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It seems appropriate to start with a few remarks about the two terms which occur in the title. Although both words, 'humanism' and 'humanities', have Latin roots, neither of them has a straightforward equivalent in classical Latin. Cicero uses *studia humanitatis* as a name for the intellectual pursuits best fitted for a gentlemanly education, or for developing what he calls a man's *humanitas*. Reading the historians and the poets was a main ingredient of such studies. In 19th century Germany *humanistische Wissenschaften* established itself as a common name for the historical and philological disciplines. One also speaks of the *humaniora*—in English, the Humanities. I think this a useful term. It has, it seems, no very firmly established connotation. Here I propose to use it for the totality of disciplines which study human nature and the achievements of man as a being capable of culture. Then it covers also the social sciences and the broad field of cultural anthropology.

The term 'humanism' too seems to be a 19th century German invention (*Humanismus*). It was originally used for referring to the Renaissance current in literature and scholarship, the representatives of which in Italy had, at the time, been known as *umanisti*. The pursuits of the *umanisti* had meant a revival of interest in the classic Greek and Latin authors. Accordingly, 'humanism', or 'neohumanism', became a name also for the second return to the Ancients in the search of standards of beauty and style which took place in late 18th and early 19th century Germany.

With the humanism both of the Renaissance and of the Enlightenment was also connected a certain view of man, of his potentialities and their proper cultivation. Sometimes this view found articulation in a philosophy, sometimes it existed only as an implicit attitude to life and society. For this value-loaded view too the name 'humanism' has become current. When, for example, one speaks to-day of an existentialist or of a socialist humanism, what one has in mind is a philosophy of life—related maybe to views entertained by humanists of the Renaissance or by some neohumanists, but independent of a scholarly interest in ancient history or literature. Similarly, when one speaks of the humanism of the Ancients, one is thinking not so much of their contributions to humanistic studies as of a certain philosophic interest in man and concern for human values.

In the title of this paper, 'humanism' refers to an attitude to life, an explicit or implicit philosophical anthropology. By 'the humanities' again I shall understand the scholarly study of man as a being of culture. In spite of this disparity of meaning, there is a connection between humanism and the humanities which is not only historical and accidental but also philosophical and essential. I hope this will be clear from what follows.

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The life of primitive man is a struggle with nature. Man is, so to speak, at the mercy of his natural environment: immediate supply of food, protection against climatic changes and wild beasts—these are his basic needs. Behind the operation of natural forces man fancies the hand of benevolent or inimical super-natural beings, whom he fears and tries to soothe. The germ of a humanist attitude was laid the moment when man stopped to consider his potentialities in the fight with nature and

to vindicate his freedom in face of the gods. In the myth of Prometheus, who taught man the crafts and the use of fire, we see this moment reflected in the folklore of a singularly gifted nation. It was in ancient Greece that the germ was first developed into a rational attitude to man and the world.

It has become tradition to describe early Greek rational thought as a philosophy of nature or even as a proto-science. Its grand idea was the conception of the universe as a *kosmos* or lawful order. 'Nature's law', its *arche* or guiding principle, also applies to man who is a *mikrokosmos*. Health is the natural state of the human body. By a profound medical analogy the good life for man and society was thought of as a state of health, i.e. agreement with the principles governing the *kosmos*. This, I should say, is the core of the humanist attitude as it appears in Greek culture.

It almost goes without saying that, on this view, natural law does not mean simply a universal regularity in the factual course of events. The law of nature is also a standard to which things must conform in order to be in accord with *their* 'nature'. Applied to human affairs, this means that the good life pursues the natural order of things as an ideal or norm. It is worth noting that the Greek word *physis* like the Latin *natura* and our 'nature' has a double meaning. It means nature in the restricted sense of external reality, but it also means the essence or order of things.

The idea that 'the nature of nature' is a lawful order can rightly be said to constitute the foundation and backbone of what we too should call a 'scientific' view of the world. But the semi-normative understanding of it, characteristic of Greek thought, is not a scientific idea in our sense. The contributions of the Ancients to what we understand by natural science and by humanistic scholarship were not of impressive magnitude. Their great contribution to rational thought was rather the early formation of a humanist attitude. This partly explains why later currents in history which have become known as 'humanist' have almost invariably looked to Greek and Roman antiquity as a source of inspiration and wisdom.

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During the Christian civilization of the Middle Ages the humanist inheritance of the Ancients was by no means entirely effaced. But times were hardly favourable to its further development. Nature lost its positive value-load and therewith its interest to the inquiring mind. The intellectual energies of man were directed towards the divine, to objects of pure thought beyond the evidence of our senses. It is no accident that some centuries of the Middle Ages came to be a golden age of logic—nor that this noble discipline should, with the turning of the tide in history, have fallen into a disrepute from which it has been rescued only in the last one hundred years.

When viewed against the background of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance—to quote Jacob Burckhardt's famous words—meant a rediscovery of man and of nature. But nature rediscovered was rather different from the *kosmos* of the Greeks. It was not so much a lofty ideal to be imitated by man as a brute force to be subjugated by him. Man, the crown of creation, is 'lord and commander of the elements'—to quote Marlowe's drama about Doctor Faustus. The aim of a science of nature is to make it possible for man to exploit nature's resources and put its forces in the service of human ends.

A prescientific form of this 'Faustian spirit' of Western man is the magic of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. With the Italian *umanisti*, in particular Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, begins a rationalization of it. In the philosophic program of Francis Bacon this process is consummated. With Bacon's name is associated the slogan 'knowledge is power'. Knowledge, for Bacon, meant in the first place knowledge of the causes of natural events. Causes are found by making experiments. Experimenting means studying the course of events under simplified and controllable and thus in a

sense 'artificial' or 'unnatural' conditions. This kind of 'violence on nature' is alien to the typically Greek mind. To Western science it is fundamental. The experimentalist spirit may be said to be the mode of intellectual curiosity most typical of Western man. It had guided the alchemists in the search for the Stone of Wisdom which was supposed to bring power and riches. It made Leonardo dream of the construction of aircraft for the conquest of space. These endeavours had still to wait a few more centuries for their successful fulfilment. Of more immediate reward was Vesalius's vivisection on the tissues of the living body or Galileo's study of the laws of free fall by means of sloping planes—thus artificially 'diluting' the force of gravitation.

Experimentally founded causal knowledge provides the possibility of producing or suppressing events in nature by manipulating their causes. Gearing natural processes for the sake of attaining the desired and avoiding the shunned is of the essence of scientific technology. It would certainly not be right to say that the only or even the main motive force for the erection of the lofty intellectual fabric of modern natural science had been the wish for technological applications. But it is certain that natural science has continued to nourish the dream of a scientific technology in the service of man. With the advent of the great social change called the industrial revolution, this dream has become more and more of a reality with profound effects on human life at all levels.

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The rediscovery of nature and of man—still to use Burckhardt's characterization of the Renaissance—also posed a new problem. I shall call it the Problem of Man's Place in Nature. For the Greeks this was no problem. The blend of fact and ideal which is characteristic of their conception of the cosmic order tended to slur over problems which become intriguing when the notion of nature's law has developed into that of a factual 'iron necessity' governing the course of all things. In his so-called 'Oration on the Dignity of Man' the Renaissance humanist Pico della Mirandola had expressed the idea that man, alone among God's creatures, has no fixed place in the great order of things. It is up to man himself to choose his place, what he will be: beast or angel or something in between. In the terminology of mediaeval scholasticism Pico's idea amounts to saying that in man existence precedes essence—a formula for human freedom familiar also from modern existentialism.

Pico also wrote a treatise against astrology. It is false and unworthy of men, he says, to believe that human destiny is predetermined by the constellations of heavenly bodies and other 'signs in the sky'. Astrology, however, was a strong influence at the time, a lingering variety of protoscientific magic. Pico's attack on astrology was met by a counter-attack by no less than Johannes Kepler, one of the founding fathers of modern exact science. Kepler was deeply convinced that human affairs depend on the mutual positions of the stars. We may think this a most unscientific view. But, abstracting from the element of superstition in it, this is also a conviction that man has a fixed place in the cosmic order, that human affairs too are governed by inexorable laws of the universe. To have this conviction may be to overlook something essential about man. But it can hardly be labelled a superstition. It would be more right to call it an implicit philosophy of man which has been continuously nourished, since the days of Kepler, by the victorious progress of science.

The positions of Pico and Kepler typify two stands on the question of man's place in the world-order.¹ One could call them a *humanist* and a *naturalist* attitude. It goes without saying that the opposition between them is also relevant to the question of the place of the Humanities in the totality of the *Wissenschaften*.

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Renaissance humanism had acted as a catalyst or midwife for an exact science of nature. This new science, moreover, promised man domination over nature. But it did not teach man the mastery over himself of which Greek humanism may be said to have been in search. The rediscovery of man to which Renaissance humanism contributed was not so much the establishing of a self-searching attitude as the liberation of artistic and intellectual energies from the constraints of received religious authority. It inaugurated a process of secularization which has, since then, been steadily progressing.

Man's search for himself had still to await a new wave in the movement of humanist thought. This wave was the humanism of the Enlightenment. Just as Renaissance humanism belongs in the setting of the troubled times of religious reform, neohumanism must be seen in connexion with the great social upheaval of the French Revolution and the consequent unrest of the Napoleonic era. The lesson taught by the external drama of the time could perhaps be summarized as follows:

Man unleashed from received secular and spiritual authority is a beast, who has to be tamed before he can make proper use of his freedom. The taming of the beast is the education of man to a dignified and enlightened human being. In Germany, the homeland of the humanism of the Enlightenment in much the same sense in which Italy had been the cradle of Renaissance humanism, the two humanist catchwords of the time were *Bildung* and *Erziehung*.

Like their Italian precursors the German neohumanists looked to the Ancients for their ideals of beauty and culture. But this traditional 'humanist nostalgia' was now coupled with a much more profound classical scholarship and a new understanding of humanity's past. The study of history and languages and human *mores* was placed on a new footing early in the 19th century. Gradually, what we call the social sciences too established themselves on the academic stage.

The humanism of the Enlightenment thus gave origin to a scholarly study of man and his society, deserving the name 'scientific' in the German sense of *wissenschaftlich*. The 19th century is the era of the great classics in the Humanities. Niebuhr, Ranke, and Mommsen were the Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo of historiography; Wilhelm von Humboldt, Jacob Grimm, and Rasmus Rask those of the study of language; Marx, Durkheim and Weber those of sociology.

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The developments which led to the birth of the humanities did not by themselves much affect our views of man's place in nature. A revolutionary impact on these views, however, came from 19th century natural science—chiefly from Darwin and the theory of evolution. The upheaval in ideas brought about by Darwin's theory is comparable only to the effects which the Copernican system

¹ For the comparison and contrast Pico-Kepler I am much indebted to the excellent introduction by Rolf Lindborg to his translation into Swedish of Pico's 'Oration'. Rolf Lindborg, *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Om människans värdighet*, Publications of the New Society of Letters in Lund 71, Lund 1974.

and the subsequently emerging view of the infinitude of the universe had had on the human world-perspective two or three centuries earlier.

In the footsteps of Darwinism followed a deterministic naturalism which in many ways can be regarded as a reaction against the libertarian idealism of the era of neohumanism and the French Revolution. The humanities, though born in the atmosphere of idealism could not fail, in their growth to maturity, to be affected by the prevailing climate of naturalism. The question What is man's place in nature? is from now on paralleled by the question How are the humanities related to the natural sciences, the scientific study of man to the scientific study of nature?

Two confronting positions on this last issue mirror the attitudes of Pico the humanist and Kepler the natural scientist. It is interesting to note that in the two major figures who have most profoundly influenced our understanding of man and society, Marx and Freud, the two attitudes strongly intermingle. It has become the fashion to speak of two Marxes: Marx the humanist who put emphasis on man's possibilities of emancipating himself from exploitation and slavery and of overcoming alienation, and Marx the historical materialist who in the evolution of society saw the working of 'iron laws' concerning the interplay of productive forces and productive relations. It is usual to connect the two attitudes with the young and the mature Marx—and there is *some* truth in this. But the more interesting fact about Marx is that the two attitudes are both present, implicitly, in his work as a whole. Therefore all those for whom Marx continues to be a source of inspiration—philosophers, social scientists, and the exegetes of various socialist creeds—are likely always to fall back, now on one, now on another of the potentialities inherent in this strangely contradiction-loaded thinker. Something similar holds true of Freud. His theorizing largely follows the pattern of 19th century 'naturalist' medicine and psychology with their implicit determinist view of man. That Freud's insights can be given a very different—and from the point of view of therapy probably much more fertile—interpretation is evident from modern trends in psychiatry and what is nowadays sometimes called 'humanist' psychology.

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The polarization implicit in these giants of thought is explicit in opposed trends in 19th century philosophy of science. The philosophy of the naturalist trend is known as positivism. Its early protagonist was Auguste Comte. Comte saw in the emergence of a science of society the last stage in an evolutionary process of liberation of rational thought, first from the tutelage of religion and then from the illusions of metaphysical speculation. Mathematics and astronomy with the Ancients, physics since the Renaissance, chemistry and biology since the Enlightenment had already entered the 'positivist' stage. Now it was the turn of the humanities. The older and more mature members in this ancestral tree set the pattern for the younger members. Thus mathematics for physics, physics for the other natural sciences, and the natural sciences for the social sciences. For the last Comte also uses the name *physique sociale*. The uniform line of descent is a warrant of the Unity of Science. It is illuminating to compare Comte as the philosophic herald of a new science of man with Bacon as a herald of a new science of nature. Neither one of the two visionaries made a contribution to the actual progress of science. Comte's understanding of history and society is as poor compared to Marx's as is Bacon's understanding of physics compared to Galileo's. Both Comte and Bacon were imbued with belief in the usefulness of science as an instrument of human progress. The French positivists' famous characterization of the aim of science as *savoir pour prévoir pour pouvoir* is the technological spirit in a nutshell. When applied to natural science it means man's mastery of nature. When applied to the humanities it does not, however, mean

anything which could reasonably be called man's mastery of himself. The slogan rather suggests a use of scientific knowledge about men for purposes of manipulating human beings for various ends and goals. Whose ends and goals—and manipulation by whom? These questions have obvious answers when we deal with a technology based on natural science. For the social technology based on knowledge of human beings they constitute a grave and open problem.

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I do not think one can answer these questions without also challenging the philosophy of science which made it urgent to raise them. The challenge was actually made towards the end of the last century in the form of a reaction against positivism. The reaction aimed at defending the autonomy of the humanities in relation to the natural sciences. Various efforts were made to capture the essential differences between the two types of inquiry and in particular to tell wherein the peculiar character of the humanities consisted. Windelband described the difference with the terms *nomothetic* and *ideographic*: in the study of nature we look for generalities and laws, in the study of man and human creations we are interested in the individual and unique. Dilthey exploited the difference between explanation and understanding (*Erklären* and *Verstehen*). The natural sciences explain phenomena by subsuming them under laws; in the *Geisteswissenschaften* we try to understand their meaning and significance.

This early hermeneutic or interpretative philosophy of the humanities was, however, an episode rather than the beginning of an era in the history of thought. Soon positivism made its return—this time equipped with the powerful methodological tools of modern mathematical or symbolic logic. In its heyday between the two wars, logical positivism thought that it had swept the philosophic stage clear of metaphysical rubbish once and for all and laid the foundation of a *wissenschaftliche Weltauffassung*. The enthusiasm was soon tempered, but a lasting impact of the new positivism came to prevail in the diverse currents and trends which can be subsumed under the elastic label of 'analytical philosophy'. Heterogeneous as this phenomenon is, it is still possible to speak of a characteristic climate of opinion in philosophy, ultimately inspired by the positivism of the Vienna Circle and by what used to be called the Cambridge School of Analysis. This climate has long prevailed in the English-speaking countries and in Scandinavia and is making headway, it seems, also on the European continent. In this tradition great contributions have been made to logic and the study of the foundations of mathematics, and to the methodology and philosophy of the natural and other 'exact' sciences. But I should say without hesitation that the contributions to the philosophy of the humanities have been remarkably poor. This fact reflects, I think, a *Zeitgeist* which is uncongenial to humanistic thought and study.

9

The failure of behaviourism, positivism, logical empiricism, and other 'naturalistic' trends in the philosophy of science to provide a satisfactory philosophic basis for the humanities is, in my opinion, due to something I should call *conceptual poverty*. The phenomena which the humanities study have features of their own which distinguish them logically from the typical objects of study in the natural sciences. A primary task of a philosophy of the humanities is to try to capture and do justice to those features. The task can perhaps be completed only through a long process of change and maturation in an intellectual climate of opinion. What I can do here is only to indicate a direction in which I think we should proceed in the search for a more adequate philosophy of the humanities than any which has so far been suggested.

10

I characterized the humanities as the study of man as a being of culture. This suggests that the phenomena which the human sciences study are, somehow, 'cultural'. What this means, however, can be understood only if we first pay attention to another, more basic, feature of human phenomena. This is their *intentionality*.

Saying that intentionality is a characteristic of phenomena connected with human culture is, roughly, saying that those phenomena have a *meaning*. A special case of this is linguistic meaning. Another is when the meaning is something aimed at or pursued through the phenomenon in question. In the first case, the bearer of meaning is a 'text', i.e. a document of language. In the second case it is either the action of some individuals or groups or a practice or an institution of society. These two types of meaning, moreover, are closely interwoven. The subject matter of a text is often intentional phenomena. Indeed, without the records which texts provide, a major part of humanistic study would be strictly impossible. Mankind would then have no *recorded* history. But more than this; all forms of human life which can be called instituted and the perpetuation of which is called, in a wide sense, 'tradition' depend on the fact that man is a speaking creature. Were not man a being of language, he would not be a being of culture either—and he would literally have no *history* different in character from that of any other zoological species.

However, we must not exaggerate the uniqueness of man's position in the animal kingdom. Intentional, meaning-carrying phenomena are not exclusively human. Nor are they necessarily language-dependent. It is not anthropomorphism to attribute to a dog fear of punishment consequent upon some mischief. But it would be anthropomorphism to attribute to it remorse at having snatched a piece of meat from the butcher's shop. This is so because remorse is a much more developed form of intentional reaction than fear—and probably one which is inconceivable without language and interpersonal relations under rule.

The recognition that intentionality and language are characteristic even if not exclusively human will help us see, why the conceptual frame of physics, chemistry, or biology is not sufficient for an account of human phenomena in their fulness. In order to understand man as a being of culture concepts are needed which simply have no *application* to, say, mice and rats, not to speak of inanimate objects. Therefore it is a mistake to think that the concepts which suffice for describing and explaining physico-chemical reactions or even sub-human forms of animal behaviour could, either by themselves or as a reduction basis for complex logical constructions, exhaust the conceptual store of the humanities.

To make this statement is, of course, not to prove it true. A philosopher of a positivist orientation would probably also agree that intentionality is a characteristic of everything connected with human culture. But he would deny that intentional phenomena are irreducible to non-intentional ones. In defence of his view he might, for example, put forward a behaviourist theory of meaning.

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Intentional phenomena have to be *understood* and, when this is connected with difficulties, *interpreted*. Understanding their meaning or significance precedes any attempt to explain their existence or origin; this is one difference between intentional and non-intentional phenomena. It is therefore not inappropriate to call the humanities *hermeneutic* or *interpretative* disciplines.

Calling the humanities hermeneutic and saying that meaning is a characteristic of the phenomena which they study is also to touch on a grave philosophic problem. What is meaning? This question has been very much at the centre of 20th century philosophy. No-one could dispute, I think, that

the philosopher whose thoughts in the area were most influential and most original was Wittgenstein. He had no clear and simple answer to offer. But from what he has said about intentionality, language, and meaning useful hints can be got also for that which was *not* Wittgenstein's immediate concern, viz. a philosophy of the humanities.

A basic thought of Wittgenstein's is that a 'private language' is impossible. Language is essentially a 'social affair'. The same holds true also of extra-lingual meaning—at least on the human level.

Saying that meaning is a social affair has two important implications. The first is that meaning is something which is handed down, 'tradited', within a community and therefore has to be learnt and taught. The second is that meaning is intimately connected with *action*. To learn a first language is not to be given a catalogue of names of objects and perhaps some rules of correct speech. It is to grow up to take part in the life of a community, to learn 'how to do things with words': calling persons, asking for objects and for help, reacting to commands and warnings, answering questions—at a later stage also describing things and events and speaking about what is not immediately at hand in space and time. In order to understand the meaning of actions and words, one must therefore either be another member of the same community or otherwise become familiar with, i.e. learn to participate in, its 'culture' or ways of life.

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Both understanding *what* intentional phenomena mean and explaining *why* they occur makes reference to rules. Just as we cannot understand speech without mastering the rules of linguistic practice, we cannot grasp the significance of or the reasons for most human actions without knowing the conventions and regulations, say, for greeting people, honouring the dead, driving and parking cars, getting commodities against payment, transacting one's daily business in the role of official, employer or employee, teacher or student, child or parent, etc. Also most human wants and needs—with the partial exception of those which we share with other species of the animal kingdom—get articulated in the set frame of societal rules and institutionalized patterns of behaviour.

One can make a useful distinction between rules which define a practice and rules which prescribe what ought to or may or must not be done, between constitutive rules and regulative rules, as one sometimes calls them. Then one can give a summary characterization of the way rules relate to explanation and understanding of behaviour by saying that constitutive rules make us understand the meaning of actions—e.g. how bowing to a person can be a way of greeting him—and that regulative or prescriptive rules explain why actions are done—e.g. that I stopped my car because the red light appeared.

13

I shall now advance a thesis which I am sure many will find controversial but which I think is true and, moreover, crucial for understanding the methodological status of the humanities and the relation of the humanities to the sciences of nature. The thesis goes as follows:

Just as natural, i.e. non-intentional phenomena are 'governed' by natural laws, i.e. principles which tell us either what will invariably or in statistical average be the case under in principle recurrent and repeatable circumstances, in an analogous manner intentional phenomena are 'governed' by normative rules which tell us what people under given circumstances are (or were) expected or allowed or practically necessitated to do. I am, in other words, pleading for what might be called a 'methodological parallelism' between natural laws on the one hand and laws and other societal

rules on the other hand. I am inviting the reader to see the difference between the humanities and the natural sciences in the light of the difference between the factual and the normative, between rules which state how things in fact go and rules which ordain how they should go according to the conceptions of those who instituted the rules.

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It might be objected that what I have said holds true at most only for those humanistic disciplines which are in a strict sense historical.—Undeniably the normative web which gives a meaning to the actions of individuals and regulates life in society sets the frame of reference for any account of human affairs we call 'history'—from naive chronicle and narration to the most ambitious attempts at understanding the significance of events and explaining their connections.

Consider narration. An account which limits itself to telling 'wie es eigentlich gewesen' in the most straightforward sense of this debatable slogan will primarily be about the individual and collective actions of men: how they built and organized their communities, how they cultivated the land, how they traded, waged wars, worshipped and observed various ceremonies—also of the decisions and heroic deeds of great individuals at momentous stages in the peoples' lives. Even if such a story is being told quite naively in the sense that it does not aim at explaining anything, it would not be intelligible unless it described the agents' actions in terms of the institutionalized behaviour-patterns which alone give the actions a 'meaning'.

History, however, is not only chronicle, it is also 'explanation'. We want to know why the actors on history's stage performed as they did—how their actions were motivated by their personal aims or by their duties in assigned roles as kings or governors or priests or judges, say. We also want to estimate the significance of their actions to later developments, i.e. to see how what they did—for whatever reasons—in its turn became a factor in the motivational background for the actions of other people. We can call such explanation 'causal' if we wish. But 'causal' does not then mean 'nomothetic'. The historian does not unravel laws which made events inevitable. He interprets what took place as adequate responses within given institutional frames to the aims and ends towards which human action was directed. Sometimes what happened will appear inevitable in retrospect—as a practical necessity under the circumstances, but not as a causal or natural necessity under the impact of a universal law.

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Someone who agrees to this may yet argue that it only shows how different history proper is from the non-historical study of man as a being of culture in the social sciences or in linguistics and philology. Do not the non-historical humanities aim at the discovery of lawlike regularities of various forms of human behaviour: economic, political, religious, etc., in much the same way as the natural sciences investigate law-like regularities among natural phenomena? Maybe it is vain to look for universal laws in history, but surely there are laws of economics, for example. This we need not deny. But I would maintain that the situation with regard to laws in economics is not as like the situation in, say, physics as some wish to think and not as unlike the situation in historical research as it may appear. Also in the overtly non-historical study of human phenomena there is implicit an essential element of historicity. Not to have recognized this is, I think, a valid criticism which can be levelled against much of contemporary research in the social sciences. I shall try to illustrate what I mean with a very simple example.

Suppose someone wanted to explain the fact that all silver coins vanished from circulation and only paper money remained in the market during, say, the temporary occupation of country X by power Y in an armed conflict, by reference to what is known as Gresham's law. To say that coins ceased to circulate because there is a law to the effect that, when two kinds of money of unequal exchange value are available for payments, the one of inferior value tends to drive the one of higher value out of circulation—to quote the standard formulation—sounds to my 'logical ear' like a joke and I hope that my readers, upon consideration, will share my feeling. Compare this with the following case:

Suppose we explain—to paraphrase a famous example—the bursting of a waterpipe during a frosty night by reference to the law that water expands when it freezes. If one is curious one can ask why water expands when it freezes. But whether or not this question is raised and can be answered, one will understand why the pipe burst—and if one is incredulous one can make experiments and watch the result. One need only accept the law as fact in order to admit that it has explanatory force.

It is different with Gresham's law. It has no explanatory power *of its own*. Unless we understand *why* 'bad' money should tend to drive 'good' money out of circulation, mere reference to the fact that it does so does not make what happened a whit more intelligible. To understand why 'bad' money drives 'good' money out of circulation is easy enough, however—but to understand why water should expand when it freezes is not at all easy. If people fear that the paper money issued by the occupying power will be declared valueless once the occupation is over, whereas silver coins will at least retain their metal value, then it is clear that people are reluctant to give away what they have in silver and maybe even anxious to buy up coins in exchange for paper money at a nominal over-value. This is a thoroughly understandable motivational mechanism. We have seen impressive examples of its working. To have drawn attention to this is a merit for which Gresham deserves to be remembered. But even if nobody had ever thought of this as a 'law' of economic behaviour, we could readily have explained in an individual case why 'bad' money drove 'good' money out of circulation. What is required is only familiarity with the institution of money and the idea of a market—and, one could add, with 'human nature', i.e. the needs and wants of normal men in a society which knows these institutions.

In order for so-called laws of economic, political, and other forms of social behaviour to have explanatory force, we must first understand *why* they are valid, i.e. we must know the institutional frame within which behaviour in accordance with the law is an adequate intentional response to the challenge of a given situation. Therefore, when the institutional frame changes previously valid laws may lose their applicability to otherwise similar situations. Thus, for example, it has often been noted that the laws of 'classical' market economy cannot be expected to hold good for the strongly 'manipulated' market characteristic of late capitalist societies, nor for rigidly planned socialist economies.

In this difference in the nature and rôle of 'laws' one of the *deep* differences between the natural and the human sciences manifests itself. And for reasons connected with this I would claim that the so-called non-historical behavioural sciences are not really 'nonhistorical'. Theorizing about economic and other forms of social behaviour means devising conceptual schemas which can be used for the analysis and interpretation of phenomena in given historical situations—such as, for example, present-day Western industrialized society. The use of theory in the human as well as in the natural sciences is for explaining and making us better understand the world in which we live. But since the world men build for themselves, i.e. social reality, changes as they go on building it,

its explanatory principles—and not only our knowledge of them—will change too in the course of this process.

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I shall conclude with a return to the question which arose with Renaissance humanism concerning man's place in the world-order. We are now in a position to assign both to Pico the humanist and to Kepler the scientist a due share in the truth. But the greater share belongs, I think, to Pico.

By saying that man has a place in the world-order we could mean that human actions and institutions can be explained in terms which are extraneous to the individual agents and to the institutions in question themselves. Maybe some human phenomena have a spontaneity which defies explanation; and the same may hold true for some natural phenomena. But by and large this is not the case—neither in nature nor even with man. Events in nature have causes and what men do and achieve has reasons in terms of which we understand and explain them. To this extent we may say that Kepler was right against Pico.

But in a most important sense we can also say that man's place in the world-order is not fixed, if by 'fixed' we mean determined by factors which are extraneous to human action. There are, of course, biological aspects of human life, which makes man's position in this sense fixed too: environmental conditions of temperature, composition of the atmosphere, possibilities of nutrition, etc. But the phenomena specific to man as a being of culture are different. The factors in the terms of which we interpret and explain those phenomena are the creation of man himself: the level of knowledge and technology, the educational institutions, the force of custom and tradition, the normative fabric of the legal order. Once these factors are 'instituted', their determining influence on individual action may extend to minute details of life and even seem like 'iron necessities'. But it would be a fatalistic misunderstanding not to realize that they are man-made and therefore subject to change effected by man himself.

The destiny of men therefore is not written in the stars—either in the literal sense Kepler had in mind and we regard as superstitious, or in the extended sense which alone makes Kepler's idea worth taking seriously, viz. that the achievements of men are the predetermined results of forces over which man has no control. If one calls the place of man in the order of things 'fixed' at all, one should remember that the one who fixed it was man himself—though by no means always those men whose actions now are guided and whose freedom is restricted by the rules of the 'fixers'. The possibility is always open that men will refuse the order under which they live and re-fix their place in the world.

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