

FROM THE SKEPTIC TO THE CYNIC

I would like to elaborate in depth the theme that I suggested in 1982 when I wrote, referring to Wittgenstein, "that *skepticism* turns ethically *cynical*...."¹ At the same time, I am interested in continuing the North-South dialogue initiated in Freiburg (November of 1989)² and continued in Mexico (February and March of 1991).³ Now, however, I will attempt to show that the point of departure of discourse ethics is perhaps a moment within Liberation Philosophy, philosophy which philosophizes from the periphery of a capitalism that presents itself today cynically without alternatives.⁴

Our argumentative strategy in this chapter will be extremely simple: Apel's discourse ethics attempts an "ultimate grounding" (*Letztebegründung*) before an opponent, the *skeptic*, to whom it can be shown that if they want to be radically skeptical, they will inevitably fall into a "performative self-contradiction." The Philosophy of Liberation, instead, departs from its confrontation with another opponent. Its original position is constituted in its confrontation with the *cynic*, who grounds the "moral system.. of the established structure on the irrational force of power (of the Will to Power we would say with Nietzsche), and which commands the Totality with strategic rationality. Both philosophical discourses, as much in their strategies as in their architectonic structure, are, because of this, different. Not without reason Levinas wrote:

Does not lucidity, the mind's openness upon the true, consist in catching sight of the permanent possibility of war? *The state of war suspends morality*; it divests the eternal institutions and obligations of their eternity and rescinds ad interim the unconditional imperatives.⁵

In *Philosophy of Liberation*. I have written,

From Heraclitus to Karl von Clausewitz and Henry Kissinger, "war is the origin of everything," if by "everything" one understands the order or system that world dominators control by their power and armies. We are at war.⁶

Both texts deal with the Totality, the system, already dominated or controlled

by "strategic rationality," but which now we will denominate, with greater precision, *cynical reason*.

4.1 *The Skeptic and the Ultimate Grounding of Discourse Ethics*

The architectonic⁷ of discourse ethics culminates (and this is the point of departure for its *Anwendung* [*application*]) with the "ultimate grounding," thanks to its taking recourse to the "performative contradiction," in which the skeptic inevitably falls if he/she is to be radically skeptical, as it was mentioned. It would appear that, outside the skeptic,⁸ in its most varied forms (which Apel attacks in each case), no one can any longer be in opposition to the rational acceptance of the always already, *a priori* presupposed moments of any argumentation. In this manner, by destroying all the pseudo arguments of the skeptic, discourse ethics has attained an ultimate grounding, which is what Aristotle called a dialectical refutation.

Apel, ever since his earliest works on the theme,⁹ confronts positions like that of Hans Albert,¹⁰ or those of the decisionist Karl Popper. For the latter, no reason can be given in favor of "opting for reason": critical rationalism falls into irrationalism, since the original decision in favor of reason is only a moral but not a rational decision.¹¹ Apel begins his rebuttal by demonstrating that grounding (*begründung*) cannot and ought not to be thought of in logical terms, and thus takes seriously what Aristotle wrote:

For it is impossible that there should be demonstration of absolutely everything; there would be an infinite regress, so that there would still be no demonstration.¹²

The point of departure for Apelian argumentation is the following:

Anyone who takes part in an argument implicitly acknowledges all the *potential claims* of all the members of the communication community that can be justified by rational arguments.¹³

These "validity claims" (*geltung Ansprüche*) of every communication can be neither negated without *contradiction* nor demonstrated without *begging the question*. This is, however, not simply a traditional logical contradiction; instead, departing from the speech-act theory of Searle and Austin, the "performative self-contradiction" (performative *Selbstwiderspruch*) is defined as the new form of the dialectical contradiction. The "Münchhausen trilemma" (the regress *ad infinitum*, the vicious logical circle, the dogmatic interruption in an arbitrary point) only demonstrates the impossibility of deducing a proposition from other propositions. On the contrary, in *pragmatics* there enters in play, in addition, the validity claims which all communication always presupposes *a priori*, in such a way that a new realm of argumentative grounding is reached.¹⁴

The entire transcendental, pragmatic, argumentative strategy always confronts a *skeptic*. If the skeptic "enters" into the argumentation (that is to say, participates in the communication community, thus preparing himself to effectively argue), he will fall inevitably in a performative self-contradiction when attempting, for example, to claim that "every principle is falsifiable" or "I always lie." The skeptic will never be able to put in question or negate the validity claim presupposed in the very act of argumentation itself (even when pretending to argue against all possible argumentation).

Jürgen Habermas, on the other hand, searches for arguments against Apel's position.¹⁵ Habermas points out that the entire Apelian argumentation depends on the position of the skeptic, and has some effect on the opponent if the opponent "enters" into argumentation. But if the opponent decides not to enter into discussion, the possible effect of the Apelian argumentation would be annulled. However, under the *definition itself of the skeptic*, and Habermas does not seem to take note of this, he cannot abandon the discussion, lest he stops being a skeptic.

In fact, the skeptic is the *rhetorical figure* of an opponent *in the discussion* who has a "rational position" of negation or doubt concerning some moment of the exercise of the rational act itself, but that *includes in its definition the Other* of the discussion, as affirmation (of the *person* of the naive dogmatist or rationalist, for the skeptic) of what is negated (some moment of the rational act). That is, the skeptic *supposes* the "encounter" with the argumentative Other, but negates the validity of some of the rational moments. Thus, the pretense of assuming a radical position is contradicted "by its very definition": the skeptic uses before the Other (pragmatic position) a reason that attempts to be negated. In addition to that already mentioned, the case of the postmoderns, and especially that of Richard Rorty, operates under the definition of the skeptic. Rorty "enters" into the discussion, in the "encounter" with the Other, but negates that it is an argumentative, *rational* encounter; Rorty "enters" only in order to establish a "conversation."¹⁶ He cannot but fall into a performative self-contradiction, in Apelian terminology. If he does not enter, just the same he contradicts himself if he attempts any other action (rational or practical), because in order to carry it out he ought to have some reason, and, by definition, affirms not to want to argue or give any reason (*Grund, ratio*).

But, is this not entering into the discussion always a contradiction? Is there no other *rhetorical figure* that allows perfectly *not to enter* into the discussion, and, nevertheless, not to fall into any contradiction (whether logical or pragmatic)? I believe that this figure exists, and it would clarify the intention (not achieved if the figure of the skeptic is the only one taken) of the path undertaken by Habermas when he points out that the opponent can decide "not to enter" or would like to dispense with participating in the community, in the discussion or in argument. If there was a virtual or real opponent who could

not enter into discussion, and, however, would not bring about with that a *contradiction*, the Apelian argument for the ultimate grounding would lose its logical efficacy, as well as its social and historical applicability—a loss that many judge to be precisely the practical problem of Apel's ultimate grounding, namely, that it has no real effectiveness.¹⁷

4.2 *The Cynic and the Power of Strategic Rationality as Criticized by Liberation Philosophy*

The skeptic affirms the Other, enters into argument (and by not entering, stops being a skeptic, because then the skeptic simply stops being an arguer), and by entering contradicts herself (because she cannot radically use reason pragmatically against itself). The cynic,¹⁸ on the contrary, *negates the other* from the beginning. It is a *practical* position that has decided (implicitly or explicitly) to negate the Other, thus negating all priority of discursive rationality: that is to say, it supposes the *negation* of any argumentative "encounter." The face-to-face is the ethical position of the illocutory moment of the speech act, the primary moment of the communication community as the "encounter" between persons, since it is the "entering" itself (face-to-face) into argumentation. This face-to-face is negated by the cynic; given that the Other, for the cynic, is a mediation of his project (a means for "systematic," i.e., political, economic, educational, military, interests), an "object" as *mediation* with respect to *goals* that are managed by strategic rationality. Strategic rationality, on the other hand, is also a mediation (as in the attitude of "disenchantment" of Max Weber, or in Karl Popper's anti-utopian "Open Society") of Power. Power here is not the affirmation of the dignity of persons in community, as is the case with discursive rationality; instead, it is the autopoietic, totalitarian totalization of the Totality, the mere self-referential Will.¹⁹ *Power* (read Nietzsche, Foucault, but now interpreted in its naked cynicism, and not as simple actuality, but as the reality of a "closed Totality," as Levinas would say) is the ground of *cynical* reason (and not vice versa), a reason of terror-against which the postmoderns rebel, without noticing that it is only a modality of reason and not reason itself.

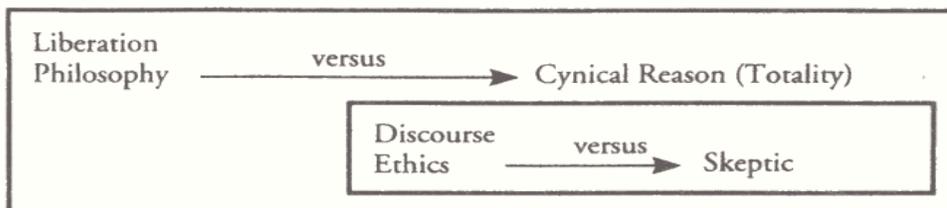
In the face of cynicism, discourse ethics cannot argue for its claim to ultimate grounding, because, the cynic *will not enter*, without contradiction (neither logical nor pragmatic), ever, into any ethical argumentation. The cynic's strategic rationality is only interested in entering into an argument of negotiation, of Power to Power, of force, of efficacy. It is a *poietic* (autopoietic) rationality. Through power, through the use of strategical rationality as an instrument, is established the "morality" of the system (self-referential, autopoietic, without subject),²⁰ in its one-dimensionality, as articulated by Herbert Marcuse²¹

Liberation Philosophy confronts, from the outset, "within" a Totality (system

or world), and opposes the domination of cynical reason: for example, that of the transnational businessman who leaves workers unemployed in order to receive greater profits from cheaper labor in "underdeveloped countries"; or that of the military general who must win the war; or that of the director of the intelligence service who must plan an assassination attempt against an enemy; or that of the torturer before the tortured. Liberation philosophy confronts the cunning of such a *strategic rationality grounded in Power*.²²

This determines the architectonic of Liberation Philosophy. In the first place, it needs to describe what cynical reason negates above all: the Other (the question of "proximity").²³ In the second place, it describes the necessary categories²⁴ in order to be able to locate the process of totalization, which we described under the rubric of the domination of cynical reason²⁵ (See Chap. 2.5.2, "The Other as Enemy"; 2.5.3, "The Negation of Difference"; 2.5.4, "The Totalization of Exteriority"; 2.5.5, "Alienation"²⁶). This architectonic of the discourse is radically necessary as an *a priori* of all *a posteriori* philosophical reflection. Not even the discourse on ultimate grounding in the face of the skeptic is prior, because-and this is unnoticed by Apel-the transcendental-pragmatic philosopher who argues in the face of the skeptic finds him/herself already within a system where cynical reason reigns. The argumentative action of discourse ethics accomplishes an "internal" function to that system, since it only confronts the skeptic, the academic, the scientist (who may be a "functionary" of cynical reason), but does not discover its most deep and real opponent: the "cynical reason" that dominates and controls the system as Totality. Emmanuel Levinas begins all discourse having as the opponent this Totality. Marx was aware that capital (as a self-referential and autopoietic system) negates the personhood of the Other (the *lebendige Arbeit*) when this is transformed into a "mediation of the valorization of value" (the Being of Capital, *Sein des Kapitals*);²⁷ it is the inversion which consists in fetishism: for cynical reason the person becomes a thing (*Ding*), and the thing (the system as totality) becomes an autonomous subjectivity, like the person (the power out of which strategic rationality deploys itself).

Schema 1. Opponents of the Different Philosophical Discourses



It is because of this that the process of liberation²⁸ only begins when, in the interior of the system, dominated by cynical reason, the Other manifests him/herself, the face of the other as someone. We call "ethical consciousness"²⁹ the

“practical action” which re-establishes a relation of communication (it is an authentic *kommunikativen Handeln*) with the Other. Only from the manifestation, as revelation (*Offenbarung*, in the Schellingian sense) of the Other, is received, without a prior decision, responsibility (*Verantwortung*) for the destiny of the oppressed who is negated by the movement of totalization of cynical reason as domination (as non-ethics par excellence). This constitutes *a priori* responsibility, prior to any discursive argumentation, prior to any ultimate grounding, prior to any possible *Anwendung* (application), which, in fact, initiates the path of a Weberian (or also, in the sense of Hans Jonas) *a posteriori* responsibility, as political or practical responsibility in order to act empirically in the organization of institutions and carry out actions, public works, etc.

In this case, in order to act institutionally and rationally, the liberation philosopher can now, and only now, have recourse to universal or transcendental pragmatics and attempt an ultimate grounding against the skeptic (of the system), and as a function of an indirect critique of cynical reason. This cannot be accomplished before, because in the confrontation with cynical reason liberation philosophy does not begin with arguments (by definition, the cynic does not “enter” or is not interested in any argumentation, since he already has Power, and this is deployed by means of a strategic rationality, which is not interested in the results of an ethical discursive rationality). Liberation Philosophy, in contrast to discourse ethics, ought to be articulated in action, or praxis, in order to challenge Power. In this case, philosophy is a moment in the “assumption of consciousness” (the *conscientização* of Paulo Freire) of the oppressed, of and in their praxis, which describes, and with that criticizes, the mechanisms of cynical rationality.³⁰ It is only now that the ultimate grounding can *assure* the use of discursive rationality, the validity of ethical norms (necessary in the struggle of the liberation praxis) and their posterior application (*Anwendung*) in the process of liberation itself.

However, at this moment of application, we can now have a fundamental criterion of difference: between 1) the application of actions directed to the accomplishment of the goals of strategic rationality, as a moment which is grounded in the cynical reason of the system (which is a contradiction),³¹ and 2) the application of normativity to actions directed at accomplishing a liberation project (partially reformist, or more radical, as the case may be) of an ethically justified strategic rationality. This is the problematic which, in *Philosophy of Liberation*, I have schematized under the heading “Liberation.”³² But it is precisely because of the prudential and consensual complexity of the innovative or creative action of liberation that the reformer, innovator, or liberator has difficulty in justifying as ethically valid what is being realized in praxis. Hence the need for a philosophy that attempts to prove the justice of the apparent “Illegitimacy of the Good.”³³ It is necessary to prove that the praxis of liberation of the oppressed, against cynicism, is legitimate because of the

grounding of the supreme ethical norm. It is no little task for Liberation Philosophy, then, to attempt to prove the ethical validity of the action of heroes (from Joan of Arc to Washington, to Martin Luther King, Jr., to Carlos Fonseca, or to Jean Bertrand Aristide), who rise up against the reigning legality (and even the accepted morality).

4.3 *The Skeptic as a Functionary of Cynical Reason*

I have repeatedly said that Apel's proposal is extremely "healthy" for Latin America (as well as for Asia and Africa), because it demonstrates the contradiction of the academic skeptic, of Popperian critical rationalism, of the linguistic-turn philosopher who uses sophisticated cunning in order to confuse the uninitiated. These skeptics pretend to destroy the reason of an ethics of liberation and allow cynical decisionism to reign without scruples. Just as Apel fears the return of nazism and discovers certain affinities of it with some skeptics, in the same way we, in Latin America, have lived the functionality of many skeptics within the military regimes of "national security." There is in skepticism, then, a degree of functionality³⁴ with respect to a system under the control of cynical reason. Max Weber can be used in this sense, just as John Rawls or Richard Rorty.³⁵

For Apel's discourse ethics, Liberation Philosophy may perhaps be seen as a complementary horizon to the empirical order (level B in Apel's philosophy). Liberation philosophy cannot accept this "classification" without challenging it. What if it were the reverse? Could not discourse ethics be a moment within Liberation Philosophy, given that it occupies a very precise location within the order of discourses, under the exigency of the imperative of ethical-emancipatory rationality, which takes a different real and historical point of departure for discourse? Discourse ethics will say that nothing can be prior to the ultimate foundation or justification. What if said foundation or justification is carried out in the face of a skeptic who is already determined by prior moments, such as being an accomplice to a Totality under the reign of cynical reason, who does not enter, and will never enter into discussion with the pragmatic philosopher? Or put differently: What if the discussion itself against the skeptic is allowed and serves the interests of the strategic rationality of the cynic? In this case discourse ethics would attack a secondary moment and with disproportionate means: first, it would attack the skeptic, and not the cynic (hiding it, occluding it in its forgetfulness); second, it would argue in the face of a Power that does not give any importance, space, or efficacy to theoretical action (it would be, then, a naive activity, without public effectiveness). And what if, on the contrary, Liberation Philosophy attacks the principal opponent (cynical reason in power), and with appropriate means? When we refer to the appropriate means we want to indicate the exercise of another type of philosophy; a philosophy as a service of *solidaristic theoretical action* (of Gramsci's "organic

intellectual"), of critical-discursive reason as a function of the organization of an actual or future counter-power, as a fruit of the praxis of the oppressed (women in machist systems, discriminated races, miserable urban dwellers, exploited wage earners, indigenous ethnicities, national interests, peripheral capitalist or poor socialist countries, popular cultures, future generations immolated beforehand by ecological destruction, etc.), in view of one day coming to exercise the power of justice, in the new institutional order that will have to be established through reform or founded by the legitimate (by liberation philosophy validly proved) praxis of liberation.

Notes

1. In my article «Ética de la liberación,» *Iglesia viva*, 102, 1982, p. 599.
2. Karl-Otto Apel, et al., eds., *Fundamentación de la ética y filosofía de la liberación* (Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1992); Raúl Fornet-Betancourt, ed., *Ethik und Befreiung* (Aachen: Augustinus Buchhandlung, 1990).
3. Raúl Fornet-Betancourt, ed., *Diskursethik oder Befreiungsethik?* (Aachen: Augustinus Buchhandlung, 1992) and Apel, *Fundamentación de la ética y filosofía de la liberación*.
4. See Francis Fukayama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992).
5. Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), p. 21 (emphasis added).
6. Enrique Dussel *Philosophy of Liberation* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1985), p. 1.
7. On the "architectonic" of the ethics of liberation see the work by Hans Schelkshorn, *Ethik der Befreiung. Eine Einführung in der Philosophie Enrique Dussels* (Freiburg: Herder, 1992).
8. Concerning this, we would have to be aware of the evolution of this philosophical position, since it was born with the Greeks, and it suffers an important transformation with modernity (with Descartes and Montaigne) and later with Hegel, for instance. See my work *Método para una filosofía de la liberación*, where I indicate how Aristotle, Descartes, or Kant knew how to confront the skeptic.
9. See «The a Priori of the Communication Community and the Foundations of Ethics: The Problem of a Rational Foundation of Ethics in the Scientific Age» in Apel, *Towards a Transformation of Philosophy*, also Apel's *Ethics and the Theory of Rationality. Selected Essays*, Vol. 2 (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1996).
10. Karl-Otto Apel, *Towards a Transformation of Philosophy*, p. 262ff. See also by Hans Albert, «Ethik und Metaethik,» *Archiv für Philosophie*, II, 1961, pp. 28-63, and later *Traktat über kritische Vernunft* (Tübingen: Mohr 1968).
11. And in the same way Paul Lorenzen ends up in decisionism, see his *Normative Logic and Ethics* (Mannheim-Zürich; Hoch schultaschenbücher verlag, 1969).
12. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, IV, 1006a; see Jonathan Barnes, ed. *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 1588.
13. Karl-Otto Apel "The a priori of the communication community..." p. 277.
14. See Karl-Otto Apel «Das Problem der philosophischen Letztbegründung im Lichte einer transzendentalen Sprachpragmatik» in Bernulf Kanitschelder, ed., *Sprache und Erkenntnis, Festschrift for G. Frey* (Innsbruck: Inst. F. Sprachwissenschaft d. Univ. Innsbruck, 1976), pp. 55ff; and "Fallibilismus, Konsentstheorie der Wahrheit und

- Letztbegründung" in *Philosophie und Begründung* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1987), sections V and VI.
15. Jürgen Habermas, *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1990), Chap. 3, section 7, pp. 82ff.
 16. See K-O. Apel, "Zurück zur Normalität? Oder könnten wir aus der nationalen Katastrophe etwas Besonderes gelernt haben?" in *Diskurs und Verantwortung* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1988).
 17. It is like the medieval proof of the existence of God, which never effectively moved anyone to a subjective acceptance of said existence. No atheist stopped being one because of such proofs, but their atheism was fruit of a practical position that denied "entering" into the discussion of such proofs.
 18. We will give the concept "cynic" a radical meaning. Peter Sloterdijk, *Kritik der zynischen Vernunft*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1983), gives it an individualistic, ontic sense when he defines it as: "Cynicism-analysis, on the other hand, describes the interaction between relentless subjectivism, supra-elevated center of private reason, gunslinger power conglomerations, and science-supported systems of hyper-production. They all do not think on the reverie of how to submit themselves to a communicative reason..." (11, p. 947). In contradistinction, I define cynicism as the *affirmation of the power of the system as the grounding* of a reason which controls or governs strategic rationality as mediation of its own realization (as absolute power). It has an ontological sense (Being as a Will-to-Power). The soldier who discovers an argument in order to avoid death in a cowardly moment in war is not cynical (ibid., 11, pp. 403ff), but he who, *inasmuch as a soldier with courage*, defines the enemy "as the defeated thing," before whom there is no place for the exercise of any ethical-discursive rationality. Sloterdijk still moves within the "innocent" meaning of cynicism, and thus does not discover the meaning of "cynical reason" as Terror, as the self-affirmation of the system (which meaning, for Levinas, is the "Truth" of the Totality as negation of the Other).
 19. In my *Para una ética de la liberación latinoamericana*, Vol. II, I entitled Paragraph 21: "Ethical-Ontological Evil as Totalitarian Totalization of the Totality" (pp. 13ff). I wrote there twenty years ago: "We have thus quickly traversed the ontological tradition of Totality, within which is possible the "closed society" [without alterity], where men live next to one another indifferent to the rest of humanity, always alert in order to attack or to defend themselves, reduced to the attitude of combat (Henri Bergson, *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion*, [Paris: PUF, 1969, p. 283]; just as in the "open society" [read *closed*] of Popper). The triumphant hero is practically in charge of fighting for Everything against the other who is different and who attempts to be different; the sage (wise man) is he who has theoretically discovered the Other as the natural evil of the different as plurality. Perfection is attained through the honor of killing whoever opposes, thus annihilating plurality, alterity, and knowing the Totality (the same) as the self-identical origin of the difference. The whole (the totality), as grounding, is not ethical: it is simply true" (pp. 21-22). The affirmation of the whole, without alterity, is the first moment within cynical reason.
 20. The definition of system in Niklas Luhmann, *Soziale Systeme*, corresponds exactly to a "cyrtical totality": "Das selbstreferentielle Subjekt und das selbstreferentielle Objekt, werden isomorph gedacht" (p. 595).
 21. See Douglass Kellner, *Herbert Marcuse and the Crisis of Marxism* (London: Macmillan, 1984), Chap. 8, "Marcuse's Theory of Advanced Industrial Society: *One Dimensional Man*" (pp. 229ff). Marcuse has a clear consciousness that the "open society"

- of "late capitalism" is a cynical system, although he does not use this word.
22. In fact, strategic rationality acts as a means toward ends. Cynical reason grounds strategic rationality in the power of the system that negates the Other: it is self-referential, autopoietic, and strategic rationality. The Will-to-Power, which for Nietzsche was modern subjectivity's grounding, could now be understood only and reductively as the "grounding" of the exercise of a cynical rationality. The definition is tripolar: 1) Power as grounding, 2) Cynical reason grounded in power (and as such, a specific "type" of rationality, neither strategic, nor instrumental, nor discursive, but the reason of a dominant system as morally dominating and controlling or governing strategic and instrumental rationality in turn), 3) Strategic rationality governed by cynical reason.
 23. See my *Philosophy of Liberation*, 2.1, "Proximity" (pp. 16ff). Furthermore the face-to-face is located underneath every argument as argument that "proposes" something to an Other by definition.
 24. Enrique Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation*, "Totality, Mediation, Exteriority," 2.2-2.4, pp. 21ff.
 25. All of these categories have been extensively elaborated in the five volumes of my work *Para una ética de la liberación latinoamericana*.
 26. Enrique Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation*, pp. 49ff.
 27. See my work *El último Marx (1863-1882)*, Chaps. 8-10. I argue, departing from Schelling, that Marx affirms "living labor" as the "creative source" (*schöpferische Quelle*) of value (being), from "the nothingness" of capital: this is surplus. Marx's categories resist contemporary criticism, and he show himself to be the only fundamental critic of capital, which today has pretensions of being triumphant.
 28. Enrique Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation*, 2.6, "Liberation," pp. 58ff.
 29. Enrique Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation* "Ethical Conscience," 2.6.2, pp. 59ff.
 30. Everything that has been indicated in the categories such as Proximity (positivity later negated), Totality (and its meditations), and negated Exteriority (as alienation, as subsumption in the system of domination) allows this critical description.
 31. The *Anwendung* of an ethical norm (of level A) in a totality under the reign of cynical reason (level B) is ethically contradictory, but discourse ethics does not have any means in order to observe such contradiction because it adopts the Popperian Open Society or Habermas's Late Capitalism as society as such [*sin más*], ambiguous but not intrinsically cynical.
 32. Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation*, 2.6, pp. 58ff. With the following possible moments: 2.6.3, "Responsibility for the Other"; 2.6.4, "The Destruction of the Order" (proportional to concrete, practical needs, from an insignificant institutional reform to a process of radical change; *a priori* it can not be judged on the viability of each case); 2.6.5, "Liberation or *Anarchy*" (proportional novelty to the degree of undertaken action, be it of a small reform or of profound change).
 33. Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation*, 2.6.9, pp. 66ff. Illegitimacy before the established law, of the "good" act which innovates and demands "new" laws.
 34. This is what Noam Chomsky has clearly demonstrated with respect to the United States, where the greatest researchers of the most famous universities collaborated with the CIA and other organizations of power, see *American Power and the New Mandarins* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1969), especially the chapter "The Responsibility of The Intellectuals," pp. 323ff.
 35. In this case because in the "Principle of Difference" he raises as "natural" the liberal position of North American liberal individualism, especially the economic inequality (between rich and poor).