

TECHNO-SCIENTIFIC ACTION VERSUS SOCIAL ACTION

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ABSTRACT

In the attempts to understand human action and thought there are two contradictory perspectives: one is the human centered explanation and interpretation, the other is the techno-scientific conception. Human centered analysis of action has been mainly carried on the basis of three distinct theoretical frameworks: structuralism, interactionism and the synthesis of these two approaches by the way of emphasizing the role of a dialectical process between actor and structure. Techno-scientific approach to action shows a similarity with the structural explanation in the sense that both consider action without reference to the individual actors, but it emphasizes technology and science as constitutive for action as opposed to the structuralist preoccupation with social or cultural structures. Here, it is insisted that any social conception of action is incapable of understanding global processes that are effective over the daily life of individuals. Meaning in daily activities is seen as a techno-scientific prerequisite rather than having a cultural, social, interactional or individual basis. Homogenization of lifestyles all over the world is given way by the dominance of technology over the economic, cultural and political spheres. Therefore, in this study we attempt to show an essential need to question validity and relevance of the basic social scientific concepts such as social as a process, background, integration, development, action, environment, context, meaning, interaction; normative conditioning of action; culture; East and West.

Keywords: Techno-scientific constitution of action, technology as nihilism, globalization of life styles, social action, actor-centered conception of action.

TOPLUMSAL EYLEME KARŞI TEKNO-BİLİMSEL EYLEM

ÖZET

İnsan eyleminin ve düşüncesinin, insan merkezli açıklamaları ve yorumları ile tekno-bilimsel açıdan ele alınması gerçeğin anlaşılmasında birbiriyle çatışan iki bakış açısını temsil eder. Eylemin insan merkezli çözümlemesi başlıca üç farklı kuramsal çerçeve temelinde yürütülmektedir: yapısalcılık, etkileşimcilik ve eylem ve yapı arsında diyalektik bir sürecin rolünü vurgulama yoluyla bu ikisinin bir sentezi. Eyleme tekno-bilimsel bir yaklaşım, eylemi birey aktörlere göndermede bulunmadan ele alması açısından yapısal açıklamayla benzerlik gösterir, ancak ilgilerini toplumsal ve/veya kültürel yapılar üzerinde yoğunlaştıran yapısalcılığın tersine teknoloji ve bilimi eylem için oluşturucu olarak değerlendirir. Burada, herhangi bir toplumsal eylem anlayışının bireyin gündelik yaşamında etkin olan küresel süreçlerin anlaşılmasında yetersiz kaldığı ileri sürülmektedir. Gündelik etkinliklerdeki anlam kültürel, toplumsal, etkileşimsel veya bireysel bir temele sahip olmaktan çok tekno-bilimsel bir gereklilik olarak görülmektedir. Ekonomik, kültürel ve siyasal alanlar üzerinde teknolojinin egemenliği dünya genelinde yaşam tarzlarının türdeşleşmesine yol açmıştır. Bu nedenle bu çalışmada; bir süreç, arkaplan, bütünleşme, gelişme, eylem, çevre, bağlam, anlam ve etkileşim olarak toplum; eylemin normative koşullanması; kültür, Doğu ve Batı gibi toplumbiliminin temel kavramlarının geçerlilik ve alakalılığının köklü bir sorgulanmaya tabi tutulması gerkliliği ortaya konulmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Eylemin tekno-bilimsel oluşumu, nihilizm olarak teknoloji, yaşam tarzının küresellşmesi, toplumsal eylem, aktör-merkezli eylem anlayışı.

INTRODUCTION

First of all it should be emphasized that technoscientific action based on instrumental rationality is contrasted with and eliminating the distinctive modes of actions based on a peculiar worldview. Predominance of the instrumen-

tal rationality in the daily life gives way to a conception of technology as neutral and as mere instruments. Since our emphasis is on the actual state of technoscientifically constituted action, any theoretical insight can be evaluated within a particularistic and perspectivistic conception of action. Such an approach believes in

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the interconnectedness of theory and practice. It considers the proliferation and globalization of any scientific, religious, philosophical, rational, and irrational view and mode of life basically as a threat to the rich potentialities of human beings. Truth claims are the unavoidable and necessary characteristic of wo/man as the thinking being, but to demand universal validity for any truth is a claim for domination. In the globalmodern as well as in the particular traditional times, a specific mode of domination concealed in the guise of truth. Traditional forms of life taken under control through absolute values and modern wo/men now obey the rules of the smooth functioning scientific technology. The considerable difference between these two forms of domination lies on the degree of universality they have, and on their relative approach to the nature. In this sense, technoscientific extinction of the values gives rise to different consequences for each people who had a specific 'dealing with the world' before the technoscientific invasion of their life spheres. For our purpose in this study it is a significant fact that although the scientific technology has its roots in the Western context it has given way to the worldwide homogenization of human existence.

An attempt to evaluate the place of technology in our existential context, from the beginning, seems to be a selfcontradictory task that stems from the fact that the critical potentialities of the nonWestern thoughts have been absorbed and exhausted by a mode of thought that has undertook the role of criticism in the Western social scientific context. This signals the need for a double criticism. Here, to develop such a criticism is one of our basic aims. Beside the deficiency of the prevailing critical discourse, international communication pattern of the social scientific and philosophical discourses indicates a kind of standardization in these realms. This is the logic and reality of its mode of operation. Even critical orientations can not achieve a status of substantial criticism, since worldwide proliferation of the critical perspectives through global communication pattern is contradictory with what makes them criticism. If we consider the substantial difference of thought and life style as the one that is apart and independent from the global processes, there is not any possibility of life to it in the contemporary condition. Integration of the remote corners of the world and of the substantially diffe-

rent manners of life and thought into the global processes, has been the consequence of the modern scientific technology that has its roots in the historical context of the West.

Therefore, a particularistic and perspectivistic concern with action and thought indicates a critical evaluation of the already established global reality, and of social scientific disciplines as its ideological counterparts. In this sense, our approach adopts a vision of the present enriched by the distinctive life styles of the so-called premodern people and culture. It directs itself to look for some links, continuities, and flows between the past and the present. If it cannot find such connections in spite of all of its efforts, it is equally ready to question the underlying legitimacy of the 'present'. In this context questioning legitimacy also means the questioning legitimacy of the authority of sociological reasoning that tries to validate the view that human life can be analytically understood around the core concept 'social'.

TECHNOSCIENTIFIC ACTION AND THOUGHT FROM A HISTORICAL POINT OF VIEW

When we look at the different periods of human history, it can be seen that there are different forms of constitutions of action. Action becomes what it is within its worldcontext, which is shaped by a certain art of living. Our view of "the technoscientific constitution of action" is related to the various aspects of the scientific technology relevant for an understanding of action that is peculiar to the modern age. How can we approach technology and science in relation to the contemporary mode of human life? How can we conceptually relate technological science and action? Technoscientific constitution of action is only the one among the possible others. Cultural constitution of action indicating values of life, which is removed from the world by the impact of technology is only a general name that is thought to represent common characteristics of various and distinct life patterns. In the pretechnoscientific world different communities shared very little values and meanings in common. They did not have common universal concepts and meanings by which it would be possible to make comparison between them. Therefore, the basic distinctive feature of the technoscientific constitution of action from various cultural

constitution of action is its globalism. Scientific technology creates universal standards that are not only ideational but also material in the sense that it actually creates and orders thought and action.

On the basis of the view that today there is no sociocultural entity that escapes from the global processes over its life patterns, we can argue that the survival of such concepts as society and culture within social scientific discourse limits our approach to the 'ongoing reality'. Globalization becomes an effective process over the behavioral level through reducing individual to his/her technical capacities, and through destroying the sociohistorical and cultural specificities that would give individual a different meaning. That's why history of science and technology in a nonWestern context may provide the basic clues in attempting to understand the nature of the destruction process the 'specific' undergoes. That is the ground for us to read the sociology and philosophy of science and technology in a specific manner. Technology and science become a concern from the point of their character destroying the specificity of what is specific. Such a path can lead us to inquire into the unacknowledged way that the specific passed through. This is related with the imposing fact that today the Western schools of thought, in which we are involved, in both its modernist and postmodernist varieties, follow indeed must follow the route that has been determined in the peculiar conditions of the Western history. The common characteristic of these different Western perspectives is to absorb, integrate and represent the distinctive life forms within the process of globalization through transforming their irreconcilable distinctiveness. We can, at best, conceive the present condition as the diversity within a unity.

The rise of modern science and technology is linked with the peculiar features of the Western history, namely, Greek rationalism, Renaissance humanism, Enlightenment confidence in man, beside Biblical teachings. However our present focus is determined by the fact that global extension of the West through the proliferation of science and technology has eliminated the existential possibility of the various modes of life. Capitalism can be considered as only one aspect of the new order created by the scientific technology. Capitalism, as Ellul argues, was only one aspect of the deep disorder

of the nineteenth century prepared by technology. The present world was not created by capitalism but by the machine. 'The machine took its place in a social milieu that was not made for it, and for that reason created the inhuman society in which we live' (Ellul 1964:5). In his view 'as technique progresses in a given society, it tends to reproduce in that society the social structure that gave birth to it. At present we witness the penetration of every sphere of life by techniques. 'The life of modern world is to an ever greater degree dominated by economics, and economics in turn is more and more dominated by technique. The whole of the material world in which we live rests on this technical base' (ibid: 304). There had always been great inequalities and wealthy persons among people in history, but with the advent of the scientific technology private wealth has been transformed into private capital. Capitalism and global market have been tied to and found their possibility in the functioning of the global technology that gives way to the worldwide mobilization of the masses. Wealth becomes capital when the nature (including wo/man) is technoscientifically treated

Within an evolutionist perspective particular cultures and lifestyles are backward structures in the sense that they represented earlier stages of the developed societies. This is the fiction of the typical modern way of thought about men and history. Western domination over various particular cultures has been persuaded through such an evolutionist reasoning, and this process continued until domination has acquired a worldwide recognition (Yılmaz 1994:149155). Its new focus is oriented toward a particularistic concern. Authenticity and nontechnoscientific content of the particular has been transformed and reshaped within a global discourse. From the perspective of particular life styles, today what matters is not this or that paradigm being dominant on the scene of global communication but the very possibility of global communication itself that prevails as the darkening aspect of the Enlightenment project and evolutionism. Darkening aspect of this process is concealed behind the new particularism of the global discourse. Global communication as it operates presently presumes making impossible the voice of the local one. By putting the local experiences into the global discourse and by separating the interconnectedness of theory and practice; by removing 'theory' from its ori-

ginal context, it functions to conceal and eliminate the very characteristics that constitute the locality of the local. It is the decontextual communication of what is contextual. That is why without endarkening the local features it can not proliferate them. With such and similar reasoning globalization can be conceived as the extension of the West, and technology and science as the grounds of possibility for that extension. Western domination has coincided with and been supported by the 'politics of evolutionism' and the 'project of Enlightenment'.

Any particular culture has also its own values and manners of communication. If the 'particular' is also communicatively particular there is no reason in admitting that international communication involves the communication of the particular preserving its particularity. And if the technological science globalizes communication, its nature is immune against the existence of particularity in communication. It should be a clear point, for our purpose, that in the technoscientific age communication of particularity is different from, indeed violates the condition of, the particularity of communication. In past communication of particularity was carried on within a particular manner of communication. Methodological and theoretical disputes on such issues assume an illuminative status for the social scientific disciplines; otherwise their enlightening mission would not work. How can we grasp the full meaning of Enlightenment? What are the consequences of it for the distinctive cultural values and for the distinctive constitution of action? Is it the movement, the historical act of lightening the hidden or darkened truth? Is the Enlightening act based on the assumption of a prior light darkened by earlier ages? Can we consider Enlightenment as a universal project? If so it can not be seen as a project limited with the historical context it was born in. The predominant view conceives Enlightenment as having a content that is Promethean in its nature. As a universal, contactunbound framework for action and thought; it is thought to be a beneficial act for all of the humanity since it defends and preserves the rights and liberties of human beings in general against the supernatural, metaphysical powers.

Whatever the context and content of the Enlightening act are it is the politics of evolutionist epistemology that considers the Enlighten-

ment as a universally valid project. However, we should relativize its mission because of its limited content within the Western historical context. Moreover, Enlightenment as a specific sociopolitical and intellectual project considers the prior and nonWestern experiences of humankind as Endarkened. In this sense the act of Enlightening for any nonWestern people becomes an Endarkening phenomenon. From a particularistic point of view the spread of this specifically Western Enlightenment all over the world has produced a process of Endarkenment extinguishing the locally defined and pursued light of the local. That's why we can see the historical indeed dehistorical condition in which they find themselves as shadowy context. Elimination of their particularities is not caused from their particular way of life. In approaching the Enlightenment with these cautions our emphasis is more about the form of it which prevails within the international communication pattern than the form of it that appeared in the history of the West. The Enlightenment if understood as the 'disenchantment of the world' through not only rationalization in Weberian sense but also technoscientific scientific treatment of culture and nature, has contributed to the disappearance of the local modes of existence in the name of a global society. But conceptualizing this new order as a 'society' is an illusory engagement since the concept 'society' presupposes a more or less determined system that is anthropocentric in nature. It is a selfsustaining holistic entity that organizes and coordinates action and interaction. Social sciences in general and particularly sociology have taken this selfsustaining entity for granted. Action takes place in favor of or against such a pregiven ground. We should argue that approaching action and interaction as contextual accomplishments could be seen, as an anachronism or a habit of thought pretechnoscientific in nature and far from being able to deal with the ongoing situation of human life.

What is the connection between the Enlightenment and technoscientific constitution of action? What is the relative position of action in each case? Can we consider the Enlightenment as the precondition of the scientific technology if so the precondition of the technoscientific action? Rather than developing a cause and effect relation between the two, we can argue that the transformation of the world is the embodiment of the Enlightenment project. The

Enlightenment proceeds when the technoscience develops or vice versa. 'The Enlightenment dream of a universal society', as insisted by Barber, 'has to a remarkable degree been realized' and that achievement has been realized in a commercialized, bureaucratized, homogenized and 'depoliticized' form (Robertson 1995:34). There is no Enlightenment without scientific technology because of the predominance of the effective norms there is tutelage over the individual reason; there is a restriction on freedom that is seen as impediment to Enlightenment (Kant 1959). As argued by Halton 'Enlightenment was supposed to replace the dark regions of the mythologizing psyche with sober modern reason, a project which neglected the possibility that mythic narratives might be expressions of a deeper relatedness with the powers that move humans than rational consciousness can touch' (Halton 1995:272). Scientific conception of the universe necessitates the disappearance of the traditional modes of existence on the basis of the technological penetration into the very nexus of life. Social science is an inseparable part of this new formation. Enlightening mission of the social sciences continually necessitates further steps to involve more objects into their analytical domain. The more their body of knowledge extended, the more they promise to illuminate the human condition. Such a promise is included within its politics of evolutionist epistemology. Modern wo/men are, nearer to truth, more free, and their life condition is better and more improved than the previous ages. In fact, the Enlightenment project Endarkens the modes of existence for at least three reasons: Firstly; it has a mission devoted to the globalization of these modes; it does not open new possibilities for them, but rather closes the way for the very 'natural' possibilities of their opening. It gives an end to the possibility of an internal progression of the particular. Secondly; the Enlightenment as the proliferation of the contextbounded Western Enlightenment is a totalitarian project that does not allow the local adaptation of it without the transfer of its technological counterpart. Lastly, for the late comers to, let's say, the process of the Enlightenment, it means a completed package in the international electronic communication network which presupposes their role as passive recipients. The idea of Enlightenment presumes that there is darkness prior to the taking place and consolidation of the specifically Western Enlightenment. But,

from the point of view of the local, the light was prior to the Enlightenism of the technoscientific processes. This is, in brief, the reason why the so-called Enlightenment as an idea and process has so far been the process of Endarkenment for the authentic lifestyles of the local people. Endarkenment as such means the concealment of the particular root of the Western project of Enlightenment and giving it a universal content.

SOCIAL SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY

Among modern disciplines a specific status is ascribed to anthropology to make investigation about premodern cultures. Although anthropological research has given way to the production of a large body of knowledge, it was made possible on the ground of a worldconception that contributes to the destruction of specificity. It had to respond to its own legitimacy problem that the natives had not need such an analytical endeavor. Its investigation of the native culture was supported by an idea of superiority, that as a part of the Western rationality, it could illuminate or enlighten the essence of native cultures more adequately than the natives. Analytical discourse can not coexist with the native one. Today anthropology, as the study of so-called premoderns comes to lose its conventional object, and lacks relevance, no matter how it reformulates its original focus and reorients itself. The discontinuity is sharp since an anthropocentered disciplinary framework can not give an adequate explanation of the present modes of human life. Sociohistorical and cultural disciplines are just the frameworks in the search of certain backgrounds under the prevailing lifestyles. The importance of the background is kept constant by social sciences through taking concepts such as 'history', 'process' and 'context' into their focus. These concepts have a vital function in the formation of the disciplinary discourse, and in the formation of objects within it. The concept 'process' is ordered within the discourse in order to analyze, explain, define, and determine the temporal continuity of any object, and the concept 'context' is utilized as the totality of the definite spatiotemporal factors that have certain roles over the object from the formative stage to the present state of it. However, we can conceive technoscientific 'process' as taking place of the spatiotemporal factors and as indicating the gradual extinction of contextuality of any ob-

ject. This view of action and its larger structures is diametrically opposed to an 'attempt to understand the relationship of personal activity and experience on the one hand and social organization on the other as something that is continuously constructed in time' (Abrams 1982: 16). In such a view, continuous process of construction is seen as the focal concern of social analysis against the view of a world that powerfully constrains individuals. Human action is linked to the global functioning of technology and science that prepares both the condition and the consequence of action. This process is conceptualized as the dehumanization of human action and thought. Then, we have a critical evaluation of the subjectivist as well as the social, cultural, and historical analysis of action. Ongoing reality needs no human initiative but it orders human beings. In this sense decontextualization not only expresses the transformation of what is contextual but it covers as well the analytical treatment of that of offbased object of anthropocentric reasoning. In other word, homogenization of life experiences violates the basis of diachronic differences that is a ground of social scientific discourse in its mancentered conception of reality.

The view that the origin of the modern technology rests on a certain Western cultural milieu is now familiar. The present ecological crisis, that is the consequence of the unnatural treatment of nature is connected with the Western application of modern science and technology (White Jr. 1967). It is argued that Biblical conception of man as the master of everything has given way to the search for the way of this mastership (Barbour 1970). Islam is also considered as responsible for the modern technology. What role did and did not Islam play in the development of the modern scientific technology? Can we consider it as a part of Western metaphysics? How can we relate subjectivism with Islam? Is there 'subject' in the normative framework of it? Whatever answer to such and similar questions are given, it is a kind of anachronism by means of which make sense to us when subjectivism is accepted as the sole ground of thinking. For Heidegger, Descartes 'selfcertain subject' and Nietzsche's extreme subjectivism as 'will to power' indicates the culmination of Western thought. For him, the root of modern technology is found in this subjectivist way of thinking (Zimmerman 1979). Admitting that modern technology pre-

vails everywhere creating its own way of development rather than being shaped by specific cultures It is what makes us human beings (Özel 1992, İnam 1993), we can no more make an essential distinction between Western and non-Western societies. It is not only an ecological crisis but also an existential crisis, mainly the crisis of meaning that deserves deeper understanding than sociologizing values and action. Contemporary condition indicates inseparability between man and technique so that we can not think even human being without the technological instruments (Uygur 1989: 5355). In this sense it substantially differs from all the condition that has been known until present. Today, we can think nothing without a technological character. This is the same both for East and West, even though we still need such terms since we are inclined to see the past through the glasses of present and present by the image of the living past. Social scientists are no exception to living the tension between their human self and cyber character of their memory. This tension can be thought to be responsible for not only anachronism of such social concepts but also a widespread schizophrenia of conception.

On the basis of the argument we have developed so far it can be claimed that the global homogenization of the life styles has already ended the conflicts between West and its other; nonWest. But, of course, this fact should not make us blind to see the Western origin (Giddens 1992: 174) of this homogenization. Globalization of the distinctive creations of the Western history has been realized on the basis of the transformation of the distinctive material and mental features of the various peoples. That's why to argue that West dominates in the international relations misleads us since such an approach assumes that there is some party other than West although subordinated. If the possibility of the technoscientific world order is connected with the peculiar context of the West, its global reign means that West has already achieved a victory over the other worlds. In Fukuyama's (1989) evolutionist-Hegelian view it is the victory of the 'Western idea' that has determined the end of history shaped by liberal democracy. However, an alternative story to Fukuyama's subjectivist conception of modern age tells that Western man has no benefit from this end, since it also signals the end of man as a culmination of Descartes' separation

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of reason from emotion and as a result of increasing identification of man with machine in the industrial period and with electronic technology in the postindustrial period (Springer 1998: 26-27). Cyborgs in popular literature and films signify only one dimension of the growing concerns in a future without human beings. They symbolize the victory of reason on the one hand and the disappearance of human beings and the birth of a posthuman, postEnlightenment age on the other. Although cyborg seems to be based on the duality of body and mind, this dualism slips away and becomes anachronistic within the situation that unites man and electronic technology. Cybernetic character of human action and interaction destroys the possibility of social construction of reality.

Being conquered by the West, the nonWestern worlds live only in the memory of the people. It should be stated that the term 'nonWestern' does not indicate an identity. It indicates not the presence but the absence of an entity. Since we can not infer from the reality such an abstraction, we can not use of it as an ontological category. We can count at least three reasons why we deny it an identity. Firstly; old identities have been broken down, and the new ones have been conferred from outside that we can not consider as a legitimate and adequate identity. Its inadequacy mainly stems from the disciplinary formation of such identities, which has not proper ties with their specific modes of life. Secondly; there had been not one but various nonWestern modes of life; they could not be generalized into one form of identity. Thirdly; these various life styles have been absorbed, suppressed, and transformed in the same direction. They now share the same identity imposed upon them; Third World. Here to escape from the conceptual trap of the repressive ontology, We can argue that the terms such as Third World, East, Muslim Society, Indonesians, Bengalis, South Africans are, as abstract identities, deceives us into the dreams of the technoscientific sociological disciplines. This is because technoscientific nihilism has been accompanied by the subjectivism of humanistic concepts. Such concepts represent imagined presence of what they intend to represent. And this is not related with the arbitrariness of the linguistic signs (Saussure 1989) but with the globality of the communication of it. To divide our contemporary world into some social

and/or cultural categories mainly serves to conceal the actual processes of globalization and its nihilistic essence. The development of world system as emphasized by Wallerstein, and the impossibility of society as a total entity as insisted by Laclau although for a different purpose (Laclau 1990) may give some insights to capture some aspects of the prevailing state of mode of life.

To stand against the fictive mechanism of social science which divides people into 'social' and 'cultural' categories; we can concentrate on the factors that are effective in the realization of action. If the technoscientific world is counter positioned with social organization of human action, we see the basic imaginative capacity of the social sciences being unable to comprehend the ongoing structuration of the human condition. A comprehensive grasp of the so-called social universe that is considered as human's sphere necessitates the task of questioning whether it is social or not. However, the widespread epistemological illusion that prepares the distorted nature of the social scientific theories can be related to the huge body of knowledge that has so far been produced throughout the 'modern' period of the Mankind. Sociological categories, indeed the concept of society, are off base since there has been worldwide processes for a long time (Wallerstein 1990). Such structurally, relationally, and institutionally imaginative categories support the 'modern mythical' capacity of social sciences. They are functional for the concealment of the real factors behind the actuality of the technoscientific constitution of action in a global scale. That's why we should deny them importance or primacy in any attempt to grasp the nature of the contemporary human condition. On the other hand, to deny any 'essentialism' around the concept of society and structure should not lead us to leave 'essentialism' altogether. To the extent that the 'essence' of action in the pre-technoscientific age was determined within the normative domain, today the essence of action is determined in the technoscientific realm. In the same measure as the structural explanation, any actorcentered approach can not consider the technoscientific challenge that is all encompassing both at the level of action and interaction. Actorcentered approach considers individual actor as the sole subject over his/her action, we can argue that there is no meaning in action per se, except the technoscientific one

imposed upon it. Since action is not a purposive human accomplishment, the 'essence' of it remains outside of the individual decision. Technoscientific background creates the realm of possibility within which action takes place, it becomes what it is. So any behavioral and societal explanation has to be rejected on the basis of the 'essential' constitution of action by technology and science.

Contemporary industrial society, according to Marcuse, tends to be totalitarian by virtue of the way it has organized its technical base. By 'totalitarian' he means 'not only a terroristic political coordination, but also a nonterroristic economic/technical coordination which operates through the vested interests'. It is a specific system of production and distribution that are compatible with a "pluralism" of parties, newspapers, "countervailing powers", etc. In this sense the prevailing forms of social control are technological in a new sense. Political power asserts itself through its power over the machine process and over the technical organization of the apparatus (Marcuse 1964:3). In the personal level and interpersonal relations 'the people recognize themselves in their commodities, they find their soul in their automobile, hifi set, split levels home, kitchen equipment. The very mechanisms which ties individual to his society, has changed'. Since 'the individuals identify themselves with the existence which is imposed upon them and have in it their own development and satisfaction' the concept of alienation becomes questionable. This identification is not illusion but reality constituting a more progressive stage of alienation (Marcuse 1964: 9-11). The consequence is 'a pattern of onedimensional thought and behavior in which ideas, aspirations, and objectives that by their content, transcend the established universe of discourse and action are either repelled or reduced to terms of this universe. They are redefined by the rationality of the given system and of its extension'. This trend, for Marcuse, is related to the development of operationalism in physical, and behaviorism in social sciences. A total empiricism in the treatment of concepts or restricting their meaning to the representation of particular operations and behavior is the new mode of thought which 'is today the predominant tendency in philosophy, psychology, sociology, and other fields' (Marcuse 1964: 12). Technoscientific system repels ideas and goals that are irreconcilable with it. The reign

of onedimensional reality, for him, does not mean that materialism rules, and that the spiritual, metaphysical and bohemian occupations are absent. They are the ceremonial aspects of practical behaviorism, 'its harmless negation, and are quickly digested by the status quo as part of its healthy diet' (Marcuse 1964: 14-18). The main contradiction of technological order is, then, the irrational element in its rationality. Technological rationality has a political characteristics since it becomes a vehicle of creating a totalitarian universe which keeps society and nature, mind and body in a state of permanent mobilization for the defense of this universe. In this universe the decline of individuality is related to the fact that rights and liberties which were the premises of the earlier stages of industrialization loses their initial rationale and content. Indeed, on the basis of Industrial Revolution lies the mysterious advancement of the means of production. And this had in its early period in Europe particularly in Great Britain it had given way to a tremendous frustration on the nucleus of cultural life. Industrial production has transformed a person into the masses that's why Polanyi (1986: 57) conceives it as having a 'Satanic' impact.

In a similar manner of reasoning, eversameness (Adorno 1984: 68) or onedimensional reality as the consequence of the technoscientific constitution of action can be understood as Marcuse (ibid: 10-11) points it out:

The idea of "inner freedom" designates the private space in which man may become and remain "himself". Today this private space has been invaded and whittled down by technological rationality. Mass production and mass distribution claim the entire individual, and industrial psychology has long since ceased to be confined to the factory. Automatic identification is the product of a sophisticated, scientific management and organization. In this process, the "inner" dimension of the mind in which opposition to the status quo can take root is whittled down. The loss of this dimension, in which the power of negative thinking the critical power of Reason is at home, is the ideological counterpart to the very material process in which advanced industrial society silences and reconciles the opposition. The impact of progress turns Reason into submission to the facts of life, and to the dynamic capability of producing more and bigger facts of the same sort of life.

Technological rationality is effective over all spheres of private and public existence and integrates and absorbs all alternatives and oppositions. In a similar manner impossibility of an alternative to the technological order and its antihumanitarianism are explained by Ellul (1972: 90) in the following way:

The supreme and final authority in the technological society is the fact, at once ground and evidence. And when we think on man as he exists in this society it can only be as a being immersed in a universe of objects, machines, and innumerable material things. Technique indeed guarantees him such material happiness as material objects can. But the technical society is not, and can not be, a genuinely humanist society since it puts in first place not man but material things... The transition from the technically quantitative to the humanly qualitative is an impossible one. In our times, technical growth monopolizes all human forces, passions, intelligences, and virtues in such a way that it is in practice nigh impossible to seek and find anywhere any distinctively human excellence. And if this search is impossible, there can not be a civilization in the proper sense of the term.

Technology is effective outside industrial life that has no common measure with the past. Not only the work but also interaction that is thought to be the possible realm of human freedom is subjected to its constitutive operations. Technology can be seen as the totality of methods rationally arrived at and having absolute efficacy in every field of human activity. It is the ensemble of rational and efficient practices; orders, schemes and mechanisms. Then, 'the more technical actions increase in society, the more human autonomy and initiative diminish' (Ellul 1972:91). As such the technoscientific order indicates an 'existential revolution' (Ferkiss 1972: 104). The operation of technique is an operation of determinism and necessity and in this sense is contrary to human freedom. It can be asserted that it is the autonomy of technology as creating its own reality that elicits social, political and economic change. It has become a reality in itself, self-sufficient, with its special laws and its own determination. In this sense Ellul contends that technique 'is not a kind of neutral matter, with no direction, quality, or structure. It is a power endowed with its own peculiar force. It refracts in its own speci-

fic sense the will which make use of it and the ends proposed for it'. 'If we make use of technique, we must accept the specificity and autonomy of its ends, and the totality of its rules. Our own desires and aspirations can change nothing'. It therefore 'does not accept the existence of rules outside itself, or of any norm' (Ellul 1964:141-142). The implications of such views for the social sciences are very great. Indeed it constitutes an actual challenge particularly to the sociological reasoning in general. In Ellul's view everything of a sociological character has had its character changed by technique which is essentially independent of human being that finds himself naked and disarmed before it. There is nothing of a sociological character to restrain technique, because everything in society is its servant. 'Man, in modern societies, is not situated in relation to other men, but in relation to technique, for this reason the sociological structure of these societies is completely altered. There is no longer any question of autonomous collectivities or groups with specific values and orientations. Modern collectivities and groups have no existence beyond technique' (ibid: 305-307). Man is unable to limit and even to orient technique. He has no means to bring action to bear upon technique. The impact created by the combination of technology and science can be seen in the interactions among men as well as in the production and use of the concrete devices. So interaction among contemporary wo/man becomes technoscientific interaction.

HUMAN VALUES AND THE PACKAGES OF LIFE

Within a particularistic conception, technology and science prevail as the nihilistic occupation of the life spheres. Nihilism can be understood in the sense that we can not pursue any meaningful, normcentered, or actorcentered explanation or interpretation of human action. Nihilism as the transvaluation of all values reflects the technoscientific constitution of action that destroys any possibility for a constitution of action on the basis of any life values. There is no significance in action except for certain basic reference to the requisites of the technoscientific order. Such a view necessitates escaping the trap of 'humanistic' reasoning that considers technology as mere devices for the achievement of any purpose. Any volitional approach is in difficulty in explaining the total transfor-

mation of the experiences of nonWestern peoples, since purpose lacks its being a mere human intention when it is arranged within the system of possibilities created and regulated by the functioning of scientific technology. This is because technology takes from man the possibility of being himself.

For Ellul (*ibid*: 6-7), the growth of the power of technique has no relation to the growing use of the machine which signifies its application outside industrial life:

It is the machine which is now entirely dependent upon technique, and machine represents only a small part of technique...as long as technique was represented exclusively by the machine, it was possible to speak of "man and the machine". The machine remained an external object, and man...remained none the less independent. He was in a position to assert himself apart from the machine...But when technique enters into every area of life, including the human, it ceases to be external to man and becomes his very substance. It is no longer face to face with man but it is integrated with him, and it progressively absorbs him. In this respect, technique is radically different from the machine. This transformation, so obvious in modern society, is the result of the fact that technique has become autonomous...Mechanization which results from technique is the application of this higher form to all domains hitherto foreign to the machine; we can say that technique is characteristic of precisely that realm in which the machine itself can play no role.

Although the machine is the most spectacular aspect of technique, it is not the most important aspect of it, technique has taken over all of man's activities, not just his productive activity. Machine, for him, represents the ideal toward which technique strives. The machine is solely, exclusively technique' that 'transforms everything it touches into a machine.

Man now live in conditions that are less than human. Consider the concentration of our great cities, the slums, the lack of space, of air, of time, of the gloomy streets and the sallow lights that confuse night and day...Life in such an environment has no meaning. Consider our public transportation, in which man is less important than a parcel; our hospitals, in which he is only a number. Yet we call this progress (*ibid*:

4-5).

It is a common error to equate technology with the machine. Moore argues that 'the machine is only the most conspicuous and tangible manifestation of man's ingenuity in adopting to his environment and altering it to suit his own purposes'. Technology, for him, is the application of knowledge to the achievement of particular goals or to the solution of particular problems. 'The knowledge to be applied and how to apply it successfully is also a part of the store of knowledge may involve abstract principles and scientific "laws", or be merely experimental, a bit of proven lore (Moore 1972: 4-5). Therefore pure science is concerned only with the discovery of truth, and is not concerned with utility, while technologists have no goal other than application and utility. Science is dealt with the investigation of reality that it concerns itself with what is, while technology creates a reality and concerns itself with what is to be (Skolimowski 1972:44). In a similar manner Feibelman argues that pure science aims to understand nature and seeks explanation. But applied science has as its aim the control of nature. It puts to human uses the discoveries made in pure science. So in his view 'there could be technology without science, for millennia, in fact, there was. But surely there could be no applied science without pure science' (Fiebleman 1972:33-36). He also makes a distinction between applied science and technology. The former is concerned with the applications for pure theory, while the technologist has a problem that lies a little nearer to practice. However the distinctions between the two has been diminished. Today the main trend is adopting the findings of pure science the purposes of obtaining practical consequences is the main trend. The purpose of science is transformed from searching for 'truth' to the 'efficiency' ideal of technology. In fact this is the natural consequence of the fact that the foundation of technology shifted from craft to science at the end of eighteenth century (*ibid*: 37-38).

The contemporary order involves the definition, characterization and classification of man and nature on a technoscientific base. 'The enormous effort to put this technical civilization into motion supposes that all individual effort is directed toward this goal alone and that all social forces are mobilized to attain the mathematically perfect structure of the edifice' (Ellul

Techno-Scientific Action Versus Social Action (25-39).

1964:89-90). 'The individual will no longer be able, materially or spiritually, to disengage himself from society. Materially, he will not be able to release himself because the technical means are so numerous that they invade his whole life and make it impossible for him to escape the collective phenomenon. There is no longer an uninhabited place, or any other geographical locale, for the wouldbe solitary'. In this situation spiritually it is impossible for the individual to dissociate himself from the technological processes. Spiritual attitude is constantly conditioned. Therefore Ellul says that 'the autonomy of technique forbids the man of today to chose his destiny' (ibid: 139-140).

In the same manner McLuhan contends that 'the effect of technology do not occur at the level of opinions or concepts, but alter sense ratios or patterns of perception steadily and without any resistance'. That's why similar to Heidegger, he sees that it is only the serious artist who is able to encounter technology with impunity, just because he is an expert aware of the changes in sense perception (McLuhan 1964:18). For him although technology is an extension of man, it steadily achieves autonomy. 'To listen to radio or to read the printed page is to accept these extensions of ourselves into our personal system and to undergo the "closure" or displacement of perception that follows automatically.' By continuously embracing technologies in beholding, using and perceiving them, we relate ourselves as servo-mechanisms. 'That is why we must to use them at all, serve these objects, these extensions of ourselves, as gods or minor religions'. The overall result is explained in terms of the principle of numbness that 'comes into play with electronic technology, as with any other. We have to numb our central nervous system when it is extended and exposed, or we will die. Thus the age of anxiety and of electronic media is also the age of the unconsciousness and of apathy' (ibid: 46-47).

Beside the violation of the very existential basis of purpose, it is further the violation of cultural and/or normative conditioning of action. Both the conception of 'purposive rational action' as connected with Protestantism (Weber 1958) and 'communicative action' (Habermas 1987) that is seen as a possible development within the modern society, consider action as a human endeavor. However, as Cassirer argues

people cease to be free and personal agents. The prevalence of chaos in the social world or the absence of the sense of a common purpose or the disappearance of the conventional perspectives in Habermasian sense is not to say that each persons goes his own way, since the individual perceives himself as fragmented. This is because of the fact that inner sense of self consists only of happenings, without continuity, let alone direction. Therefore as Krois (1982: 218-220) points out:

Unlike solitude, which involves not communicating with others in society, "loneliness" signifies an inability to even "commune" with oneself...such an internal breakdown or dialogue at the level of selfcommuning must be considered in any attempt to view communication, argument, or dialogue as the source of ethical action, as Carl-Otto Apel, Jürgen Habermas and Henry W. Johnstone have done. Without having this attempt to establish it as a norm run the risk of falling into the idealistic illusion of claiming things to be reasonable when they are not. Dialogue may not be as readily available to man as philosophical discussion of "communicative competence" can lead us to believe it is.

It should be primarily stressed that for the non-Western people the transformation, destruction, and disappearance of their local ways of life have been realized on the basis of the introduction of technology and science. That's why nihilism is not to be conceived as a phenomenon caused by the 'will to power' as it has been the case in the West, but as a condition brought by the technoscientific constitution of the will. Wo/man is situated in certain links within the prevailing processes through which s/he is defined, explored, achieved, and ordered as an inseparable component of the larger system: From birth on s/he is connected with the working of that mechanism. The processes such as, the development of health service, schooling, Turkification, Islamization, urbanization, commodification, and industrialization all express the specific technoscientific domains where action is formed.

As the sociology of knowledge perspective is short sighted to concern with the formation of knowledge, any sociology of change perspective should fail to grasp the nature of such processes since it considers them as the change in

the social structure. As a society-centered approach it can not grasp the characteristics of that which is subjected to profound change because the development of the discipline of sociology have been accompanied with the termination of the peculiar modes of knowledge that were the inseparable part of the transformed specificity. Sociology of change perspective considers change within the system as the change from one state to another. It has not a close concern in the challenging, terminating, and annihilating aspects of change, since this requires a perspectivist and particularistic not universalistic and analytical value. The conceptualization of change as a social endeavor benefits from the mythical character of the concept 'society'. Since such scientific disciplines are also the factors, which contribute to the annihilation of particularity, they are disabled to conceive dehumanization, dehistoricization, and decontextualization inherent in such processes.

The prevailing search for distinctiveness can be evaluated within such a perspective. The plea for a distinctive Islamic use or development of technology (Sardar 1984) finds a ground of legitimacy in the view that considers technology and science as dependent on their use. Contemporary problems stem not from the nature but from the use of technology (Dickson 1974). But technology is not only the concrete devices. It is also a kind of consciousness, a certain conception of the world, a life style, a manner of perception. Worldwide proliferation and domination of technology include a technological conception of Being, the traces of which can be determined even in the discourse that emphasizes particularity. In this context it is considered possible to preserve Islamic and Turkic feature of the society through taking the contemporary science and technology (Gökalp 1976). However, the concepts 'Turkification' and 'Islamization' presume a process through which being Turkic and Islamic are reached. Being a Turk is not an already existent category but rather a goal that could be achieved. But we should stress that the particular is already particular. To think of it, as the one that will become particular is to conceal the process that eliminates its particularity. The discursive strategy of the will to Turkification performs a function that consolidates and propagates the illusion that communal norms are still effective over the life style of people. In fact without the

predominance of this illusion such a discourse could not work and it could not find so many clients to sell such an image in the technoscientific market. The market price of the image is determined not on the basis of the freely competing parties but by the monopoly of the technical logos.

We have argued that one world civilization and cultural distinctiveness are contradictory phenomena. The search for cultural authenticity, in any way, must take technology and science into account as the main factors making the many worlds one. In the broader sense one world means homogenization of the life styles of the world peoples. At the primary level, action as the most primordial unit of human sphere, is the one by means of which technoscientific world achieves the possibility of realization. Such an emphasis on the technoscientific world has already meant to consider it as mainly challenging. The characteristic of modern technology is considered as 'enframing'. It is no mere human doing and it makes nature (including human beings) as the standing reserve that man is ordered to exploit (Heidegger 1977). According to Heidegger the danger that technology brings forth is counterbalanced by the saving power of art, such points deserve a more detailed attention paid to the role of mechanical reproduction and the position of art, particularly artistic authenticity. The solitary experience and the particularistic content of the artistic experience are the issues to be handled visàvis the totalitarian character of technology and its global market. The points to be clarified are related with whether the authenticity and saving power of art are preserved. How does art encounter the technoscientific challenge? The whole sphere of authenticity of the work of art is outside technical reproducibility. The aura of the work of art withers in the age of mechanical reproduction. The uniqueness or authenticity of a work of art is insuperable from its being imbedded in the fabric of tradition or in its aura. As argued by Benjamin (1968: 218-222) 'This is a symptomatic process whose significance points beyond the realm of art...the technique of reproduction detaches the reproduced object from the domain of tradition'.

The inherent disorder in everyday life is reflected within the realm of culture that has lost its authenticity and taken a technoscientific shape. However, a dominant illusion prevail among

the individuals so that they suppose as if the daily activities and interactions are based on subjective intentions and decisions. They can not see that personality and interaction are fundamentally prerequisites, and suppose that their individualities are their own, which are in fact enframed by technological and scientific processes. As argued by Nalbantoğlu (1997: 180-181), as a result of subjectivist illusion, it is possible to observe even a paranoid schizophrenia situation that they not only objectify others but also perceive them as enemy. This situation, for Nalbantoğlu, lies in the psyche of modern subject dominated by individualism. Far from awakening to a situation of Dasein in Heideggerian sense, modern subject lives with an illusion of being self, although s/he is a small mass of molecule dragged by social and historical processes.

The replacements of values of life by packages of life have significant consequences for most of our social scientific concepts. Life packages indicate industrial background of meaning and concept, although life values express construction of 'reality' by human beings. Culture industry prevails as the basic feature of the public relations, and it is based on the complete identification of individual with the generality. 'In the culture industry individual is an illusion' that's why 'personality scarcely signifies anything more than shining white teeth' (Horkheimer and Adorno 1972). In approaching mass culture and culture industry our focus will have a point of originality. This is because instrumental reason is an embodiment of the Enlightenment idea of progress, which is culturally and historically limited to Western society. Likewise, the enframing in Heideggerian sense, which constitute a challenge for the nonWestern wo/man is not 'home grown' and since it becomes possible only through making impossible the survival of the various nonWestern ways of life. Frankfurt School critique of technology, although we can not deny its merits, is in the line with Western philosophy (Murray 1982: 236) for which science and technology were not external factors. For an action context where technology and science exist as external impositions, existential crisis is expressed in the form of conflicts and collisions of consciousness (Berger 1974) as a consequence of the total withdrawal from the scene of history that means nonWestern peoples are without history. On this ground, it can be said that technologi-

cal order is an absolute disorder. Annihilation of the truth conceptions may be understood as the inefficiency of the conception of truth in the practical life. Nihilism has not a subjectivist but a techno scientific origin.

CONCLUSION

We have seen that in order to understand technoscientific constitution of action we need an antihumanistic perspective. Humanistic perspective stresses on the priority of human initiative and responsibility in the establishment and operation of the ongoing reality. What is humanism? It has a twosided meaning; we can conceive it, on the one hand, as the idea that defends the capacity and control of human being over his/her existential situation, on the other hand, as the growing power of wo/man over the nonhuman creatures. At least for the first case, although it will demand a more detailed understanding, it is argued in this study that technoscientific reality is far from being an appropriate condition that would improve the capacity of human being so that s/he would get an opportunity to determine his/her life pattern. The preestablished reality suppresses human being even to perceive him/herself within the technoscientific discourse. Wo/man is a productive machine. S/he is a clearly located agent, a welldefined subject that contributes to the reproduction of consumption. His/her role as worker, social scientist, official, administrator and whatever it is has a vital function in the operation of the technoscientific global market. Social scientists presuppose a kind of humanism in their preoccupation with the modern life processes. This kind of humanism is, in fact, under the pressure of a widespread illusion.

The world of the social scientific concepts is still an anthropocentered world. However, globalization, as a time and space unbound process, does not only give an end to the particular modes of life; it also makes our analytical concepts of social sciences irrelevant and useless. Technoscientific constitution of action is counterpositioned with the sociocultural, historical and anthropological constitution of action. Individual, interaction, norm, and value structure are thought to be active and responsible agents over the construction and operation of that world. This world can be considered as an illusion. It finds a possibility of life in the imaginary capacity of our social scientists, and in the

ideologicopolitical treatment of the 'reality'. Social sciences must adopt new concepts and should reorient their framework in order not to be outmoded by the all-encompassing technoscientific content of daily life and global processes.

We have adopted a perspectivistic orientation in understanding action and thought in order to get a full contact with the experience of profound and all-encompassing changes that have prepared the cornerstones of our present way of life, and with the witnessing the memory of those for whom the 'word' has already lost its 'meaning', not because it has lost its capacity of logical connection, but since it has lost its proper link with action that it has nothing to bring into the discourse except making so much noise. A particularistic viewpoint emphasizes the vital significance of meaninglessness rather than meanings in daily activities and thought. Change has already occurred and transformed the 'solid' and meaningful bases of human conduct. There is a radical break with the specificity of mode of existence the impact of which reaches to an extent that changed the 'nature' of the world. The temporal and spatial unboundedness of the prevailing globaltechnoscientific processes turns the large body of social scientific knowledge into a well-prepared guidebook for the travelers in the dream world.

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