empirical' and 'transcendental?

We can start answering this question by answering the following: what is the basis of the distinction between the 'empirical' and the 'transcendental'? The basic intuition that lies behind the distinction between 'empirical' and 'transcendental' is that our perception of something is not the same as the thing we perceive. In a broader sense our interpretation of the world is not the same as the world is in itself.

But in order to maintain such a distinction it is imperative that our interpretation of the world be contestable (in principle) and that is a possibility of genuine non arbitrary alternatives.

The only way the factual interpretation of the world can be contested is if we possess the force of a principled 'no'. Such a force can only be provided if we have distinguished between 'facticity' and validity.

The possibility of such a principled 'no' to our existing validity claims or interpretation would show that our interpretation of the world is not equal to the world order as such and thus there is a distinction between our interpretation and the world as such. The distinction between our interpretation of the world and the world order as such provides the basis for the general distinction between the 'empirical' and 'transcendental'.

Thus the distinction between the empirical and the transcendental supervenes on the distinction between facticity and validity and is the basis for all further concepts such as openness of worldviews, fallibility, revisibility and openness of doctrines[9] and hence is the basis of modernity.

No wonder Habermas wants to preserve the Kantian distinction between 'transcendental' and 'empirical' although he has abandoned Kantian transcendental idealism and dubs any attempts to blur the distinction as a return of obscurantism and conservatism.[10]

Habermas' distinction between facticity and validity corresponds to his distinction between 'nature' and culture. As was the case in the distinction between facticity and validity Habermas claims that in non modern societies 'nature' and culture' are not sufficiently differentiated concepts.

In the case of the facticity validity distinction Habermas has argued that premodern societies did not possess a conception of validity that was 'free of the admixture of empirical efficacy.

Habermas argues that these societies did not possess a concept of nature that was free of the admixture of 'human like forces'. Thus they do not have a concept of nature which is free of the 'admixture of culture'. Thus the argument takes the distinction in case from the opposite angle of what was the case in the facticity validity distinction.

Therefore, Habermas is in fact claiming that non-modern societies did not possess a conception of validity free of the admixture of empirical efficacy, they also did not have any conception of facticity free from the admixture of validity or cultural elements. No wonder Habermas sees modernity as simultaneous desocialization of nature as well as denaturation of society: ". . . demythologization of worldview means the desocialization of nature and the denaturalization of society." (Habermas 1981, I, p 45)

The process of the emergence of a conception of 'nature' as free from the admixture of validity is as necessary for the development of modern worldviews as the emergence of a conception of validity free of empirical admixtures.

The development of a demythological concept of nature is important from two angles.

a) On the one hand, the emergence of a demythologized conception of nature has been important in the development of an instrumental and objective conception of nature which provides the basis for an understanding of objective nature and provides the basis for a greater detachment from and control of nature by human beings and thus paves the way for their taking charge of their own destiny. It has been indispensable for the accumulation of resources that are deemed

important for the development of human freedom and autonomy.

b) However, there is also another aspect of the emergence of 'non humanized' and demythologized conception of nature that is not explicitly stated anywhere by Hebermas or any of his commentators but which follows from the logic of our overall understanding of Habermas presented here. This is the conception that the emergence of a demythologized concept of nature has also been very important in arriving at a conception of a resisting reality that[11] Habermas presents in his later work.

Without a conception of resisting reality the distance between 'subject' and 'object' that is needed for the development of a space of reason where validity claims can be raised would not have been possible. Such a resisting conception of reality on the other hand could not have developed without a concept of nature free of an admixture of 'human forces'.

Thus the development of a conception of nature free from the admixture of validity has been important for the development of modern worldviews as has been the distinction between the 'empirical' and the 'transcendental'.

For Habermas modernity emerges with a clear differentiation and distinction between a) validity and empirical efficacy b) nature and culture. It is with the simultaneous emergence of the concept of nature that is free of the admixtures of culture and the notion of culture that is free of the admixtures of nature that we enter into the threshold of modernity. Similarly, it is with the simultaneous emergence of a concept of validity that

is free of the admixture of empirical efficacy, and the concept of the empirical that is free of the admixture of validity that every other key distinction for modernity becomes possible.

a) The distinction between 'subjective nature,' 'objective nature' and 'nature in itself' is dependent on the distinction between nature and culture and consequently, on the emergence of the independent concept of nature.

b) Similarly, the emergence of the distinct space for reason and for law or causality is dependent on the emergence of a clear distinction between validity and empirical efficacy. The emergence of the two spaces is also dependent on (a).

c) The concept of the modern autonomous subject as unique and irreplaceable individuals would not have been possible without the emergence of the autonomous space for reason which in turn presupposes 'yes's' and 'no's' of the participants in the space. Similarly, the emergence of an autonomous space for reason would not have been possible without the emergence of an 'autonomous nature' which can be further differentiated in the manner described in (a) above.

In this context it becomes clear that the emergence of key distinctions and differentiation is important for the emergence of the modern worldview which is open ended and amenable to historical revisions. Non modern worldviews specifically mythological worldviews are not differentiated and their, non differentiated character is the basis for their totalizing and closed character. As Habermas writes:

"What irritates us members of a modern lifeworld is that in a mythical interpreted world we cannot, or cannot with sufficient precision, make certain differentiations that are fundamental to our understanding for the world. From Durkheim to Levi Strauss, anthropologists have repeatedly pointed out the peculiar *confusion between nature and culture*. We can understand this phenomenon to begin with as a mixing of two object domains, physical nature and the sociocultural environment. Myths do not permit a clear, basic, conceptual differentiation between things and person, between objects that can be manipulated and agents — subjects capable of speaking and acting to whom we attribute linguistic utterances." (Habermas 1981, p48)[12].

The lack of differentiation in turn leads to the development of a totalizing character of mythological worldviews. The totalizing power of the mythological worldviews is the direct result of their undifferentiated character and closedness and completeness are aspects of this totalizing nature:

"The deeper one penetrates into the network of a mythical interpretation of the world, the more strongly the totalizing power of the "savage mind" stands out. On the one hand, abundant and precise information about the natural and social environments is processed in myths: that is, geographical, astronomical, and metrological knowledge, knowledge about flora and fauna; about economic and technical matters; about complex kinship relations; about rites, healing practices, waging war and so on. On the other hand, this information is organized in such a way that every individual appearance in the world, in its typical aspects resembles or contrasts with every other appearance. Through these *contrast and similarly relations* the multiplicity of observations is united in a totality." (Habermas, 1981, p 45-46)[1].

Modern worldviews, on the other hand, are the exact opposite of the above. They are nationalizing and this non totalizing character of modernity is the direct result of the differentiation and decentration that becomes possible within it. Similarly as against the closed and complete character of mythological worldviews the modern worldview is open ended and essentially incomplete. The open ended and essentially incomplete character of modern worldviews is the logical outcome of its non totalizing character and is in turn dependent on the key conceptual differentiations Habermas' presents.

The non totalizing open ended and essentially incomplete character of modern worldviews leads to the emergence of another key Habermasian concept which is finitude. In the mythological worldviews finitude is swallowed by the urge for tantalization, closeness and completeness. The finitude of human life (as individuals and specie beings) is compromised by stretching human forces right into the heart of nature and by not clearly differentiating nature and humans and the finitude of nature is forsaken by giving the anonymous forces of nature complete sway over human beings. With the assertion of finitude of both human beings and nature space is opened for the first time for contingencies and surprises from both sides in modernist discourse.

"What we find most astonishing is the peculiar leveling of the different domains of reality: nature and culture are projected onto the same plane. From this reciprocal assimilation of nature to culture and conversely, culture to nature, there results, on the one hand, a nature that is outfitted with anthropomorphic features, drawn into the communicative network of social subjects, and in this sense humanized, and on the other hand, a culture that is to a certain extent naturalized and reified and absorbed into the objective nexus of operations of anonymous power." (Habermas 1981, I, p47).

The fusion amounts to the closure of all openings. This happens because finitude is covered up through subsuming it under all encompassing and complete (closed) worldview, which Habermas generically describes as 'totalizing worldviews'. The all-encompassing (totalizing) worldviews leave no room for any alternatives. Everything is foretold in *toto* or can in principle be subsumed under one and only one complete and true explanation. There are no real lifeworld disappointments as they are readily explained or explained away.

On the level of communicative action the raising of (making) a validity claim is only a 'pseudo' exercise in the sense that there are no real alternatives[2] as all alternatives are already predetermined in the possibilities contained in an all encompassing worldview.

On the level of specialized discourses the hypothetical attitude is a sham as everything ultimately must fall under the all-comprehensive (totalizing) conception of the sacred. (Habermas 1981, I, p 49).

Thus the mythical worldview is a closed[3] system, *complete* and with no gaps, fractures or openings. There is no alternative world possible, as an interpretation of the world is considered complete and the world (Habermas, 1981, I, p52). The completeness and consequent closedness is what covers up finitude in traditional worldviews and traditional societies and subsequently, the possibility of *openness* and *transcendence* is foreclosed in such societies.

Modernity initially liberates the facticity from the all-encompassing (totalizing) spell of the sacred and totalizing worldviews. Through liberating facticity (from the sacred) modernity also liberates the conception of finitude from the tutelage of totalizing and all encompassing worldviews.

With the liberation of finitude alternatives become possible in the genuine sense of the word. A non-empirical conception of validity can emerge from within facticity and the possibility of reflection and self-reflection is created in the genuine sense of the words, for the first time.

Habermas defines modernity and distinguishes the modern conception of life from non modern conceptions primarily on the basis of the self-reflective character of modernity. In modernity as against the mythical worldviews[4] there is a possibility of having distance from the factual (and hence the possibility of alternatives).

This reflective character of modernity depends upon and leads to a differentiation among different domains of reality[5] and also a differentiation between the 'world as it is'[6] and a linguistically constituted world.[7]

The fact that we do not equate our interpretation of the world with the world is conditioned upon the possibility of reflection and is in turn basis of self-reflection that is the defining characteristics of modernity. (Habermas 1981, I, p49).

An example from Habermas would suffice to explain this a bit further. Habermas explains the dual role an actor has within the lifeworld he inhabits in the following way: "while the segment of the lifeworld relevant to the situation encounters the actor as a problem which he has to solve as something standing as it were in front of him, he is supported in the rear by the background of his lifeworld. Coping with situations is a circular process in which the actor is two things at the same time: the initiator of actions that can be attributed to him and the product of the traditions to which he stands."(Habermas 1981, II, p145).

In the context of his conception of the lifeworld Habermas emphasizes two seemingly contradictory maxims. On the one hand he emphasizes the enabling character of the lifeworld constraints and emphasizes the necessary character of the lifeworld for the actors in communication. The lifeworld constitutes the actors and this constitution cannot be avoided. However, Habermas also emphasizes the finite character of the lifeworld and warns against totalizing notions of the lifeworld.

In non modern conception, the lifeworld is a totalizing force that devours everything in the sense that everything else must refer back to this totality (Habermas 1981, I, p 45-46). There is no possibility of an independent subjectivity capable of differentiating itself from the lifeworld and having a constitutive power in the context of mythic totalizing character of premodern lifeworld (Habermas 1981, I, p 49-51).

The conception of a constitutive and active agency is an accomplishment that Habermas attributes to modernity.

However, there is a danger from another direction that can result in the dismantling of constitutive and active subjectivity that emanates not from absolutising lifeworld but from absolutising subjectivity itself. This is the danger peculiar to modernity.

The conception of absolute subjectivity creates an illusion of pure spontaneity – an illusion of a non-constitude subjectivity and an illusion of complete transparency. *Modernity sacrifices finitude at the altarof absolute subjectivity while mythical worldview sacrifices it on the altar of a totalizing lifeworld*. One scarifies the constituted character of the subject while the other ignores its constitutive character.

The innovation of Habermas is to say that actors in the lifeworld are simultaneously constitutive and constituted, productive and product. This in turn depends on showing the necessity of preserving the finitude of the lifeworld and subjectivity for the constitution of an enabling subjectivity. Finitude is the necessary condition of a free subjectivity. Modernity creates its own 'sacred' and 'totality' through is insatiable urge for complete articulation.

The urge in modernity, to understand and describe reality exhaustively, betrays the same tendency to cover up the finitude that we encounter in non modern worldviews. The same urge is manifested in different forms in modern conceptions of transcendental subjectivity, ontology, and absolute idealism and criticized by Habermas throughout his work from this angle. Habermas' thesis is that modernity's initial liberation of facticity from the all-encompassing (totalizing) spell of the sacred can be salvaged without creating new encompassivities and exhaustivities and new totalities.[8]

"Taking the unity of the lifeworld, which is only known subconsciously, and projecting it in an objectifying manner onto the level of explicit knowledge is the operation that has been responsible for mythological, religious, and also of course metaphysical worldviews." (Habermas 1981, I, p 143).

The above insight leads Habermas to reassert the detranscendentalized character of modernity, to the consideration of which we must now turn.

III Habermas and Detranscedentalisation

Habermas takes detranscedentalisation to be an integral part of his conception of modernity. Detranscedentalisation is

not an external limit faced by modernity; it is something which is an internal to modernity as transcendentalism. This is what gives Habermas' whole conception of detranscedentalisation a unique characteristics of its own.

While 'transcendentalism' is more closely related to and contrasted with the 'mythological worldview' 'detranscedentalisation' is contrasted with the so called great world religions. While mythological worldviews represent pure immanence, the great world religions represent pure transcendence.

Modernity in a sense holds a middle position between the pure immanence of the mythological worldview and the pure transcendence of the great world religion. It is precisely in this sense that the modernist project may be termed as a search for immanent transcendence or what Habermas terms 'transcendence from within'.

Modernity takes the side of the great world religions in rejecting the pure immanence of mythological worldviews. It views the transcendentalism of the great world religions as a positive increase in rationality.[9]

However, the above is accepted only to the extent that the great world religions are seen as a transition to modernity and not as worthy in themselves. The great world religions are criticized and rejected as far as they claim intrinsic worth.

The great world religions are categorized for absolutising transcendentalism into the transcendent God and hence for devaluating this world. Modernity takes sides with mythological worldviews in preserving the essential immanence (of the world) against the great world religions which reject it.

Weber and Habermas following him, considers the great world religions as a transitory phenomenon between mythological worldviews and modern worldviews. The positive contribution of the great world religions was to provide the resources to affect transcendental distance vis-à-vis the pure immanence of the mythological worldviews. This resulted in the creation of a space within which the modern concepts of freedom, individuation and progress became possible.

However, on the negative side the early modern theories and philosophies of modernity were imbued with transcendentalism in such a way that they were unable to sufficiently exercise the pure transcendence of the great world religions. Early modern thinking especially in the Kantian and Hegelian version of it created their own absolutes which sacrificed the (mythological) principle of immanence to which modernity remains faithful. In the urge to counter pure immanence a new "myth" was created, the "myth" of absolute transcendentalism.

The purpose of detranscedentalisation is to reclaim the methodological immanence which is lost in the absolute transcendentalism of modern philosophy. Such reclamation of immanence however should not be mistaken for pure immanence (which is what, according to Habermas, certain versions of the so called postmodernism and poststructuralism do). [10] The positive contribution of the great world religions remains indispensable for modernity.

To Summarize: Habermas' account of modernity is in a crucial sense derived from Weber. Habermas takes from Weber the notion of the "disenchantment of the world" through which the world loses its value and meaning bestowing function. The world is demythologized so to speak. This paves the way for developing the reflective attitude towards the world and ultimately for the

demarcation between "human" and "nature" in general. Habermas terms this process as the process of rationalization of the lifeworld. This process was fully developed within modernity and results in demarcation and de differentiation of value spheres within the lifeworld. The rationalization of the lifeworld is the reflection of a general process of the demythologization of the lifeworld.

The demythologization of the world was first affected by the great world religions who through developing the concept of a transcendent God and transcendentism in general paved the way for the undermining of mythological worldviews which are basically anthropomorphic in character.

However, though modernity in its Habermasian version recognizes the positivity of the great world religions in this sense it does not stop there. The great world religions through their conception of a transcendent God create a gulf between humans and Nature. Modernity thrives on and presupposes this demythologization and consequent differentiation between Nature and humans effected by great world religions, but it does not accept the "transcendent" character of these religions. It tries to detranscedentalisation these religious discourses. Even Descartes' conception of reason and its centrality should be constructed as aiming a displacing the conception of the transcendent God. However, in this process Descartes created his own dichotomy the dichotomy between Nature and reason. Modernity since then is trying to overcome this dichotomy.

Kant tried to overcome the dichotomy but in the process created his own perennial dichotomy. In the context of Habermas the main target of his detranscedentalisation

is Kant. We shall try to summarize this project of detranscedentalisation briefly.

IV. Detranscedentalising Kant

Habermas' use of the term detranscedentalisation is coupled with his critique of transcendental subjectivity and it's realm of pure intelligence. The whole notion of detranscedentalisation presupposes the Kantian grounding of the distinction between "transcendental" and "empirical" in the two realm distinction (the realm of pure intelligibility and the phenomenal real). It is only if this Kantian notion is presupposed that the notion of' detranscedentalisation' makes any sense. Habermas says this in his discussion on Quine quite explicitly.

"the heirs of Hume are less affected than the heirs of Kant by the two problems to which the detranscedentalizing move gives rise. The unsettling questions regarding the objectivity of knowledge and the difference between the world and what is innerwordly do not even arise unless we start with the assumptions of the transcendental approach in the first place." (Habermas 1998, p23).

"Detrancendentalisation alters the very concept of the transcendental. Transcendental consciousness loses the connotation of an "otherworldly" dimension rooted in the realm of intelligible. It has come down to Earth in the form of everyday communicative practice, which is no longer sublime. Thus, the profane lifeworld has usurped the transmundane place of the noumenal. Although pragmatism retains the transcendental framing of the issue, it defuses the tension between the transcendental and empirical. To be sure, communicative language still commits participants to strong idealization. By orienting themselves to unconditional validity claims and

presupposing each other's accountability, itnercolours aim beyond contingent and merely local contexts. *But these counterfactual presuppositions are rooted in the facticity of everyday practices.*" (Habermas 1998, p 17-18).

Habermas goes on to say that:

"Deflating our original understanding of the transcendental has significant consequences. If transcendental rules are no longer something rational outside the world, they mutate into expressions of cultural forms of life and have a beginning in time. As a consequence, we may no longer without qualification claim "universality" and "necessity" that is, objectivity for empirical cognition the possibility of which has been established transcendentally. And the transcendental conditions under which we have epistemic access to the world themselves must be convied as something in the world" (Habermas 1998 p 18).

Habermas' critique of the Kantian conception of trancedental subjectivity provides the focus for the whole theme of detranscedentalisation. He criticizes the Kantian concept of "spontaneity of a subjectivity that is world-constituting yet itself without a world (*Weltlos*)" (Habermas 1988, p 142). The detranscedentalisation theme is to resituate this worldless subject into the world.

An appropriate conception of situated reason was not mainly established along the "young Hegelian lines" but as a "consequence of [the] critique" of "the foundationalist variety of thought within the philosophy of subject." (Habermas 1988, p40).

The aim of any such critique is to undermine the "extramundane position of trancedental subjectivity, to which the metaphysical attributes of universality, supratemporality and necessity were transformed . . ." (Habermas, 1988, p 40). In this context Habermas speaks of verities of approaches that have tried to overcome the Cartesian Kantian paradigm of consciousness without world. In his reply to Henrich's objection against abandoning the paradigm of transcendental subjectivity Habermas asks.

". . . one would have to examine whether those who step out of the Cartesian language-game do not have good reasons for according philosophical status to "third" categories, such as "language," "action," or the "body". Attempts to think of transcendental consciousness as "embodied" in language, action, or the body, and to "situate" reason in society and history, are supported by a set of arguments that is not entirely insignificant. These arguments have been developed, from Humboldt through Frege to Wittgenstein and through Dilthey of Gadamer, from Peirce through Mead to Ghelen, and finally, from Feuebach through Plessner to Merleau-Ponty."(Habermas 1988, p19).

Two things should be noted in the context of Habermas' above claim; a) Habermas does not treat the approaches that develop a critique of the philosophy of consciousness as faultless. He on the other hand observes that these approaches are engulfed in the "hopeless to-and for between metaphysical and antimetaphysical thinking, i.e. between idealism and materialism." (Habermas 1988, p44). b) However, Habermas does not believe that the aporias in which these critiques of the philosophy of subject are engulfed are due to their status as a critique of the philosophy of subject as such. Habermas rather believes that these aporias can be avoided if these approaches take a "linguistic turn" (Ibid, p 44). From this we can also derive this minor point that for Habermas the linguistic turn is not essential for a critique of the philosophy of subject as such, it is only essential for a non aporiatic critique of the philosophy of subjectivity.

Having clarified the above points it is possible now to enumerate what Habermas finds compelling in different critiques of the philosophy of the subject.

i) They lay bare the finitude of human subjectivity and expose the contradictions in which transcendental subjects inevitably get involved (due to violating this finitude of actual human subjects). This aspect of the critique of transcendental subjectivity involves critiquing and exposing the transmundane or extramundane character of human subjectivity.

ii) The result of such a critique of subjectivity is to reconceptualize human subjectivity as a finite and mundane entity. Thus with Heidegger's conception of *Dasien* "generative objectivity is finally brought down from the realm of intelligible . . ." (Ibid, p49). This is what detranscedentalisation means. With the detranscedentalisation of transcendental subjectivity the categories and the whole architectonic associated with transcendental subjectivity is brought down from the realm of intelligible down to this earth.

Thus the detranscedentalisation of the transcendental subjectivity requires the detranscedentalisation of the realm of pure intelligence as well.

a. With the detranscedentalisation of transcendental subjectivity the dualism between subject and object is

overcome. This can also be seen as overcoming dualism between thought and being.

The critical terms that define Habermas' re-embeddedness of consciousness into "this world" are a) language b) lifeworld. I shall say a bit about both in what follows from the perspective of explaining Habermas' notion of detranscendentalism:

a) Cristina Lafont describes the two founding insights of the German tradition of language which she following Charles Taylor, calls the Hamann-Herder-Humboldt tradition as follows:

1. The view of language presupposed by the philosophy of consciousness is subjected to a critique. On the view, the role of language is relegated to that of a tool mediating the subject-object relation; consequently, language becomes a medium for the mere expression of paralinguistic thoughts. The critique of this standpoint arises by regarding language as constitutive of thought, and by recognizing accordingly the double status of language as both empirical and transcendental. In virtue of this status, language claims to the constitutive role traditionally attributed to consciousness, to a transcendental subject.

2. Furthermore, this transformation amounts to a detranscedentalization of reason. Reason comes to be unavoidably situated in the midst of a plurality of natural

> languages, which cannot guarantee the unity of reason in the same way as could the extraworldly standpoint of a transcendental subject. (Lafont).

Lafont's analysis of the German linguistic tradition may be summarized as follows:

1) Habermas rejects an instrumental conception of language. For Habermas our relation with language is primordial. We can have an instrumental relation with language only because we have a primordial relation with language and not the other way round. We are socialized and individuated in the language and our intentions are always already constituted (formed) by the language we use. There can be bare intentions as there is no bare reality. Both subjectivity as well as objectivity are possible from within language alone.

2) It follows from the above that language is constitutive of thought. This follows from Habermas' rejection of the instrumental conception of language as well as from Habermas' notion of linguistic world disclosure. The world is always already disclosed in language. There is no world without language. Habermas rejects and criticizes Heidegger's hyphotatization of linguistic world disclosure but he does not reject the notion of linguistic world disclosure itself.

3) Habermas also emphasizes the double status of language. Language is both "empirical' and "transcendental". This is possible due to the detranscendentalization of constitutive subjectivity. Subjects are constituted and formed within language,

and always find themselves working in the context of and within a specific language. To the extent that language works from "behind" it is "transcendental". However, subjects constituted within language are capable of initiation and can in turn affect language background through their actions. They can partially objectify language. To that extent language is empirical. Thus language is natural and to that extent it is thing of this world but it has a double "empirical and "transcendental" status in the way we have just described. This could not be possible without the detranscendentalization of transcendental subjectivity.

4) Thus language has a constitutive role that is traditionally attributed to consciousness. This is what "detranscendentalises" constitute consciousness.

a. The above as Lafont says amounts to the detranscendentalization of reason and the unity of reason cannot be guaranteed in the way it is by extraworldy situated transcendental subjectivity. The plurality of reason is a fact of life after the detranscendentalization of transcendental subjectivity and resituating it within language.

There are two basic sources of Habermas' notion of lifeworld: Husserlian phenomenology and Heidegger. The notion is taken from Husserl but is given a Heideggerian turn or twist. Habermas following Heidegger redescribes the concept of lifeworld as "being in the world".

The subjects capable of speech and acts are no longer transcendental subjects located beyond "this" world but are embedded in this world as "being in the world". They are formed

within language which they do not have any power over in the final instance. They act and speak in a context which they have not made and have not any power to influence in the final instance. They are always already formed within a language and they are always already located in the context within which they socialize and develop and are formed. This context is lifeworld.

The concept of lifeworld for Habermas is closely related to his concept of language though he maintains a fine distinction between lifeworld and language (he does not collapse them into each other). The lifeworld for Habermas is linguistically constituted, however, that does not mean that lifeoworld is the same as language. Lifeworld is related to language in the sense that as an immediate background it is constituted and reproduced through language. However, as a deep background it remains outside the grasp of language or any interaction with humans. It is simply an ever receding background. Through this ever background we are in touch with reality.

In this context an aspect of lifeworld that needs elaboration and emphasis is its characteristics as the repository of reasons. Reasons come from lifeworld, reasons are not located in the "intelligible realm". The "space of reasons" and the "space of law" is located in this world. If reasons are located in the lifeworld the whole conception of rationality is detranscendentalized.

V Conclusion: Going beyond transcendentalism and detranscendentalization

There are two themes that run parallel in Habermas. On the one hand:

1) There is a "transcendental theme" in the context of which Habermas forcefully argues for:

   a) A sharp distinction between facticity and validity.
   b) A sharp distinction between nature and human (social and cultural) world.
   c) Absolute spontaneity of reason.
   d) Spontaneity of human subjectivity and agency.
   e) Typically Kantian notions of reflection, thought and critique.

2) On the other hand: there is a parallel "detranscendentalization theme" in Habermas where he equally forcefully argues for:

   a) Detranscendentalization of reason.
   b) Embeddedness of human agency.
   c) Our status as "Being in the world."
   d) A critique of transcendental subjectivity and consciousness.
   e) A critique of all types of metaphysics that locates reason beyond this world.

Habermas' commentators tend to emphasize one theme at the expense of the other depending on their own preferences. However, what needs to be done is to understand how we can systematically synthesize these themes in one coherent "theory" without down playing one theme at the expense of the other.

If we want to do justice to both themes in Habermas then the only way out is to emphasize and highlight the theme of "transcendence from within".

If we want say on the one hand that there is a sharp distinction between 'facticity' and 'validity' while on the other hand we also want to empathize the ultimate 'detranscendentalized' character of the 'validity', the only possibility is to show how a sharp distinction between facticity and validity can emerge from within, i.e. to show *how* the 'factual' can produce what is only sharply distinct from it but also in its our 'antithesis'.

Notes

[1] By transcendentalism we do not mean here religious-philosophical viewpoint held by New England intellectuals like Emerson. By transcendentalism we do not mean transcendental arguments either. By transcendentalism we refer to Kantian transcendentalism and specifically the belief that the human capacity to reflect cannot be understood naturalistically.

[2] Habermas' critique of modernity, particularly his critique of the philosophies of consciousness and subject, is our source to know Habermas' views about modernity as detranscendentalisation.

[3]Fusion in the sense facticity and validity are not differentiated as distinct concepts yet.

[4] Emphasis added. (Habermas 1981, I, p 50).

[5] Habermas is not claiming that in premodern worldviews notions of error, critique or alternatives do not exist in the factual sense, what he is claiming is rather that such concepts have no normative power in these societies.

[6] Since this would involve a commitment to some kind of metaphysical realism.

[7] Since the distinction between 'empirical' and 'transcendental' is incompatible with metaphysical realism.

[8] Habermas also wants to avoid metaphysical realism in all its forms as adopting metaphysical realism would exclude any possibility of maintaining a distinction between world and innerworldly.

[9] The distinction between empirical and transcendental is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for these concepts.

[10] This is Habermas' basis for refusing to return to any kind of metaphysics a la Henrich and others.

[11] The concept of resisting reality should not be confused with Habermas' conception of objective nature.

[12] Italics in the original

[23] Italics in the original

[14] Habermas is not saying that there are no alternatives in traditional worldviews in the ordinary sense. What he is claiming is that all alternatives are predetermined. There are no 'surprises' in the genuine sense of the word.

[15] Closedness is another trait of traditional worldviews and is related to completeness mentioned above.

[16] And totalizing worldviews in general.

[17] Habermas makes it clear at several points in his exposition that propositional differentiation within the linguistic medium and differentiation in the referent domains in terms of the creation of formal three world concepts in necessary for the release of the rationality potential inherent in language use and for raising validity claims (Habermas 1981, II, p 13). However, this process of differentiation itself is the result of a long learning process, which in part also depends on the achievement, and accomplishments of the actors themselves.

[18] The crucial point here is the distinction as such and not how Habermas conceives the 'world as it is'.

[19] The same distinction is the basis for taking different attitudes towards the same world and for the creation of formal concepts (Habermas 1981, I, p 50).

[20]Habermas' treatment of myth and modernity in its structure and spirit is comparable and parallel to Horkheimer's critique

of traditionalism (mainly neo Thomism) and positivism as described by Habermas in 1981 Theory of Communicative Action (Ibid, I, p 374-375)

[21]". . . I do not believe that we, as Europeans can seriously understand concepts like morality and ethical life, person and individuality, or freedom and emancipation, without appropriating the substance of the Judeo-Christian understanding of history in terms of salvation". Furthermore, Habermas warns that, "without the transmission through socialization and the transformation through philosophy of *any one* of the great world religions, this semantic potential could only become inaccessible."(Habermas 1988, p 15: 15, italics in the original. 1988 Post Colonial Thinking.

[22] Habermas' criticism of both empiricism and idealism can be seen as a critique of the pure immanence of mythological worldviews lingering in empiricism and the critique of idealism should be treated as the critique of absolute transcendentalism of the great world religions lingering in it. In no way does Habermas criticizes immanence of empiricism of transcendentalism of idealism in itself.

References

1- Habermas, Jurgen, Theory of Communicative Action, 1981

2- Habermas, Jurgen, Post Metaphysical Thinking, 1988.

3- Habermas, Jurgen, Truth and Justifications, 1988.