

## *Critical Theory and Revisionary Metaphysics*

1. Significantly, the so-called transcendentals of scholastic philosophy are not formulated in complete abstraction from human interests, but are, in effect, the formal objects constituted by the unavoidable, indispensable human interests—e.g., *bonum*, *verum*, and *pulchrum*. To this extent, the idea that reality, in the different senses in which “reality” may be used, is formally constituted by some human interest or other is not a new, Kantian or post-Kantian idea.

2. But this need not imply any endorsement of “metaphysical neutralism.” For if, or insofar as, there are levels of human interest, in the sense that there is a single dominating interest inherent in all interests—and this is, in the nature of the case, the claim that the existential, and so religious and philosophical, interest makes for itself—the formal object constituted by *this* interest would perforce be presupposed by the formal objects constituted by all other such interests. Metaphysics, then, understood as explicating the structure of reality in itself as formally constituted by this all-inclusive, absolutely fundamental and overriding human interest would consist in explicating the concepts and principles necessarily presupposed in all human thinking, speaking, and acting.

3. I see no reason, therefore, why there cannot be an integration of “critical theory” in the sense of Habermas and Apel and “revisionary metaphysics” in my sense of the term. Nor, for that matter, is there any reason to preclude an integration of “descriptive metaphysics” in something like Strawson’s sense of the phrase with the same “revisionary,” as distinct from “revisionist,” metaphysics. In this connection, I ask, What is “critical theory,” or what is “descriptive metaphysics,” if not simply a more or less complete explication of anthropology, which in turn necessarily implies “revisionary metaphysics”?