PHILOSOPHY, PSYCHOANALYSIS AND EMANCIPATION

COLLECTED PAPERS OF HERBERT MARCUSE

EDITED BY DOUGLAS KELLNER
AND CLAYTON PIERCE

Volume One
TECHNOLOGY, WAR AND FASCISM

Volume Two
TOWARDS A CRITICAL THEORY OF SOCIETY

Volume Three
THE NEW LEFT AND THE 1960S

Volume Four
ART AND LIBERATION

Volume Five
PHILOSOPHY, PSYCHOANALYSIS AND EMANCIPATION

Volume Six
MARXISM, REVOLUTION AND UTOPIA

HERBERT MARCUSE (1898–1979) is an internationally renowned philosopher, social activist and theorist, and member of the Frankfurt School. He has been remembered as one of the most influential social critical theorists inspiring the radical political movements in the 1960s and 1970s. Author of numerous books including *One-Dimensional Man*, *Eros and Civilization*, and *Reason and Revolution*, Marcuse taught at Columbia, Harvard, Brandeis University, and the University of California before his death in 1979.

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PHILOSOPHY, PSYCHOANALYSIS AND EMANCIPATION

HERBERT MARCUSE

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OF HERBERT MARCUSE

Volume Five

Edited by
Douglas Kellner and Clayton Pierce

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INTRODUCTION

Herbert Marcuse, Philosophy, Psychoanalysis and Emancipation

Douglas Kellner, Clayton Pierce, and Tyson Lewis[1]

Philosophy, Psychoanalysis and Emancipation, Volume 5 of the *Collected Papers of Herbert Marcuse*, presents for contemporary readers Marcuse's unique syntheses of philosophy, psychoanalysis, and critical social theory, directed toward human emancipation and social transformation. Within these disciplines, Marcuse critically engaged disparate currents ranging from Heidegger and phenomenology to Hegel, Marx, Dewey, and Freud to create unique philosophical perspectives and analyses, often overlooked in favor of his social theory and political interventions with the New Left, the subject of previous volumes.

The collection assembles significant, largely unknown, texts from the Herbert Marcuse archives in Frankfurt, important, and in some cases unknown, critiques of positivism and idealism, Dewey's pragmatism, and the tradition of German philosophy; philosophical essays from the 1930s and 1940s that attempt to reconstruct philosophy on a materialist base; Marcuse's unique attempts to bring together Freud, philosophy, and critical social theory; philosophical reflections on death, human aggression, war, and peace; and his later critical philosophical perspectives on science, technology, society, religion, ecology, and human emancipation.

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[1] For editorial advice and help with sources we would like to thank Peter-Erwin Jansen and Charles Reitz, who also provided significant editorial help in shaping the final version of this Introduction.

These philosophical themes are connected to genealogical lines of development that appear as one assesses Marcuse's intellectual and political growth, which help define his unique critical theory project. The task we undertake in the Introduction to this volume is to make prominent these threads of Marcuse's critical theory that play a major role in his theoretical synthesis. We see Marcuse as moving beyond traditional approaches to philosophical and social problems in a highly productive and relevant manner. Struggling against the conceptual and political limitations of various thinkers and movements, Marcuse developed a synthetically robust and historically attuned critical theory capable of confronting the multifaceted problems facing contemporary civilization as it continued to produce damaged conditions for human and non-human life under capitalist organization.

In this sense, Marcuse's Marxist reworking of Heideggerian interpretations of being and historicity, the development of a Freudian critical theory of the psyche and society, and critiques of intellectual movements such as idealism, positivism, and pragmatism should be understood as philosophical endeavors interested in constantly reevaluating the capabilities of critical theory for developing a metacritique of human domination that ultimately aimed at human emancipation. The subject–object relation, the psyche/society/nature dialectic, and perhaps most importantly, the effects of science and technological rationality on human life are just some of the examples of philosophical and social problems that Marcuse reinterpreted in novel ways within his constantly evolving critical theory of society.

In sum, Heidegger, Hegel, Marx, and Freud appear as privileged interlocutors because they open up the path for reconceptualizing the strengths and weaknesses of critical theory in light of historical tendencies. Primarily a philosopher, Marcuse demonstrated that philosophy could concern itself both with the crucial political issues of the day and with traditional philosophical problems and prospects for human emancipation. The Introduction to the volume will situate Marcuse's engagement with philosophy in the context of main currents of twentieth-century philosophy and the development of his own philosophical perspectives. Marcuse's enduring philosophical contributions will be presented, along with the intense controversy over his work and its continuing relevance for challenges of the contemporary moment.

HERBERT MARCUSE'S POLITICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL ADVENTURES: AN INITIAL OVERVIEW

In 1922 Marcuse summarized his early life in the *Lebenslauf* (biography) required as part of his German doctoral dissertation *Der deutsche Künstlerroman* (*The German Artist-Novel*):

> I was born on July 19, 1898 in Berlin, the son of the businessman Carl Marcuse and his wife Gertrud, born Kreslawsky. I attended the Mommsen Gymnasium and from 1911 the Kaiserin–Augusta Gymnasium in Charlottenburg until my summons to military service in 1916. After completing my final examination (*Reifeprüfung*), I entered Reserve Division 18 (*Train-Ers.-Abtg. 18*) but remained in the homeland on account of my poor eye-sight and was transferred to the Zeppelin Reserves (*Luftschiffer-Ers.Abtg. 1*) where I received permission and the opportunity to visit lectures. After my release in the Winter of 1918, I studied regularly for four semesters in Berlin and four semesters in Freiburg, first Germanistik, and then modern German literary history as my main subject (*Hauptfach*) and philosophy and political economy as minors (*Nebenfach*). I attended the lectures of Professors Roethe, Geiger, Herrmann, Schneider, Heusler, Hübner, Witkop, Schultz, Heiss, Brückner, Dessoir, Riehal, Stumpf, Troeltsch, Cohn, Geyser, Husserl, Eberstadt, Schumacher, Diehl, Mombert. I partook in seminars offered by Professors Herrman, Roethe, Schneider, Hübner, Kluge, Witkop, Schultz and Dessoir. I am particularly obliged to Professor Witkop for decisive influence.[2]

Marcuse has always insisted that his childhood and upbringing was that of a typical upper-middle-class German youth.[3] He claims that his Jewish family was well integrated into German society and that he never felt any acute alienation because of his Jewish origins.[4] While it is tempting to try to find clues to the later man and thinker in his early biography, Marcuse himself implicitly warns against such a procedure in his last book, *The Aesthetic Dimension*: "What is true of the classics of socialism is true also of great artists. They break through the class limitations of their family background, environment. Marxist theory is not family research."[5]

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[2] Herbert Marcuse, *Lebenslauf*, appended to his doctoral dissertation, *Der deutsche Künstlerroman* (Freiburg i. Br., 1922); reprinted in *Schriften 1* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1978) p. 344 (hereafter S1).

[3] Conversation with Herbert Marcuse, December 28, 1978, La Jolla, California; see also Sidney Lipshires, *Herbert Marcuse: From Marx to Freud and Beyond* (Cambridge, MA: Schenkman, 1974) p. 1. Biographical information is based on research and interviews done by Douglas Kellner for *Herbert Marcuse and the Crisis of Marxism*. Berkeley and London: University of California Press (USA) and Macmillan Press (England), 1984, as well as decades of research by the editors in the Herbert Marcuse archives and other published sources on Marcuse and the topics addressed. There is still no definitive biography of Marcuse's life and work.

[4] Conversation with Marcuse, December 28, 1978, La Jolla. Marcuse also told Helmut Dubiel that he had rarely actively experienced anti-Semitism in Germany. See Helmut Dubiel and Leo Löwenthal, *Mitmachen wollte ich nie* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1980) pp. 27ff. Consequently, like Marx, Marcuse was never especially interested in the "Jewish question," as were other Jewish Marxists like Max Horkheimer, Walter Benjamin, and Ernst Bloch. Nonetheless, Marcuse's Jewish origins may have helped produce alienation from bourgeois society, which may help explain his sharp critiques of bourgeois society and search for an alternative model

Marcuse claimed that his philosophical views were influenced by political experiences and his existential situation, and that his entry into philosophical studies was mediated by his experiences in the aftermath of World War I and in the tumult of the Weimar Republic. Marcuse recalled that he first became actively interested in politics and radical thought when he was stationed in Berlin during the war. Joining a soldiers' council, Marcuse participated in the demonstrations in Berlin in 1918 that led to the abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm and the creation of a German democratic Republic known as the Weimar Republic.[6]

Marcuse briefly joined the German Social Democratic Party at this time but was disappointed when its leaders did not support the more revolutionary demands of Rosa Luxembourg and the Spartacus League, so he quit the organization and never again affiliated himself with any political party. By 1919 Marcuse's brief period of political activity was over. He decided to return to his studies, interrupted by the war, and entered Humboldt University in Berlin where he took courses for the next four semesters in 1919–20. After two years of study of traditional curricula in Berlin, he transferred to Freiburg, where he concentrated on German literature, and took courses in philosophy and political economy, his two minor fields. Here he carried out a systematic study of German literature, and wrote and defended his doctoral dissertation on *Der deutsche Künstlerroman* (*The German Artist-Novel*) which was accepted in 1922.[7]

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of society and culture. For a suggestive analysis of Jewish opposition to bourgeois society, see John Murray Cuddihy, *The Ordeal of Civility* (New York: Basic Books, 1974).

[5] Herbert Marcuse, *The Aesthetic Dimension* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1977) p. 19.

[6] The account of Marcuse's participation in the German revolution of 1918 and his political ideas at the time are based on interviews with Marcuse by Douglas Kellner in La Jolla, California in December 1978. On the workers' councils movement and the political situation at the time, see A. J. Ryder, *The German Revolution of 1918: A Study of German Socialism in War and Revolt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967) and Peter von Oertzen, *Betriebsräte in der Novemberrevolution* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1963). Documents describing the workers council's ideas and actions are found in Charles Burdick and Ralph Lutz, *The Political Institutions of the German Revolution* (New York: Praeger, 1966); *Die Rätebewegung*, ed. Gunter Hillman (Reinbeck bei Hamberg: Rowohlt, 1971); and Dieter Schneider and Rudolph Kuda, *Arbeiterräte in der Novemberrevolution* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1973). On the Weimar Republic, see Peter Gay, *Weimar Culture: The Outsider as Insider*. New York: Harper and Row, 1968.

[7] On Marcuse's literary studies and his Ph.D. in literature, see Douglas Kellner, Introduction, *Herbert Marcuse. Art and Liberation. Volume Four. Collected Papers of Herbert Marcuse*, edited by Douglas Kellner (London and New York: Routledge, 2007) pp. 4ff.

In 1922 Marcuse returned to Berlin and worked for several years as a catalogue researcher and bibliographer. He lived at the time in an apartment in Charlottenburg with his wife Sophie, a former student of mathematics and statistics whom he met in Freiburg and married in 1924. His father had survived the economic crisis of 1923 through good property investments and helped Marcuse buy a partnership in the antiquarian book dealer and publishing firm where he worked, S. Martin Fraenkel, where he worked primarily as a catalogue researcher and bibliographer.[8] Here he prepared his first publication, a lightly annotated Schiller bibliography which appeared in 1925 and which Marcuse insists was "just a job" and "unimportant" for his intellectual development.[9] In it, he updated the standard Schiller bibliographies with sparsely annotated factual notes on the various Schiller texts and editions. Marcuse later claimed that it was not until he was working on *Eros and Civilization* that Schiller took on a crucial importance for him, but we suspect that his early literary studies influenced him deeply and returned to play a decisive role in his later work. Then, in Marcuse's words: "I read *Sein und Zeit* when it came out in 1927 and after having read it, I decided to go back to Freiburg (where I had received my PhD in 1922) in order to work with Heidegger. I stayed in Freiburg and worked with Heidegger until December 1932, when I left Germany a few days before Hitler's ascent to power."[10]

Martin Heidegger was at the time one of the most influential German philosophers. His work *Being and Time* presented a synthesis of Edmund Husserl's phenomenology and what was soon to be called "existentialism" with elements of classical philosophy.[11] Although Marcuse attended the lectures of both Husserl and Heidegger in Freiburg, he found Heidegger "more exciting," despite his admiration for Husserl's attempt to make a "new beginning."[12] Heidegger's work blended the concern for the authenticity of the individual championed by Kierkegaard and Nietzsche with Husserl's demand that philosophy turn to "the things themselves," to concrete phenomena and experience.[13] Husserl proposed that philosophers put aside their abstract categories and theories, and return to a study of experience and consciousness that is not distorted by philosophical blinders and preconceptions. Husserl developed the method of "phenomenology" in order to provide a radically new starting point, method of inquiry, and foundation for philosophy. Heidegger associated with Husserl and published *Being and Time* in his journal.

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[8] Douglas Kellner, interview with Marcuse, December 28, 1978, La Jolla.

[9] Herbert Marcuse, *Schiller-Bibliographie unter Benutzung der Trämelschen Schiller-Bibliothek* (Berlin: S. Martin Fraenkel, 1925). Marcuse expressed his evaluation of the Schiller bibliography to Douglas Kellner in an interview on March 26, 1978, in San Francisco.

[10] "Heidegger's Politics: An Interview with Herbert Marcuse by Frederich Olafson." *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal*, vol. 6, no. 1 (Winter 1977) p. 28; reprinted in *Heideggerian Marxism*, edited by Richard Wolin and John Abromeit (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2005) pp. 165–75; page references will be to the original publication.

[11] Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1953); English translation, *Being and Time* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962). On Heidegger's concept of an authentic existence which influenced Marcuse, see Douglas Kellner, *Heidegger's Concept of Authenticity*, Ph.D. Dissertation (Columbia University, 1973); online at http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/Heidegger.pdf.

[12] Ibid.

Marcuse was alert to important intellectual trends and developments, producing one of the first major interpretations and critiques of Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time*. Marcuse's initial published article, "Contributions to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism" in 1928, attempted a synthesis of the philosophical perspectives of phenomenology, existentialism, and Marxism, a project which decades later would be carried out again by various "existential" and "phenomenological" Marxists, such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, as well as American students and intellectuals in the New Left.[14]

Marcuse argued that much of Marxist thought had degenerated into a rigid orthodoxy and thus needed concrete lived and "phenomenological" experience to revivify the theory. At the same time, Marcuse believed that Marxism neglected the problem of the individual and throughout his life he was concerned with individual liberation and well-being in addition to social transformation and the possibilities of a transition from capitalism to socialism.

In 1932 Marcuse recognized the importance of Marx's recently published *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* of 1844 and began revising interpretations of Marxism from the vantage point of Marx's early works.[15] Marcuse was also a major Hegel scholar and contributed to the Hegel renaissance in the 1930s and 1940s, with a doctoral dissertation and then a ground-breaking book on Hegel and the rise of social theory, *Reason and Revolution* (1941). After World War II during the 1950s Marcuse was an influential exponent of a synthesis of Freud and Marx.

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[13] On phenomenology, see Edmund Husserl, *Ideas* (New York: Collier, 1962) and Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960).

[14] Marcuse's first published article, "Beiträge zu einer Phenomenologie des Historischen Materialismus," appeared in *Philosophische Hefte*, I (Berlin: 1928) pp. 43–68, a journal edited by his friend Maximillian Beck that was oriented toward phenomenology and German idealism, but which occasionally published articles on Marxism. The article has been reprinted in the first volume of Marcuse's collected works, *Schriften I* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1978) pp. 347–84. Page references will refer first to the *Philosophische Hefte* original publication and then to the *Schriften* edition (hereafter SI); translations are by Douglas Kellner. An English translation appeared as "Contributions to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism," in *Heideggerian Marxism*, op. cit., pp. 1–33. On attempts to synthesize Marxism with phenomenological existentialism in a French context in the 1940s, see Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Adventures of the Dialectic* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973). For later efforts to develop a phenomenological or existential Marxism in France and the United States, see Mark Poster, *Existential Marxism in Postwar France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975) and Paul Piccone, "Phenomenological Marxism," *Telos* 9 (Fall 1977) pp. 3–31.

From the time of his arrival in the United States in 1934, Marcuse helped transmit the best of European radical thought and developed penetrating critiques of advanced industrial society. Not only was he a transmitter of a tradition of radical thought that was rediscovered by many in the 1960s, but Marcuse was an original contributor to this tradition. During the post-war period, Marcuse trenchantly criticized both Soviet Marxism and U.S. capitalism, calling attention to new forms of domination, repression and social control in advanced industrial societies. He accompanied his social critique with a theory of liberation and defense of his own version of utopian socialism. As this collection of many largely unknown texts will testify, Marcuse engaged a wide range of philosophical movements, thinkers, and issues, as well as taking on key issues of his time such as science, technology, industry, religion, aggression, war and peace, ecology, human emancipation, and revolution from a philosophical standpoint.

Finally, Marcuse was one of the few contemporary thinkers to attempt a fusion of philosophy and politics and became a major figure in contemporary history both through his work in philosophy and social theory and through his concern with radical politics. From his first published essays, Marcuse sought the unity of theory and practice which he believed was the mark of genuine critical philosophy, and throughout his life absorbed the most radical philosophical currents of the day into his thought to create ever-evolving syntheses of philosophy, critical social theory, aesthetics, and radical politics geared toward understanding and transforming contemporary society and culture and human emancipation.

MARCUSE AND HEIDEGGER

When Marcuse came to study with Heidegger in 1928, the German speculative thinker was emerging as a major contemporary philosopher. Further, Martin Heidegger was reportedly a truly exciting teacher and Marcuse was impressed with his serious philosophizing, his method of reading texts, and his seemingly radical, new philosophy. A letter from Marcuse to friends in Berlin provides a vivid picture of Heidegger and discloses Marcuse's views of both Heidegger and Husserl in 1929:

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[15] See Herbert Marcuse, "New Sources on the Foundation of Historical Materialism," in *Heideggerian Marxism*, op. cit., pp. 86–122.

> Concerning Heidegger: It is hard to imagine a greater difference than between the shy and obstinate lecturer (*Privatdozent*) who eight years ago talked out of the window in a small lecture hall compared to the successor of Husserl who lectures in an overflowing auditorium with at least six hundred listeners (mostly women) in brilliant lectures with unshakeable certainty, talking with that pleasant tremor in his voice which so excites the women, dressed in a sports suit that almost looks like a chauffeur's uniform, darkly tanned, with the pathos of a teacher who feels himself completely to be an educator, a prophet and pathfinder and whom one indeed believes to be so. The ethical tendencies found in *Being and Time*—which aim at philosophy becoming practical—really seem to achieve a breakthrough in Heidegger himself, although, to be sure, in a way that is somewhat alienating. He is all in all too rhetorical, too preachy, too primitive. He is reminiscent of Guardini, whom he is similar to in behavior. In the large lecture on German idealism and the philosophical problems of the present he has so far treated the dominant tendencies of contemporary philosophy as anthropological tendencies and metaphysics . . .
>
> He does not really have disciples in the genuine sense. The girls are especially bad. Many have already come with him from Marburg. They are completely drilled in his philosophy, know sufficient Aristotle—in order to be able to use the right vocabulary at an appropriate moment—but have certainly not noticed that Heidegger himself has changed since the Marburg period and his early Freiburg period. There is still little to say about this transformation because it is not yet completed. At its center stands the new Kant-interpretation, which will appear shortly . . . Perhaps one can provisionally characterize the direction of this change as a tendency to transcendental metaphysics. Plato and Kant, ontology and transcendental philosophy will stand at its center. Anyway, that's what we expect. Overall impression: he is a fine fellow, a lively personality, a genuine teacher, a true philosopher (if all this really belongs to philosophy) and that is today more than enough . . .
>
> Concerning Husserl, we are attending his seminar on empathy (*Einfühlung*). Unfortunately, a complete decline is evident here. He jabbers away without interruption, still only recognizes transcendental phenomenology, the pure I as the 'Urmonad' and naturally takes great care with how this Urmonad comes to other I's![16]

Heidegger's *Being and Time* applied the phenomenological method to a wealth of phenomena like the work world, the social world, individual experiences of death, anxiety and conscience, questions of choice and commitment, and the constitutive force of human temporality and historicity. For Heidegger, human beings are intrinsically temporal with time-consciousness constituted by memory of the past, anticipation of the future, and the necessity to act and choose in a perpetually disappearing present. Human beings are historical beings, shaped by their historical environment, events, and consciousness of being finite, part of the movement of history. Heidegger developed these themes in a philosophical problematic addressed to traditional philosophical problems, as well as crucial problems of human existence. Furthermore, he reinterpreted classical philosophers like Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, and Hegel, in addition to more recent philosophers like Dilthey, Scheler, and Husserl, to capture their relevance for contemporary existence. To many readers, Heidegger appeared to give new answers to fundamental philosophical questions and to have produced a philosophical revolution.

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[16] Herbert Marcuse, letter to Maximillian Beck and his wife, May 9, 1929, translated by Douglas Kellner. Beck was the editor of *Philosophische Hefte*, the journal that published Marcuse's first essay, which we examine below. The Becks were personal friends of Marcuse and also of his wife Sophie.

Marcuse recollects that

> during this time, let's say from 1928 to 1932, there were relatively few reservations and relatively few criticisms on my part. I would rather say on our part, because Heidegger at that time was not a personal problem, not even philosophically, but a problem of a large part of the generation that studied in Germany after the First World War. We saw in Heidegger what we had first seen in Husserl, a new beginning, the first radical attempt to put philosophy on really concrete foundations—philosophy concerned with the human existence, the human condition, and not with merely abstract ideas and principles. That certainly I shared with a relatively large number of my generation, and, needless to say, the disappointment with this philosophy eventually began in the early 30s. But we re-examined Heidegger thoroughly only after his association with Nazism had become known.[17]

It should be noted that not all radicals of Marcuse's generation shared this fascination with Heidegger. Brecht, Benjamin, and their circle perceived immediately the dangers of the seductive power and reactionary content of Heidegger's philosophy, as we learn from a letter that Benjamin sent to his friend Scholem in 1930: "There was a plan afoot here to establish this summer a very small critical reading circle, led by Brecht and myself, to destroy Heidegger. But unfortunately Brecht, who is not doing well at all, will have to go out of town soon, and I won't take it on by myself."[18] Members of the group that Marcuse joined in 1934 who constituted the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt also had criticisms of Heidegger. Adorno wrote to Horkheimer in 1935 criticizing Marcuse—with undeserved harshness as we document below—as an unreconstructed Heidegger disciple: "you won't be surprised to know that I am saddened that you are doing philosophical work so closely with a man whom I consider to be hindered only by his Jewishness from being a fascist; according to the foreword of his Hegel book, he owes everything to Heidegger, of whom he could have had no illusions."[19] These quotes show that Heidegger was already a controversial figure and that critical intellectuals were both attracted to and repelled by his philosophy, a division that continues to this day. The complexity and difficulty of Heidegger's works enable those influenced by Heidegger to find profound philosophical truths and those hostile to his philosophy to find mystification and reactionary pedantry, masquerading as profound insights and a new approach to philosophy.

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[17] Herbert Marcuse, "Heidegger's Politics," op. cit., pp. 28–9.

[18] Walter Benjamin, letter to Scholem, 25 April 1930. Cited in *Brecht Chronicle*, compiled by Klaus Volker (New York: Seabury, 1975) p. 56. Henry Pachter told Douglas Kellner that P. Dubislaw, a friend of Karl Korsch, referred to Heidegger's philosophy at the time as "Quatschosophie" (nonsense philosophy) and that the term was frequently used to label Heidegger's philosophy in Korsch's circle (conversation in New York, July 11, 1978).

During the late 1920s Marcuse sought to merge through a dialectical critique and synthesis both Marxism and Heidegger's phenomenological existentialism.

Marcuse's first published essay "Contributions to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism" constitutes an audacious attempt to synthesize the perspectives of Heidegger's phenomenological existentialism with Marxian dialectics and historical materialism into a "concrete philosophy" that will address concrete problems of human and social existence.

Marcuse claims that Heidegger's *Being and Time* is important for this project "because it appears to us that in this book a turning point in the history of philosophy is reached: the point where bourgeois philosophy dissolves itself from within and makes the way clear for a new 'concrete' science."[20] Marcuse believes that Heidegger's problematic is important because its concept of authenticity contributes to a theory of radical action and human emancipation. Moreover, Marcuse believes that Heidegger's philosophical starting point, being-in-the-world, overcomes the subject–object dichotomy endemic to previous bourgeois philosophy, which begins with the consciousness of the subject and describes its attempt to gain knowledge of a world standing over and against the worldless subject.[21] Heidegger rejects this dualistic standpoint, which is the source of all the endless debates about knowledge and reality that plague modern philosophy, and Marcuse and others believe that Heidegger therefore provides a promising new start in philosophy. Furthermore, Marcuse thinks that Heidegger's concept of "historicity" explicates a process of historical movement that at once overcomes the subject–object dichotomy and the endless debate between idealism and materialism over the nature of reality by positing a single, unitary process of movement that encompasses subject and object, material conditions and consciousness, facts and values. This new, seemingly concrete and historical, approach provides, so Marcuse believes, access to concrete social and human affairs, which would henceforth be the subject matter of philosophy. For Marcuse, Heidegger seems to have concretized the phenomenological method and, unlike Husserl, to have developed a phenomenology of everyday human existence.

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[19] Theodore W. Adorno, letter of May 13, 1935, in Arno Widmann (ed.), *Doktrinäre im Dialog: Theodor W. Adorno und Max Horkheimer im Briefwechsel der Jahre 1927 bis 1937* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2003). Adorno comment translated here by Charles Reitz. See also Douglas Kellner, *Herbert Marcuse: Technology, War, and Fascism, Volume One, Collected Papers of Herbert Marcuse* (New York and London: Routledge, 1998) p. 16, note 22.

[20] Marcuse, "Contributions," p. 52; S1, p. 358.

[21] On the importance of overcoming the subject–object dichotomy and the similarity between Heidegger and Lukács, see Lucien Goldmann, *Lukács and Heidegger: Towards a New Philosophy* (London: Routledge & Kegain Paul, 1979); and for Marx's and Lukács' attempts to shatter the subject–object conceptual framework, see Andrew Feenberg, *Lukács, Marx and the Sources of Critical Theory* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1981). This rejection of the dominant philosophical framework in the Western philosophical tradition is a distinguishing feature of Marcuse's philosophy in line with Heidegger and members of the Frankfurt School such as Horkheimer and Adorno. See, in particular Max Horkheimer and T. W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002).

Marcuse begins his merger of Marx and Heidegger by assimilating Heidegger's categories of inauthenticity and "fallenness" to Marxian categories of alienation and reification.[22] Heidegger argues that all individuals in a society fall under the dictatorship of *das Man* (the public, the others) and exist in a condition of not-being-a-self (inauthenticity).[23] In Heidegger's account, the individual is dominated by powerful social forces, conforms to standard modes of behavior, and thereby falls into inauthenticity, whereby one loses one's individuality and autonomy, failing to develop one's powers of creativity, will, responsibility, and so on. For Marcuse, Heidegger's analysis reinforces the impression, nurtured by his study of Marxism, that the established society is one of domination and control.

Heidegger's way of overcoming an alienated–inauthentic existence is a project of individual authenticity, which requires a resolve to undertake a process of self-transformation and emancipation and construct an authentic self. Heidegger claims that even within a state of inauthenticity one has a potentiality *(Sein-können)* for authenticity, arguing that everyday experiences of anxiety, one's impending death, guilt, and a call of conscience can bring the individual to reject the everyday world and prepare one for the choice of authenticity.[24] This transformation from inauthentic to authentic existence requires what Heidegger calls *resoluteness:* a decision to modify one's inauthentic existence by embarking on a project of self-transformation through choosing authentic possibilities from the heritage.

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[22] The category of reification refers to humans becoming things and objects and was developed by Lukács in *History and Class Consciousness*, op. cit.

[23] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, pp. 126–30 and pp. 175–90. On Heidegger's concept of authenticity, which is the crucial concept for Marcuse's appropriation of Heidegger, see Kellner, *Heidegger's Concept of Authenticity*, op. cit. and Andrew Feenberg, *Heidegger and Marcuse: The Catastrophe and Redemption of History* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004). Heidegger's analysis of fallenness and inauthenticity can be compared with Lukács' analysis of alienation and reification in *History and Class Consciousness*, op. cit., pp. 83–110. Both deplored tendencies that "reified" human beings into "things." Lucien Goldmann sees *Sein und Zeit* as "a confrontation with Lukács' work: the answer is a polemic with it from a standpoint of anxiety and death," accomplished by transposing Lukács' analysis "on a metaphysical level by modifying the terminology, without ever mentioning Lukàcs." Goldmann, *Mensch, Gemeinschaft und Welt in der Philosophie Immanuel Kants* (Zurich: Europa Verlagsanstalt, 1945) p. 244.

Heidegger bases his concept of authentic choice on a distinction between tradition and heritage. The *heritage* is the ensemble of past possibilities for authentic existence, whereas *tradition* is how these possibilities have been interpreted, handed down to us, and incorporated in the modern world. Heidegger calls for a "destruction of tradition," and a novel re-appropriation of past possibilities from the heritage that would utilize past possibilities (say Hölderlin or Hegel for a poet or philosopher) against their traditional interpretation and embodiment in today's society. Consequently, the repetition (*Wiederholung*) of possibilities from the heritage involves a "disavowal" (*Widerruf*) of the tradition and a novel re-appropriation (*Erwiderung*) of the possibilities that, in Marcuse's words, "must necessarily come into conflict with today, and can be won only as a counterthrust against what is factically existing today."[25]

Marcuse's second published article "On Concrete Philosophy" continues his attempt to synthesize Marxism and phenomenological existentialism into a "concrete philosophy" and shifts from Marxist to phenomenological-existentialist positions in the spirit of dialectical mediation.[26] In his first essays Marcuse sought a "concrete philosophy" that would deal with the urgent problems of the existing individual and current society. The concrete philosophy would be "radical" in the sense of going to the roots of the phenomena at issue.[27] This meant for Marcuse concern with the material conditions of existence, with the production and reproduction of everyday life. The quest for the material would eventually lead him toward inquiry into the nature of labor, needs, desire, sexuality, consciousness, the body, art, and the nature and dynamics of contemporary social organization. Concrete philosophy for Marcuse also meant concern for history, inquiry into the dynamics of historical movement, and change. The drive toward the concrete involved concern with historical specificity, with the unique configurations and characteristics of the current society whose vicissitudes would be a major focus of Marcuse's life work.

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[24] See the second part of Douglas Kellner, *Heidegger's Concept of Authenticity*, dealing with "Extrication and Individuation," for a discussion of Heidegger's doctrine. For a critique of Heidegger's concept of authenticity, see T. W. Adorno, *Jargon of Authenticity* (Evanston: Northwestern, 1973), and the review by Douglas Kellner in *Telos*, 19 (Spring 1974) pp. 184–92.

[25] Marcuse, "Contributions," p. 54; SI, p. 361.

[26] Marcuse, "Über konkrete Philosophie" translated as "On Concrete Philosophy," in *Heideggerian Marxism*," op. cit., pp. 34–52.

[27] This is the young Marx's sense of "radical"; see Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3 (New York: International Publishers, 1975) p. 182. A major theme of twentieth-century philosophy has been a dissatisfaction with the abstractions of the traditional philosophers, which had degenerated into "school philosophies," rigid and academic systems of categories. Against these scholasticisms, Dilthey and *Lebensphilosophie* sought the concrete in a "philosophy of life," based on Nietzsche's "will to power" and Bergson's theory of *élan vital* and *dureé*. Husserl sought a new concrete philosophy in his phenomenological turn "to the things themselves," while Heidegger sought concreteness in his turn to "being-in-the-world (*Dasein*) as the starting point of philosophy and in his concern for everyday life, the individual, death, anxiety and the like. Sartre and Merleau-Ponty would seek the concrete in the realm of consciousness and experience, in art, in the

In "On Concrete Philosophy," Marcuse combines the existentialist concern for the concrete situation of the existing individual with the Marxian focus on social and historical problems and revolutionary praxis. His enterprise represents a critique of the German idealist and existentialist tendency to withdraw from history and society in order to cultivate subjectivity far from the social issues and struggles of the day. Marcuse's essay suggests that this is an evasion which abandons the existing individual to the dominant powers of society and history. The concrete philosophy, on the other hand, confronts real problems of contemporary society, searches for the causes of suffering, and points the way to the abolition of human misery and bondage. It seeks to engage the individual in the liberating activity of changing both one's life and the constitutive social conditions.

In order to engage the philosopher in the decisive struggles and issues of the day, the concrete philosophy must become public.[28] This involves real concern with social problems and taking a stand on contemporary issues. Philosophy thus commits itself to a "drive towards actuality," placing itself under a duty to be engaged in social practice: "The noblest desire of all philosophizing is the unity of theory and practice," Marcuse writes,

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body, sexuality, revolt, struggle, and history—as would Marcuse. American philosophers, like James and Dewey, sought the concrete in experience, nature, art, and religion. English philosophers, dissatisfied with the abstractions of the old Idealism, as well as logical atomism and positivism, then turned to a study of ordinary language and common experience. Hence, every major school of Western philosophy had its own concept of the "concrete," which has come to signal a claim to primordiality, authenticity, the really real, and so on in its different usages. Marcuse's lust for the concrete was thus rooted in a fundamental drive of twentieth-century philosophy for a new philosophy that would finally satisfy the drive for concrete reality prevalent in those who were dissatisfied with the moribund systems of the classical philosophers, in which once living philosophies had degenerated into abstractions to be memorized, rehearsed, and reproduced in classrooms and journals. On the search for the concrete, compare Stefan Breuer, *Die Krise der Revolutionstheorie* (Frankfurt: Syndikat, 1977) pp. 20ff., and the amusing anticipation of this problematic by Hegel, "Who Thinks Abstractly," in Walter Kaufmann, *Hegel* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1968).

[28] Marcuse, "Über konkrete Philosophie," p. 124; S1, pp. 401–2. Page references will refer first to the original *Archiv* pagination and then to the *Schriften 1* reprint; p. 123; S1, p. 400.

involving translating philosophy into practice and thus in Marx's sense realizing philosophy. Interestingly, the example of philosophy becoming concrete, historical, and public that Marcuse cites is the proto-existentialist Kierkegaard, who is usually pictured as a paradigm of inwardness solely cultivating his relation to God and his individual sensibility, while advocating an ideal of "the single one."[29] Marcuse, however, points out that at a decisive point in Kierkegaard's life he stepped out of his isolation and struggled against the tendencies of his day, which he believed were the source of its spiritual crisis:

> He went, in the Socratic sense of this activity, into the street: wrote article after article in a daily newspaper, gave out pamphlets, pressed his entire struggle in the decisiveness of the historical moment. This struggle in the public domain . . . directed in all acuteness towards a concrete movement of contemporary man, aimed at a "true" change of existence, and his attacks and demands directed themselves steadily towards concrete ways and tasks of this existence, holding the possibilities of achievement of the moment in full view. Only when one conceives how much Kierkegaard, in the fulfillment of his concrete philosophizing, came upon the urgent nowness of a real decision, upon a true movement and transformation of contemporary existence, only then can one understand the sharpness of his attack, the agitational violence of his public performance, the sought clash with the representative personalities of the public, the revolutionary concretion of his demands.[30]

Marcuse seems to want to drive intellectuals into the public sphere, into a serious concern with problems of the day. Refusing the resignation and withdrawal from public life typical of the German intellectuals of the Weimar Republic (which was soon to have such disastrous results), Marcuse exhorts philosophers to engage in socio-political action. To the existentialist, he concedes the importance of the concerns of the existing individual, the needs of human subjectivity and the drive toward authenticity. But he argues that a real change of inauthentic existence pre-supposes a transformed society. The subject of history is not the "single one," he argues, but "the historical unity is continually a unity of being-with-one-another of 'social' being—it is constantly a 'society.'"[31] Certainly philosophy should respect and cultivate the authenticity of the individual, but the "single one" and its inwardness does not stand outside history and society; instead, every individual is a social individual, living in and conditioned by a social-historical situation. Hence, gaining authenticity does not mean stepping outside or beyond social existence and history; rather, social existence is "the reality of existence itself and only through it can the single one in truth be addressed and encountered."[32]

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[29] See Walter Lowrie, *Kierkegaard* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938) and Josiah Thompson, *The Lonely Labyrinth* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1967).

[30] Marcuse, "Über konkrete Philosophie," p. 124; *S1*, pp. 401–2.

[31] Marcuse, op. cit., p. 125; *S1*, p. 403.

Marcuse introduces here a dialectic of liberation and revolution that characterizes his life-long philosophical project as a whole. Concrete philosophy aims at a social practice that will at the same time liberate the individual and revolutionize society. Since the individual is always a social individual and since one's possibilities for thought and action are prescribed by the given social-historical situation, the individual project of liberation necessarily presupposes a project of social revolution. Philosophy that involves itself with contemporary problems is aware of the duty to seize upon the current problems of existence. "Hence," Marcuse writes, "the public act stands necessarily at the end of every genuine concrete philosophy. The trial and defense of Socrates; Plato's political effort in Syracuse; Kierkegaard's struggle with the state church."[33]

After formulating his attempted synthesis of Marx and Heidegger, historical materialism and existential phenomenology, Marcuse summarizes his appreciation of Heidegger:

> [I]n so far as Heidegger recognized the historical thrownness of the human being and its historical determination and rootedness in the destiny of the community, he has driven his radical research to the furthest point that bourgeois philosophy has reached up to now—and can in general reach. He has shown that theoretical ways of behaving are "derivative," founded in practical concern (*Besorgen*) and has thus exhibited praxis as the field of decisions. He has determined the moment of decision, the resoluteness in the historical situation, and resoluteness itself as a taking-up-in-oneself of historical fate. He has contraposed the bourgeois concepts of freedom and determinism with a being-free and being-able-to-choose what is necessary, as genuine being-able-to-seize prescribed possibilities. And he has set up history as the single authority in this "loyalty to one's own existence." But here the radical impulse has reached its end.[34]

From his first published essays after explicating what he believes is a kinship between Marx and Heidegger, Marcuse also carries out a sharp critique of Heidegger. In Heidegger's terminology, Marcuse argues that what his ontological analysis requires is an ontic concretion; i.e., what is needed now is a turning to and describing of the "decisive facts of today in their historical concretion"—a particularly urgent task, Marcuse believes, because the "threatening current human situation demands reflection," whereas Heidegger is concerned with universal ways of being and asks "what is authentic existence and how is it possible?", explicating the ontological conditions of the possibility of authenticity. Marcuse thus wants to know

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[32] Ibid.

[33] Marcuse, op. cit., p. 127; *S1*, p. 405.

[34] Marcuse, "Contributions," p. 55; *S1*, pp. 362–3.

"what is authentic existence concretely?"[35]—that is, how is authentic existence possible today? This type of questioning would have to go beyond Heidegger's ontological analysis of inauthenticity and show what is obstructing authentic existence in the current situation. It would analyze the current forms of inauthenticity and domination in the existing society. These questions in turn require a historically specific analysis of the current social situation, its tendency toward domination and alienation and a disclosure of authentic, liberating possibilities—the type of analysis found in Marx and in Marcuse's later writings.

For Marcuse, one of the many problems with Heidegger's abstract ontological analysis is that it does not provide any concrete guidelines for action in the present situation. Heidegger's theory of fallenness and inauthenticity claims to be universal and valid for all historical situations, so that specific features of today's problems are excluded in principle from the Heideggerian ontological analysis. There were important reasons central to his philosophical project and personal world-view that prohibited Heidegger himself from extending his criticisms of social behavior to a concrete criticism of his own German bourgeois society.

According to Heidegger's ontological analysis in *Being and Time,* all societies in all historical periods exhibit the features of fallenness and inauthenticity, which Heidegger did not believe could be changed; thus he was pessimistic about the possibility of radical social change. In this view a socialist revolution, for example, could only create new forms of domination and alienation that would themselves enslave the individual and require yet another project of overcoming. Since Heidegger's analysis does not allow for the possibility of revolutionary change that would overcome fallenness with a new social structure, the most he can recommend is individual self-transformation. Marcuse rejects this individualistic solution: "Heidegger's attempt to refer the decisive resoluteness back to the position of the isolated individual instead of driving one forward to the resoluteness of action must be rejected. This action is more than a 'modifying' of past experience; it is a restructuring of all spheres of public life."[36]

This notion of overthrowing the current system and restructuring public life goes beyond Heidegger and indicates that on Marcuse's own analysis of the radical act, Heidegger's authentic individual is not really radical. For we have seen that a radical act, on Marcuse's account, must transform the self and the conditions of existence, whereas for Heidegger, the authentic individual is basically concerned with his or her own personal authenticity and not with changing society. The bourgeoisie can tolerate and even perform Heidegger's move toward authenticity because it leaves their interests and domination unchanged, and consequently risks nothing. Marcuse, against Heidegger here, wants the radical act to be a *public act* that "restructures all spheres of public life"—a move that runs counter to Heidegger's quietism. Marcuse thus resists both the stoical resignation of certain German intelligentsia and the project of cultivating one's individuality urged by others, choosing instead the Marxist notion of revolutionary praxis.

Heidegger, on the other hand, scorned the public act, being firmly convinced that one must do "the one thing necessary without occupying oneself with the idle chatter and agitation of intelligent and enterprising men."[37] The "one thing necessary" for Heidegger was "rational and critical destruction of the philosophical and theological traditions," which was something "apart from and perhaps outside of the expectations of the agitation of the day."[38] Heidegger's letters from the 1920s reveal scorn for social and institutional practices, including philosophy congresses, the proliferation of philosophy journals, the study of foreign cultures, and the "agitation and idle chatter" of the issues of the day.[39] This avoidance of current socio-political problems, and the withdrawal into strictly intellectual concerns, marks a crisis in the German intelligentsia that was to have dire historical effects. Heidegger and his contemporaries were in a state of political disorientation brought about by the German collapse after the First World War and the economic-political uncertainty of the Weimar Republic. There was a general fear of catastrophe (which was indeed soon to come), and it seemed that after the Russian Revolution and the Spartacus uprising in Germany the upheaval would come from the Left. Thus, while some German intellectuals were drawn to Marxian ideas, the prospects of proletarian revolution frightened others who either actively opposed it or turned from history to purely academic concerns.

Consequently, although Heidegger sometimes sounded highly radical with his critique of inauthenticity, his call for resoluteness and self-transformation, and his project of a "destruction" of the philosophical tradition, in fact his theory was in many ways conservative. Thus, German students could follow Heidegger and be "authentic" while still conforming to the dominant social powers. This pseudo-radicalism was dangerous, for it led to a repression of the real problems of social life and a refusal of social-political involvement. The mystification of socio-economic conditions was particularly striking in Heidegger's theory of authenticity and historicity, which contained an abstract reflection on the ontology of human historicity, while relegating the real problems of history to "ontic history" that was evidently not worth the philosopher's time. Such a retreat of the German intelligentsia from the public arena left an intellectual–moral vacuum, which the Nazis and their allies filled. Indeed, the Nazi seizure of power clearly revealed the danger and deficiencies in the Heideggerian project.[40] One was supposed to be resolute in order to be authentic, but what was one to resolve upon? Heidegger provided no answer, and in fact his own resolve in support of fascism clearly revealed the moral–political vacuum at the heart of his philosophy. Refusing, in *Being and Time,* to advocate any definite social, moral or political values, Heidegger fell into the grips of the nihilism that Nietzsche had warned was to be the fate of Western civilization. Such nihilism played into the hands of fascism, and Heidegger's capitulation showed the bankruptcy of his philosophy.

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[37] Ibid.

[38] These remarks of Heidegger are quoted by Karl Löwith, who published excerpts from letters by Heidegger to him, which he received in the 1920s when Heidegger was working on *Sein und Zeit*. See Löwith, "Les implications politiques de la philosophie de l'existence chez Heidegger," *Les Temps Modernes* (November 1946) p. 346. Löwith's article is valuable in its discussion of the intellectual milieu around Heidegger, and provides some hitherto unrevealed views of Heidegger on a variety of topics.

[39] Löwith, "Les implications politiques," op. cit., pp. 345–8.

In retrospect, Marcuse notes:

> I first, like all the others, believed there could be some combination between existentialism and Marxism, precisely because of their insistence on concrete analysis of the actual human existence, human beings, and their world. But I soon realized that Heidegger's concreteness was to a great extent a phony, a false concreteness, and that in fact his philosophy was just as abstract and just as removed from reality, even avoiding reality, as the philosophies which at that time had dominated German universities, namely a rather dry brand of neo-Hegelianism, neo-Idealism but also positivism.[41]

When asked how Heidegger responded to the attempt to integrate his philosophy with a Marxian social philosophy, Marcuse answers, "He didn't respond. You know as far as I can say, it is today still open to question whether Heidegger ever really read Marx, whether Heidegger ever read Lukács, as Lucien Goldmann maintains. I tend not to believe it. He may have had a look at Marx after or during the Second World War, but I don't think that he in any way studied Marx."[42]

By the end of the 1920s, the three pillars of what would eventually emerge as Marcuse's later synthesis were present: politics, aesthetics, and philosophy. In previous volumes of the *Collected Papers*, we have noted how Marcuse turned after his experience in the 1918 German revolution at the end of World War I from political activism to a study of literature and then to a study of philosophy. This move from concern with art to philosophy indicates some skepticism on Marcuse's part as to the power of art as a cognitive source of knowledge and as an instrument of personal liberation and social change. Whereas Ernst Bloch, Walter Benjamin, the early Lukács, and T. W. Adorno privileged art as a source of knowledge and liberation, a position Marcuse was also to embrace, he initially turned in the late 1920s to a serious and productive study of philosophy, and philosophy became the center of his work for some years. Although Marcuse focused, in his dissertation on *The German Artist-Novel*, on the role of art in dealing with the fundamental questions of human life, in his work from about 1928 until *Eros and Civilization* (1955), he turned his attention to philosophy and social theory as fundamental sources of knowledge and social change. Consequently it was not until the 1950s, with his work on *Eros and Civilization*, that he would bring aesthetics into his theory in systematic fashion, although the preliminary work for this move was done in the 1920s.[43] Thus only in his post-Second World War work would Marcuse achieve the union of philosophy, politics, psychology, and aesthetics that would be the distinguishing feature of his critical theory.

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[40] The story of Heidegger's support for Hitler and the Nazis in 1932–3, his assumption of the Rectorship of the University of Freiburg in 1933, his resignation in 1934, and his muted criticism of National Socialism during the rest of the war is told by Löwith in "Les implications politiques," op. cit. and in an unpublished Ph.D. dissertation by Karl Moehling, *Martin Heidegger and the Nazi Party* (Northern Illinois University, 1972), some of which is summarized in his article "Heidegger and the Nazis," *Listening*, 12 (1977) pp. 92–105. See also Victor Farias, *Heidegger and Nazism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989) and Hugo Ott, *Martin Heidegger: A Political Life* (New York: Basic Books, 1993).

[41] Marcuse, "Heidegger's Politics," op. cit., p. 28.

[42] Marcuse, "Heidegger's Politics," op. cit., p. 28.

DIALECTICS AND PHENOMENOLOGY

The thrust of Marcuse's critique by the 1930s is that Heidegger overlooks the material constituents of history (needs, classes, economics, and historical specificity), suggesting that Heidegger's concept of history at best manifests a *pseudo-concreteness*. Heidegger himself makes a distinction between his concept of "historicity" and "ontic history," which banishes the real content of history, real historical crises and problems, from his pure ontological perspective. This flight from concrete history into an ontological realm of Being reveals the dangers of the Heideggerian ontological perspective which at the time had Marcuse at least partially under its seductive sway. Perhaps, in his early essays, Marcuse thought that he could de-mystify Heidegger much as Marx had concretized and reconstructed Hegel. This seems to be an impulse behind Marcuse's project, a motive that is especially visible in Marcuse's attempt to create a dialectical phenomenology that would, supposedly, liberate phenomenology from the Husserlian–Heideggerian tendencies towards an abstract ontology.

In this section, we will set forth Marcuse's presentation of the Hegelian–Marxian dialectical method and Heideggerian–Husserlian phenomenology, and show how Marcuse's early essays contain an implicit critique of phenomenology which we spell out more explicitly than Marcuse himself does in early work. We are setting forth Marcuse's articulation of the Hegelian–Marxian dialectical method in some detail since throughout his life Marcuse would develop a dialectical critical philosophy and social theory.

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[43] See Kellner, Introduction, *Herbert Marcuse. Art and Liberation*, op. cit.

For Marcuse in the late 1920s, the most promising method to grasp the movement, development, and transformations of history is the dialectical method, as formulated by Hegel, Marx, Engels, and Lenin. This method sees "every developing form in the river of movement" and perceives its object as historical: "it considers its object as being in a state of becoming and passing away, as necessarily arising from a determinate historical situation, related to human existence rooted in this situation; dialectics can understand its object only within the context of this situation."[44] Dialectical categories analyze the constituents of human existence and describe historical development.

Marcuse explicates his understanding of dialectics by citing a famous passage from Engels, who writes that dialectics exemplifies the "great fundamental thought that the world is not to be conceived as a complex of ready-made things, but as a complex of *processes*, in which the seemingly stable things, not less than their images (*Gedankenabbilder*) in our heads, the concepts, pass through an uninterrupted transformation of becoming and passing away."[45] Marcuse then cites Lenin, who defines four fundamental characteristics of the dialectical method:

> Dialectical logic demands that we go further. In order to really know an object, one must grasp and investigate all its sides, all its relations and "mediations" . . . Second, dialectical logic requires that the object be taken in its development, in its "self-movement" . . . in its transformation. Third, the whole of human praxis must enter into the "definition" of the object, as well as the critique of its truth, since as a practical determination the object is bound together with what is necessary to man. Fourth, the dialectical logic teaches that "there is no abstract truth"; truth is always concrete.[46]

Marcuse believes that the dialectical method grasps the immanent necessity of historical movement by showing how later forms of development are found in the earlier situation, and by showing how a negation of what exists produces historical transformation. Marxists apply this method to the analysis of social, economic, and ideological objects, grounded in Marx's theory of the mode of production. Dialectical analysis is a guide to revolutionary praxis, for it shows what features of a given social-economic-historical situation should be negated in order to liberate more progressive tendencies and forms—thus dialectics preserve the unity of theory and praxis.

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[44] Marcuse, "Contributions," op. cit., p. 57; *S1*, p. 366.

[45] Engels, "Ludwig Feuerbach," cited in Marcuse, "Contributions," p. 57; *S1*, p. 366–7.

[46] Lenin, "The Fight for Social Revolution," cited in Marcuse, "Contributions," op. cit., p. 57–8; *S1*, p. 367.

After providing this interpretation of Hegelian-Marxian dialectics, Marcuse inquires whether "the dialectical method is really the corresponding mode of access to its object, and how wide its realm of validity is."[47] In other words, does the dialectical method provide a proper mode of access to the whole of human historicity? Since phenomenology is another method that is supposed to provide access to concrete human existence, Marcuse proposes to inquire whether methodological insights will result from a confrontation between phenomenology and dialectics. His analysis argues for the superiority of dialectics over phenomenology, both as a mode of access to the object and in terms of the wealth of disclosures of the object.

Phenomenology wants the questions and the access to the subject matter of investigation to come only from the "things themselves," and it wants to bring its object "completely in view."[48] Marcuse begins his critique of phenomenology with the idea that since the object of phenomenology stands in history, phenomenology must become dialectical to grasp historical change and development. This will entail a radical departure from Husserlian phenomenology, which aims, through the intuition of essences (*Wesenschau*) at grasping the atemporal, eternal, unchanging essence. An historical phenomenology would also complement Heidegger's phenomenological ontology, which conceptualizes universal, essential structures of human being.

Historicizing phenomenology is necessary, Marcuse believes, because any method that stays on the a priori (transcendental) level of essence and universality cannot deal with concrete, historical movement and change. Thus, since change is fundamental to historical being, phenomenology does not adequately grasp fully and concretely the phenomenon of history. Further, phenomenology is supposed to penetrate to the phenomenon's ultimate concretion; hence it should, as an investigation of a historical object, "allow the concrete historical situation, the concrete 'material conditions' to enter into the analysis."[49] Because the existing phenomenological theories do not do this, they lack "necessary fullness and clarity" (ibid). Marcuse then argues for another mode of historical analysis to overcome the deficiencies of phenomenological-ontological analysis:

> It is exactly this ability to attain concreteness that is the achievement of the dialectical method. The issue is to come correctly to the particular concrete historical situation of the object at any moment. The static, free-floating abstraction will become concrete when it is again integrated with the human

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[47] Marcuse, "Contributions," op. cit., p. 58; *S1*, p. 368.

[48] Marcuse, "Contributions," op. cit., p. 58; *S1*, p. 368. A classical presentation of the phenomenological method is found in Edmund Husserl, *Ideas*, op. cit.

[49] Marcuse, "Contributions," p. 58; *S1*, p. 369.

> existence that it "belongs" with. The genuine dialectic first fulfils the demand of an ultimate concretion and will be justified in regard to the mode of being of human existence when out of knowledge of the concrete historical situation it also draws consequences for the decisive sphere of human existence: Praxis . . . In so far as it addresses in its analysis the present human existence, it forces one to take a practical position with one's whole existence and, accordingly, to *act* in one's historical situation.[50]

Hence, for Marcuse the Husserlian–Heideggerian phenomenological method does not allow us to grasp the object from all sides, in all of its connections and mediations, for it conceives its object in abstraction from its historical context, and it overlooks the social–material constituents that are found in the object. For example, a phenomenological analysis of a factory "brackets" from its social–historical existence and conceives of it, in Husserl's terms, as an intentional object of an act of consciousness, in which the "phenomenological reduction" excludes its social and material constituents and grasps the "giveness" of the factory as an "object of perception," a thing with the qualities of extension, color, solidity, and so on. But does the example not show how the phenomenological reduction to an object's "essence" is highly abstract and impoverished?[51] For when I look at a factory in its concrete presence I see a place of business, a place of work, a place where consumer items are produced; I see the private property of a capitalist or corporation; I see an assembly line and working conditions that slowly destroy its workers; I see a profit-mad industry polluting the environment; perhaps I see a strike, or a factory occupation, or workers being dismissed due to automation, or bankruptcy and closure. I see a configuration and use of technology, a type of architecture, and if I am walking through the countryside perhaps I suddenly encounter an annoying intrusion. These material–social constituents of the factory are just as "real" to me as its outline, color, weight, dimensions, etc. A philosophical method that aims at concretion and fullness must take these social–material conditions into its analysis.

We might note that Marcuse does not distinguish between Husserl's and Heidegger's phenomenological method. His thematic explication of phenomenology sometimes seems to refer to Husserl's phenomenology, but his actual critique deals with Heidegger's phenomenology of existence in *Being and Time.* Thus Marcuse fails to raise the complex and difficult problem of the relation between Husserl's and Heidegger's phenomenology, and offers a critique that refers indiscriminately to both of the most important representatives of the phenomenological movement at the time.[52]

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[50] Ibid.

[51] Marcuse carries out a similar critique of the phenomenological reduction in "Über konkrete Philosophie," *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft*, 62 (1929) pp. 115–16 (reprinted in *Schriften 1*, pp. 385–406 and translated in *Heideggerian Marxism*, pp. 34–52) and a later essay "On Science and Phenomenology," in Robert Cohen and Marx W. Wartofsky, eds, *Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, *11* (1965) pp. 279–91, included in this volume, pp. 145ff.

As opposed to Husserl's more abstract phenomenology, Heidegger's phenomenology in *Being and Time* begins to take into account constituents of the work world, social world, and everyday life, but his ontological analysis, in Marcuse's view, also fails to grasp material conditions and historical constituents of phenomena. For Marcuse, Heidegger's phenomenology is capable of, at best, providing an ontology of history and is not capable of conceptualizing historical development or change. Consequently, the dimension of real history is lacking in phenomenology.

Moreover, the phenomenology current at the time was not intimately connected with human practice and did not provide practical directives for action and change, because it did not consider the specific features of a historical situation that should be transformed or eliminated. In fact, Husserl's phenomenology falls prey to a rigid fact–value, descriptive–normative distinction, excluding from analysis normative claims in the interests of carrying through a purely objective scientific description of "essences." Indeed, Husserl tends to reify values into Platonic essences when he touches on problems of values or ethical issues. Heidegger too explicitly claims to exclude normative concerns and values from *Being and Time.* Thus Marcuse finds phenomenology to be lacking a theory of human action and social practice geared toward existing social problems and human emancipation. The lack of a materialist theory of history, society, and politics in phenomenology thus led him to Marxism to provide crucial aspects of a "concrete philosophy" that he found missing in phenomenology.

One could argue that the failure of Marcuse's attempt to synthesize phenomenology with Marxism lies in the limits of the phenomenological movement of the day. That is, when Marcuse published his first essays, the two main proponents of phenomenology were Husserl, who was in the transcendental idealism stage of his complex development, and Heidegger, whose phenomenology of everyday life in *Being and Time* was being displaced by his work in speculative metaphysics. Later, Husserl, in *The Crisis of European Sciences,* would return phenomenology to the "human lifeworld" and contemporary problems, and French existential phenomenology in the 1930s and 1940s would similarly attempt to develop a concrete philosophy. Thus perhaps Marcuse's rather sharp critique of phenomenology was due to the fact that phenomenology was in a particularly idealist and metaphysical stage of development at the time that he published his first essays.

Despite its problems, Marcuse believed that a more concrete version of phenomenology could supplement and complement historical materialism and dialectics. Hence, having carried out a critique of phenomenology and argued that Marxian dialectics could help overcome its deficiencies, Marcuse then critically examines Marxian dialectics and shows in turn how phenomenology could help overcome some of its deficiencies. He stated that:

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[52] The relations and differences between Husserl, Heidegger and other phenomenologists are analyzed in Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement*, op. cit.

> If we demand, on one hand, that the phenomenology of human existence begun by Heidegger advance to a dialectical concretion and fulfill itself in a phenomenology of concrete human existence and the current historically demanded concrete act, so, on the other hand, the dialectical method of knowledge must become phenomenological and achieve concretion in the other direction as well through a full comprehension (*Erfassung*) of its object . . . Only a unification of both methods—a dialectical phenomenology that is a method of continuous and radical concretion—is able to grasp appropriately the historicity of human existence.[53]

Marcuse anticipates the later project, alluded to earlier, of developing a dialectical phenomenology or "phenomenological and existential Marxism." He argues that the dialectical method must in turn "become phenomenological" and must go beyond the historical givens of the situation to ask "whether there dwells within an integral meaning that endures through all historicity."[54] The implication is that whereas traditional phenomenology cannot grasp change, development, and process, dialectics overlooks the abiding, enduring, universal aspects of human existence. A dialectical phenomenology, Marcuse argues, aims at "the being of historical human existence and to be sure as much in its essential structures as its concrete forms and configurations."[55] It encompasses all of the regions of meaning created by the human being (i.e., it is a phenomenology of culture, and what Dilthey calls "cultural history," *Geistesgeschichte*). Marcuse therefore seems to be inserting into dialectics some notion of phenomenological method and hermeneutics, that it is the task of a dialectical phenomenology to work out and clarify.

The "dialectical basic science" is to be, Marcuse writes, a "science of the essence of historicity in general, of its structures, laws of movement, and possible existential forms of historical human being."[56] He believes that the truths concerning the essence of historicity are "universally valid" and distinguishes between these universal truths concerning the essential structures of existence and "dialectical knowledge," which is concerned with the changing facts at history (this distinction corresponds to Heidegger's distinction between the ontological and the ontic). Marcuse seems to believe that phenomenology is a more suitable method than dialectics for discovering and grounding the universally valid propositions that grasp the essence of historicity, and that phenomenology ostensibly secures and founds the basic presuppositions of historical materialism. The task of phenomenology, then, would be to distinguish enduring truths from the transitory truths of history, to distinguish the permanent from the changing. As opposed to the "universal" truths of phenomenology, "all other dialectical knowledge claims concern truths that are ordered in a determinate, concrete historicity; only through a phenomenology of this historicity can they be found and established."[57]

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[53] Marcuse, "Contributions," op. cit., p. 59; *S1*, p. 370.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Marcuse, "Contributions," op. cit., p. 60; *S1*, p. 370.
[56] Ibid.

ON THE PATH TOWARD CRITICAL THEORY: HEGEL, PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIAL THEORY

As noted, Marcuse published the first major review in 1933 of Marx's just-published *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*. The review anticipated the tendency to revise interpretations of Marxism from the standpoint of the works of the early Marx.[58] Marcuse's study of *Hegel's Ontology and Theory of Historicity* (1932) contributed to the Hegel renaissance that was taking place in Europe. These works revealed Marcuse to be an astute student of German philosophy and he was emerging as one of the most promising theorists of his generation.

In an essay on Max Adler's Marxism, Marcuse defines philosophy as "the scientific expression of a specific human basic orientation (*Grundhaltung*) and, to be sure, a basic orientation of being and entities."[59] As such, it is a privileged mode of perception and discourse "in which a historical–social situation can often be more clearly and deeply expressed than in the rigid and reified practical spheres of life," and, the essay suggests, than the social sciences.[60] This "basic orientation," Marcuse claimed, was frequently oppositional and set the philosophical subject against the existing capitalist society: "In many regions of scientific research, there exists a basic orientation that no longer has any thing to do with the familiar forms-of-life of capitalist society, and which, moreover, has already anticipated a good piece (*gutes Stück*) of historical development."[61] Marcuse presents here a concept of philosophy as critical, oppositional, and anticipatory that would guide his intellectual endeavors throughout his life.

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[57] Ibid.

[58] Volume Six of *Collected Papers of Herbert Marcuse* will engage Marxism, revolution, and utopia, and thus Marcuse's relation to the early Marx and Marxist theory and practice as a whole.

[59] Marcuse, "Transzendentaler Marxismus?," p. 445.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Ibid.

In his book on *Hegel's Ontology*, Marcuse cites Hegel's doctrine that "philosophy arises from necessity (*Not*), from a need (*Bedürfnis*) of human life in a specific historical situation: that of division"—a situation of suffering, conflict, and alienation.[62] Philosophy is directed to analyze and overcome oppositions, so as to create a more harmonious and less divided and conflictual way of being-in-the-world. Marcuse thus combines the Hegelian–Heideggerian notion that philosophy emerges from existential needs and concerns with Marx's notion that the task of philosophy is to transform the world.

Throughout his early articles, Marcuse utilizes a Hegelian concept of historicity—influenced by Heidegger—which is the focus of his book on *Hegel's Ontology*. In the introduction he writes: "The intention of this work is the attempt to provide access for ascertaining, the basic characteristics of historicity. Historicity is the title for that which characterizes history as 'history' and delimits it from regions like 'nature' and 'economy.'"[63] Marcuse believes that Dilthey has gone furthest in presenting the fundamental characteristics of historicity in recent times, but that his categories of "life," "spirit," and history as the unity of "I and world" contain undefined ontological presuppositions.[64] These presuppositions derive, Marcuse claims, from the philosophy of Hegel: "Hegel's ontology is the foundation and ground of the being of historicity worked out by Dilthey and consequently is the ground and foundation of the tradition in which the philosophical questions concerning historicity presently move."[65]

Marcuse's interpretation is distinguished by a new reading of Hegel's *Logic* and early writings; he claims that they, and not the later *Philosophy of History*, *Philosophy of Right*, or Hegel's system, contain the genuine presuppositions of Hegel's theory of history and, in fact, unfold the basic presuppositions of his philosophy.[66] Marcuse's first book on Hegel is an extremely technical, systematic work in the style of German academic philosophy. He concludes the introduction with the special thanks to Martin Heidegger, mentioned by Adorno above: "What this work contributes to the unfolding and clarification of the problems, it owes thanks to the philosophical work of Martin Heidegger. This should be stated right at the beginning, rather than through particular citations."[67] Although Marcuse occasionally asks Heideggerian questions concerning the meaning of the being of an entity and finds Heideggerian categories operative in Hegel, such as being-in-the-world, on the whole the work tends to interpret Hegel from a "philosophy of life" perspective and thus makes Dilthey, rather than Heidegger or "existential philosophy," Hegel's true heir. Marx is never mentioned, and Marcuse's situating of Hegel in the *Lebensphilosophie* tradition rather than Marxism later led Lukács as well as Adorno to attack Marcuse's study as one of a group of *Lebensphilosophie* interpretations of Hegel that tried to appropriate Hegel for an irrationalist tradition and sever the Hegel–Marx relation[68]—which would in fact, be the central focus of Marcuse's later interpretation of Hegel in *Reason and Revolution.*

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[62] Marcuse, *Hegel's Ontology*, pp. 9ff.; Marcuse repeats this notion in *Reason and Revolution* (New York: Humanity Books, 1999 [1941]) pp. 30ff.

[63] Marcuse, *Hegel's Ontology*, p. 1.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Marcuse, *Hegel's Ontology*, pp. 2–3.

[66] Marcuse, *Hegel's Ontology*, pp. 3ff., passim.

[67] Marcuse, *Hegel's Ontology*, p. 8.

Marcuse's systematic interpretation of the basic categories of Hegel's ontology is probably of primary interest today to Hegel scholars, some of whom believe that it is Marcuse's best book.[69] He provides detailed textual and analytical clarifications of Hegel's concept of historicity, which is interpreted in terms of Hegel's concepts of life, movement, essence, spirit, concept (*Begriff*), and reality (*Wirklichkeit*). One of the most interesting anticipations of his later philosophy is the section on "The Motility of Essence in Its Two-Dimensions" (pp. 71ff.). In this discussion, Marcuse shows that the origin of his theory of one-dimensional thought is a reading of Hegel's distinction between "appearance" and "essence"—a distinction that becomes crucial to Marcuse's philosophical work in the 1930s that he continued to pursue in books like *Reason and Revolution* and *One-Dimensional Man.*

Despite the abstract nature of the treatise, Adorno believed that the book disclosed a move away from Heidegger: "he is tending to move from concern with the meaning of being to disclosure of entities; from fundamental ontology to history–philosophy; from historicity to history."[70] This is a much more charitable reading of Marcuse's first Hegel book than Adorno's 1935 comment noted above. It is also strange since Marcuse rarely mentions concrete history but stays on the level of pure ontology in his early philosophical works. Adorno's reading of Hegel differed substantially than Marcuse's, however, arguing that Marcuse's quest to develop a unitary concept of historicity, enveloping subjectivity and objectivity, as well as a set of other dualisms, suppresses the fact that Hegel's basic presupposition is "absolute subjectivity" and not "life," as Marcuse claimed.[71] Adorno argues that Hegel's philosophy is at bottom really "idealism" and falls prey to all its traditional deficiencies.[72] His review discloses that Marcuse is more sympathetic towards Hegel and German idealism than Adorno, bringing to light Adorno's early desire to carry through a sharp critique of Hegelian idealism.[73]

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[68] See Georg Lukács, *The Destruction of Reason.*

[69] This judgment was frequently expressed to Douglas Kellner by philosophers in Germany. See also Richard Bernstein, "Herbert Marcuse: An Immanent Critique," *Social Theory and Practice,* vol. 1, no. 4 (Fall 1977) who calls *Hegel's Ontology* Marcuse's "most serious and brilliant work" (p. 97).

[70] T. W. Adorno, *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* vol. 1, no. 2 (1932) pp. 409–10.

[71] Ibid., p. 410.

[72] See also another Adorno review that indicates a high regard for Marcuse's *Hegel's Ontology* in *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung,* vol. 11, no. 1 (1933) pp. 107–8.

It should be made clear that there is a major difference between Marcuse's interpretation of Hegel in *Hegel's Ontology* and his later interpretation in *Reason and Revolution.* In *Reason and Revolution* Marcuse stresses the relation of Hegel to Marx and the importance of the Hegelian concepts of freedom, reason, and critical dialectics, while in *Hegel's Ontology* he is interested in the ontological features of Hegel's philosophy and totally excludes the historical–political dimension that plays such an important role in his later interpretation of Hegel. This is not surprising, since the work was written as a *Habilitationsschrift* under Heidegger, designed to gain Marcuse employment in the German university world that required such a treatise for promotion to the rank of *Dozent.*[74]

Marcuse's work in the late 1920s and early 1930s exhibits a sustained and complex attempt to overcome traditional philosophy and to move toward a new philosophy that seeks to conceptualize real historical movement and to act as a practical lever of individual emancipation and social transformation. He is inspired by the attempts of Lukács and Korsch to investigate the relations between Marxism and philosophy, and during his entire life he would defend the importance of philosophy for social theory and would contribute to developing a radical philosophy and social theory.

In the period under inquiry, this project took the form of work on the foundation of the Hegelian–Marxian philosophies and dialectical method, and criticisms of current forms of social theory and philosophy from a

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[73] On Adorno's early critique of idealism, see Susan Buck-Morss, *The Origins of Negative Dialectics* (New York: The Free Press, 1977). Adorno's Ph.D. dissertation was a critique of Husserl, and he had just finished writing a long critique of Kierkegaard. Adorno and Marcuse did not really know each other well until the late 1930s, when they were together at the Institute for Social Research in New York and later in California where they had a complicated relationship, discussed in earlier volumes *War, Technology, and Fascism*, op. cit. and *Toward a Critical Theory of Society*, op. cit.

[74] Marcuse was never officially awarded the Habilitation as a certified academic status for this work. Habermas told Douglas Kellner that it was his impression that Heidegger had refused to accept his *Habilitationsschrift*, but others believed that Heidegger had never read it and that Marcuse did not formally submit it, knowing Heidegger's political turn toward Nazism; see the discussions of the uncertainty concerning whether Marcuse formally submitted his Habilitation and Heidegger rejected it or whether Marcuse declined to submit it in Seyla Behabib, "Translator's Introduction," *Hegel's Ontology and the Theory of Historicity* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1987) pp. ixff., and Richard Wolin, "What is Heideggerian Marxism?," *Heideggerian Marxism*, op. cit., pp. xxi–xxii. Marcuse evidently sent the Habilitation dissertation to Husserl for a letter appears in Marcuse's private collection from Husserl praising his Hegel scholarship, but claiming, like most in the current generation, Marcuse does not understand the phenomenological epoché; letter from Edmund Husserl to Herbert Marcuse, Freiburg, January 14, 1932 (found in Marcuse's personal letter collection).

Hegelian–Marxian standpoint. Many of the thirteen essays published between 1928 and 1933 criticize contemporary interpretations of Marxism which Marcuse believes deflect it from its revolutionary goals and undermine its philosophical foundation and will be discussed in the next volume dedicated to Marcuse's life-long engagement with Marxism. Examples of Marcuse's philosophical scrutiny of various contemporary appropriations of Marxism include his criticism of the sociological interpretation of Marx by Karl Mannheim, which reduces Marxism to a historically surpassed ideology.[75] Marcuse attacks the neo-Kantian tendency towards a "transcendental Marxism" that would articulate an "a priori" of social theory and objective laws of society,[76] and he criticizes misinterpretations of Hegel and the dialectic.[77] Other essays contain critiques of academic German social theories and philosophies that Marcuse believes rest on dubious philosophical assumptions. Let us now examine Marcuse's encounter with what has become known as the Frankfurt School and how this influenced his philosophical perspectives and led in the 1930s and early 1940s to sharp theoretical criticisms of idealism, positivism, and pragmatism.

MARCUSE AND THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL

In 1933, Marcuse joined the Institut für Sozialforschung (Institute for Social Research) in Frankfurt and soon became deeply involved in their interdisciplinary projects, which included working out a model for radical social theory, developing a theory of the new stage of state and monopoly capitalism, and providing a systematic analysis and critique of German fascism.[78] Marcuse deeply identified with the "Critical Theory" of the Institute and throughout his life was close to Max Horkheimer, T. W. Adorno, and others in the Institute's inner circle.

The Frankfurt School developed an interdisciplinary critical social theory of the present age that would combine political economy, philosophy, social theory, political culture, and ideology critique, combining a Hegelian–Marxian dialectical theory with an ever expanding range of critical philosophy and social theory. Marcuse was, with Horkheimer and Adorno, a specialist in philosophy, although he worked on their interdisciplinary projects as well.

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[75] Herbert Marcuse, "Zur Wahrheitsproblematik der soziologischen Methode: Karl Mannheim, '*Ideologie und Utopie*,'" *Die Gesellschaft*, Vol. VI (1929) pp. 356–69.

[76] Herbert Marcuse, "Transzendentaler Marxismus?" *Die Gesellschaft*, Vol. VII, 1930, pp. 304–26.

[77] Herbert Marcuse, "Zum Problem der Dialektik," Parts I and II, *Die Gesellschaft*, Vol. VII, 1 (1930) pp. 15–30, and VIII (1931) pp. 541–57, translated by Morton Schoolman and friends in *Telos*, 27 (Spring 1976) pp. 12–39.

[78] This work is the topic of *Toward a Critical Theory of Society*, op. cit. Volume Two, *Collected Papers of Herbert Marcuse*. Volume Two provides an analysis of Marcuse's relations with members of the Institute for Social Research who emigrated from Frankfurt to Columbia University in New York in 1934 and provides an overview of his work with the Institute and the development of a critical theory of society. Our discussion here will focus on Marcuse's work in philosophy with the Institute and beyond.

After 1934, Marcuse—a German Jew and radical—fled from Nazism and emigrated to the United States where he lived for the rest of his life. The Institute for Social Research was granted offices and an academic affiliation with Columbia University, where Marcuse worked during the 1930s and early 1940s. Marcuse hoped to work with Horkheimer on what was envisaged as a major text on dialectics that would distinguish a critical and dialectical philosophy and social theory from more positivist and idealist variants. It turned out that it would be Horkheimer and Adorno who together would write *Dialectic of Enlightenment* while Marcuse continued to do his own work on these thematics before going to Washington to work with the U.S. government in the struggle against fascism.[79]

During the 1930s and early 1940s, Marcuse worked on developing ideology critiques of bourgeois concepts of authority, reason, happiness, essence, and other categories, while developing his own notion of critical philosophy and social theory.[80] This was an important developmental period for Marcuse as he was continuing to apply his dialectical analysis to dominant philosophical currents of his time. Similar to his synthetic treatment of phenomenology and Marxism, here we see Marcuse folding into his evolving critical theory of society the strengths and limitations of idealism and positivism. Moreover, this phase of Marcuse's work is particularly interesting as it shows him as a non-dogmatic thinker who is quite willing to recognize the liberatory aspects of two seemingly opposed models of thought and draw upon their strengths in a constructive effort to render philosophy relevant to social problems emanating from an increasingly brutal social reality. What also comes to light in examining this period in Marcuse's thought is the emergence of an important educative project: the introduction of dialectical thinking and analysis to an English-speaking audience.

Growing out of his critiques of idealism and positivism, as we point out below, is an important pedagogical intervention that is embedded in his often overlooked treatise on dialectical social theory, *Reason and Revolution*

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[79] This phase of Marcuse's work is covered in *Technology, War, and Fascism: Volume One, Collected Papers of Herbert Marcuse* edited by Douglas Kellner (London and New York: Routledge, 1998).

[80] Marcuse's published work in philosophy and social theory done in the 1930s and early 1940s with the Institute for Social Research in New York is covered in *Toward a Critique of Society: Volume Two, Collected Papers of Herbert Marcuse* edited by Douglas Kellner (London and New York: Routledge, 2001). In the next section, we are engaging Marcuse's mostly unpublished papers in philosophy that articulate his critique of idealism, positivism, and pragmatism.

(*R&R*). Marcuse's attempt to introduce dialectical thinking as an alternative framework for interpreting and criticizing the increasing forms of one-dimensional modes of thought that had become prominent in the 1930s and 1940s is a project that continued throughout the remainder of his life and work. The construction of a dialectics of liberation, one of the hallmarks of Marcuse's legacy, should thus be seen as part of a larger theme in Marcuse's work that attempted to make philosophy and social theory relevant for understanding the changing ontological and material conditions that forged individual and social life in late industrial society and how forms of resistance might emerge from such a context.

Thus what becomes evident in looking at Marcuse's critical analysis of positivism, idealism, pragmatism, and later Freud's theory of instincts is an intellectual trend oriented toward liberating human and non-human life from an increasingly irrational mode of thought and behavior that, for Marcuse, was creating a damaged context for the human organism to live and to develop within. Below we situate Marcuse's analysis of idealism and positivism as delineating an epistemological standpoint that rejected values and ideals generated solely from the common sense world of empirical social contexts, or the transcendental realm of ideal concepts. Instead, Marcuse stresses the tension between these two models of knowledge as a key feature of dialectical thinking and analysis, a practice of thinking and analysis that can lead to educative and liberatory social alternatives as opposed to what Marcuse sees as the life-negating logic of technological rationality.

MARCUSE'S CRITIQUE OF IDEALISM AND POSITIVISM

Several unpublished texts containing Marcuse's philosophical studies of the 1930s and 1940s that were found in the Herbert Marcuse archive in Frankfurt are being published here for the first time and will be discussed in this and following sections. What stands out in this phase of Marcuse's thought is his active critical engagement with the philosophies of positivism and, what the Frankfurt School saw as its close cousin, pragmatism. But Marcuse's critique of German idealism, positivism, and pragmatism also served another important purpose in this early intellectual gestation period of the Institute for Social Research: it accentuated and articulated the dialectical method of the historical and materialist orientation of critical theory. The trends of positivism, pragmatism, and idealist knowledge systems subordinated, for Marcuse, matters of freedom, reason, and equality to the supposedly value-neutral universe of facts that positivistic interpretations of society generated and in Marcuse's view fetishized. In other words, Marcuse stresses that whereas positivist social theory views society as a natural organism that can be studied by the methods of natural science, critical social theory, on the other hand, sees society as the product of human activity, which requires different methods of research and different criteria (i.e., reason, justice, liberation, and so on) to judge its adequacy to develop human and social potential and to provide norms of critique.

Marcuse's philosophical essays of this period therefore should be situated within the larger project of critical theory to define itself against the rising influence of positivistic forms of social theory and cultural thought, as well as new forms of social and political oppression like fascism and other manifestations of totalitarianism. Written around the same time as Horkheimer's 1930s mission statement of the Frankfurt School, "Traditional and Critical Theory," Marcuse took aim at the manner in which non-dialectical and empirical theories of society failed to take into account the root values of a commodity-based society, the dehumanizing modes of life in such a society, and how consciousness and instinctual drives of individuals were being molded by new forms of social control and administration.

Similar to the way Marcuse's materialist rethinking of phenomenology shaped his philosophical approach early in his career, so too did his critique and assessment of idealism and positivism—projects he would continue his entire life. In an early, unpublished essay, probably written in the late 1930s or early 1940s, on the historical development of idealism and positivism Marcuse states that his intent in doing such a study was to get at the essential implications of the "two types of philosophical thinking that [have] dominated the entire history of Western thought."[81] Marcuse's research on positivism and idealism is an important area to assess in the development of his thought because it helps contextualize a broader philosophical project to recalibrate philosophy to become a relevant tool for interpreting the reality of the human condition in capitalist society and help to liberate individuals from oppressive conditions and to provide tools for social transformation. In short, Marcuse's study of positivism and idealism was part of the attempt to formulate the practice of philosophy within a critical theory of society.[82]

In his 1937 essay "Philosophy and Critical Theory," which was written close to the same time as the above-mentioned Horkheimer mission statement, Marcuse argued that "philosophy thus appears within the economic concepts of materialist theory, each of which is more than an economic concept of the sort employed by the academic discipline of economics. It is more due to the theory's claim [critical theory] to explain the totality of man and his world in terms of his social being."[83] Thus Marcuse's critical appraisal of idealism and positivism as dominant modes of thought within the trajectory of Western philosophy should be thought of as falling within a larger attempt to re-orient philosophy within the material structures and modes of being that constitute individuals' experience of reality within capitalist society and its current totalitarian forms. Marcuse's interrogation of the theoretical archetypes of idealism and positivism, in other words, demonstrates how historical materialism is the "one true philosophical method" that is most appropriate for understanding and confronting the dialectical contradictions of capitalist reality.[83]

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[81] Herbert Marcuse, untitled essay on idealism and positivism, n.d., accessed from the Marcuse archive, HM 124.01; see below, pp. 92ff.

[82] In this volume we are providing an essay Marcuse wrote specifically on the historical relationship between philosophy and reality in the West. "The Relevance of Reality," written in 1969, shows that Marcuse was concerned with the status of philosophy as a critical interpretive activity for understanding the material and cultural foundations of society throughout the entirety of his career (see below, pp. 172ff).

In generating his archetype of idealism, Marcuse turns to Kant and Hegel who, according to his analysis, developed idealism most fully. Marcuse identified in this apex of idealist thought a unifying characteristic that coalesced in Kant's and Hegel's respective philosophical systems: the distinction between essence and appearance that sets up a dialectical tension between reality and human potential. In addition, reason for Marcuse in both Kant and Hegel's systems is also the key category that "sets forth the principles of thought and action, of morality and of the state, of science, and of the 'best life.'" The foundation to all these is the idea of *freedom*: reality is viewed under the aspect of the highest development of human potentialities, and the forms of nature and society are examined as to whether they release and promote these potentialities."[84]

Marcuse sees this internal critical core present in idealism as a methodological strength because it requires philosophy to measure and judge reality against the transcendent measure of reason. Yet it is this very strength of idealism, its dialectical *telos*, which also produces its most serious limitation as Marcuse sees it. In referring back to the transcendent conceptual realm that stands in contradiction to reality, idealism has also tended to construct reified norms that ignore how historical conditions are constituted in society and thus their validity can become trapped within a variety of absolutist frameworks. Plato's ideal state, Hegel's metaphysical justification of the Prussian monarchy, and even National Socialist ideology exhibited this destructive trend within idealism for Marcuse.[85] In Marcuse's view, it is the inherent critical moment that is carried within idealism as a mode of thought that should be retained as a *negative* attitude toward individual experience and matters of fact within society.[86] Here Marcuse hits upon an enduring feature of his own assessment of philosophy's historical role in society: the critical and negative moment within the dialectical structure of idealism continues to be a developmental force in the experience of the living subject so long as reason and reality fail to correspond to each other.

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[83] Herbert Marcuse, "Philosophy and Critical Theory" in *Negations*, translated by Jeremy Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), p. 134. This essay was originally published in German in *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, Vol. VI, 1937.

[84] Marcuse, "Idealism and Positivism," op. cit. p. 44.

[85] Ibid. Also see Marcuse's essay "The Struggle against Liberalism in the Totalitarian View of the State" in *Negations* where he charts the development of liberalism as a movement that ultimately finds its end in the legitimation of totalitarian states.

[86] Marcuse's interpretation of Hegel in *Reason and Revolution* focuses heavily on this

At this juncture it needs to be pointed out that Marcuse is not calling for a neo-Hegelian philosophy that reverts back to a romantic notion of idealism. This is evident simply by observing how Marcuse distills what he sees as two of the main features of the dialectical method "which manifest the critical implications of idealism: (1) it dissolves all fixed and stable relations into a process which, in the last analysis, is constituted by the developing subject; and (2) [dialectics] views the world as an antagonistic totality in which all forms and relations develop the negation of their own content and unfold themselves by virtue of this negation."[87] For Marcuse, the dialectical method, when applied to concrete social realities in history, should naturally lead to radical criticism and revolutionary social demands.

In contrast to the manner in which the dialectic is articulated in the thought of Plato or Hegel (through either ideal Forms or absolute Spirit), Marcuse situates dialectical development in the historical experience of oppressed groups and subjects and their potential to negate the counterrevolutionary status quo. Yet the dialectical method that constitutes the heart of idealism as a mode of philosophy for Marcuse cannot adequately interpret and learn from reality alone—dialectical analysis for Marcuse also needs an empirical understanding of the material realm of society in which to formulate and assess the contradictions and oppression built into the historical conditions of capitalist society.

Marcuse's critical analysis of idealism exemplifies an early moment in his thought that stresses how the dialectical method is both powerful yet severely limited if its negative motor fails to engage with the fluid and contradictory conditions that comprise the history of progress and destruction in Western civilization. In a similar dialectical fashion, Marcuse's treatment of the positivist tradition begins from the claim that empiricism was once a liberatory philosophy that stood against idealist structures embodied in the state of early modern society. The French Enlightenment that fueled the revolutionary struggles against the monarchy and the aristocratic system of rule in France exhibits for Marcuse such an emancipatory strain in positivism's early incarnation.

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aspect of the dialectical method that is articulated in Hegel's *Logic* and *Phenomenology of Spirit*. In other words, it is the negative moment in the development of consciousness within human subjectivity that represents the most important feature of Hegel's idealism. Marcuse, of course, goes on to argue how the negativity of Hegel's model provides the basis for Marx's development of historical materialism as a social mode of analysis.

[87] Marcuse, "Idealism and Positivism," op. cit., p. 95.

Despite Marcuse's and the Frankfurt School's multitude of attacks on the positivist movement, in fact, Marcuse does not flatly reject positivism. His analysis preserves the emancipatory aspects of positivism that were embodied, for instance, in aspects of Locke's natural law theory and which helped undermine the British nobility's sovereign claims, culminating in the Glorious Revolution. Early phases in the development of positivism, for Marcuse, also retained a critical approach to social and political conditions that complemented idealism's reliance on reason as the metaphysical tribunal in which to measure the human condition. Specifically, Marcuse notes that empiricism, especially those strands that had their basis in natural law, "demand[s] to found knowledge on experience [and] is used as an instrument for changing the given form of reality in the interest of reason and freedom."[88] Here positivism plays an emancipatory historical role according to Marcuse's analysis in this sense: social and political facts become the very basis for overthrowing structural forms of oppression and illegitimate forms of government that are based on irrational claims of sovereignty. Divine right cannot suffice as a justification for sovereign rule when measured against the claims of natural law that accompanied the bourgeois revolution in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England. Empirical thought, in Marcuse's view, paved the way for Locke's rational argument to be realized in history.

In essence, the initial development of positivism in the modern period produced a social theory that demanded change by pointing to current conditions within society that did not live up to Enlightenment ideals such as freedom, solidarity, and equality that had begun to take hold in Europe during this period. Yet much in the same way that idealism lost its critical capacity in its constructs of the rational state or totalitarian regimes, positivism's evolutionary absorption into the structures of natural science mutated this trend in philosophy into a system of knowledge that focused its project with precision on the universe of facts while jettisoning social and political values and critique from theoretical consideration. The reduction of positivism to a mode of knowledge production that co-developed within a capitalist paradigm and drew its legitimacy from the natural sciences represents, for Marcuse, another divergence from what he considered to be the true function of philosophy in society, a liberating system of thought focused on the rational development of human potentialities and social arrangements that promote healthy and rational conditions within which life can fully develop.

In assessing Marcuse's early critical analysis of idealism and positivism as the two dominant trends in Western philosophy, what appears is a speculative snapshot of what would be one of his most important contributions to philosophy in the twentieth century: an incisive intellectual genealogy and defense of the revolutionary potential of the dialectical method as a mode of social analysis. Indeed, the problematic of finding a dialectical synthesis between idealism and positivism is in many ways what Marcuse's largest systematic study on the subject of dialectics attempted to achieve. Laying out how dialectical thinking could be set to the rhythm of historical materialism was of course the task Marcuse took up in his classic study of Hegel. Another important and often overlooked goal was to introduce Marxist dialectics as a form of social theory to an English-speaking audience.

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[88] Marcuse, "Idealism and Positivism," op. cit., p. 97.

Reason and Revolution, Marcuse's first systematic book-length treatment of dialectical thinking, attempted to show how Hegelian idealism is the point of departure for developing a powerful critical theory of society that could adequately interpret the contours of a highly dynamic and quickly changing capitalist society. Similar to Marx and Engels' materialist reorientation of the Hegelian dialectic from neo-Hegelians such as Strauss, Bauer, and Feuerbach, Marcuse wanted to offer an alternative social theory to the positivist epistemology that had become wedded to liberal understandings of society after the First World War. One of the larger aims of *R&R* was to demonstrate how philosophy in the figure of Hegel had gone as far as idealism could take it; the conceptual world of reason in Hegel's philosophical system needed to be reinvented through Marx's materialist theory of society in a way that could make philosophy relevant again within the changing terrain of history.

With this aspect of *R&R* in view, it is clear that Marcuse had an important pedagogical project in mind: to introduce to a U.S. audience an alternative form of social analysis that did not rely on the fetishization of method and empirical observation of facts for rendering truth claims about reality.[89] In retrospect, this was a bold and important intervention into both social theory and philosophy within the United States in an environment where positivism and mathematical logic were quickly becoming the dominant framework for understanding and interpreting social reality in capitalist society. The pedagogical gesture embodied in *R&R* that sought to challenge positivism's growing influence on social theory in the United States also marks an important moment of transition in Marcuse's thought where he begins to define for the first time the shift from human rationality to technological rationality as the guiding ethos of Western civilization.

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[89] Of course, Marcuse's *R&R* was also met by serious critiques from both the Left and Right. Notable Marxist critics included Sidney Hook, Lucio Colletti, Karel Kosik, Raya Dunayevskaya and Douglas Kellner. See Kevin Anderson's essay "On Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory: A Critical Appreciation of Herbert Marcuse's *Reason and Revolution*, Fifty Years Later" in *Sociological Theory*, vol. 11, no. 3 (1993) pp. 243–267. Here Anderson provides a thorough examination of such critiques while reassessing *R&R* as an important text in the development of Hegelian-Marxist dialectical thought.

Returning to *R&R* a decade later and remarking on the further decline of negative thought in society, Marcuse noted in his 1954 epilogue that "[t]echnological progress multiplied the needs and satisfactions, while its utilization made the needs as well as their satisfactions repressive: they themselves sustain submission and domination. Progress in administration reduces the dimension in which individuals can still be 'with themselves' and 'for themselves' and transforms them into total objects in their society."[90]

Indeed, *R&R* is a pivotal moment in Marcuse's thought and signals the beginning of his long-term engagement with research on the role of science and technology in advanced industrial society. Interestingly, it was during Marcuse's intense study of positivism and idealism when his first full articulation of technological rationality appeared. With his study of idealism and positivism in view, it is evident that it was not a coincidence that "Some Social Implications of Modern Technology" (1941) grew out of the analyses Marcuse took up in *R&R*. Both works focus deeply on the decline of critical thought and the ascent of new forms of rationality that lack dialectical grounding and therefore block the potential for negative thought to find spaces for cultivation within one-dimensional society and culture.

MARCUSE'S CRITIQUE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE 1930s AND 1940s

In one of Marcuse's earliest treatments of the problem of science and technology in advanced capitalist society he introduced what would be an increasingly important area of his theoretical work: technological rationality's eclipse of human rationality. Following the decline of the critical individual's role in helping precipitate the bourgeois revolutions in England, the United States, and France, Marcuse's essay on "Some Social Implications of Modern Technology" presents the thesis that bourgeois society's liberating forces, having helped destroy feudalism and aristocratic rule, had now turned against it. Through the growth of scientific and technological modes of production and commerce, advanced industrial society brought into existence an even more powerful and elusive system of social control and human oppression than that of the Ancien Regime. Marcuse linked the pacification and administration of the individual to liberalism's trend of increasing and accelerating the mechanization of the mode of production via scientific and technological advances. Fueling the industrialization process with new organizational modes of labor, administrative bureaucracies, and the application of new technology initiated the shift from the emancipatory phase of the bourgeois era into what Marcuse would eventually call one-dimensional society.

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[90] Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution*, p. 437.

Marcuse's essay on the rise of technological rationality in advanced industrial society was thus his first attempt to conceptualize a new historical form of sovereignty that he would examine in detail decades later:

> Under the impact of this apparatus [technological domination of the mode of production], individualistic rationality has been transformed into technological rationality. It is by no means confined to the subjects and objects of large scale enterprises but characterizes the pervasive mode of thought and even the manifold forms of protest and rebellion. This rationality establishes standards of judgment and fosters attitudes which make men ready to accept and even to introcept the dictates of the apparatus.[91]

Marcuse's initial study on technological rationality is important, as William Leiss has pointed out, because it is here where Marcuse draws for the first time the connection between modern science's relationship of domination of nature and extends it to include the realm of human thought and behavior.[92] It is interesting to note, however, that many critics of Marcuse see this area of his work as overly dystopian and pessimistic when in fact he never lost hope in humanity's ability to overcome its one-dimensional condition under the reign of technological rationality and the one-dimensional universe it helped produce.

A productive question to ask at this point would be: what do Marcuse's critical studies of the positivist movement in the 1930s and 1940s tell us about his vision for a concrete, emancipatory reconfiguration of technological rationality? Does his critique of the merging of positivism with technological rationality in advanced industrial society leave room for concrete alternatives to emerge in society? One interesting place to begin to look for an answer to questions such as these would be to examine Marcuse's engagement with the scientific community in advanced industrial society.[93] Yet another productive way is to take a fresh look at the positivist dispute in Marcuse's early work, as indeed studies of positivism were a major strain of research and writing for the Institute for Social Research from its inception. Accordingly, in the following section we shall see how Marcuse framed his critique in relation to one of the most famous philosophers from the golden age of American philosophy: John Dewey.[94]

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[91] Herbert Marcuse, "Some Social Implications on Modern Technology," in *Technology, War, and Fascism*, op. cit., p. 44.

[92] See William Leiss, *The Domination of Nature* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972).

[93] See below Marcuse's essay on the "Responsibility of Science" and "World without Logos" both of which appeared in scientific publications, and which we publish below, pp. 155ff. and 141ff. We also discovered during our archival research a lecture Marcuse gave at Scripps Institution of Oceanography to scientists and graduate students. Here Marcuse's tenor is non-condemnatory, but rather hopeful in that he points to the agency that each scientist has in determining what type of research he/she does. Rejecting the aggressive and dominating forms of scientific research that capitalist society demands is a viable option that Marcuse pointed out to his audience.

DEWEY, TECHNOLOGICAL RATIONALITY, AND LIBERALISM

Marcuse's critique of Dewey's pragmatism should not be seen as peripheral to the larger body of his work. In fact, Marcuse's appraisal of the epistemological model underlying pragmatism offers some key insights from the standpoint of a critical and dialectical social theory on what role the methods of modern science should or should not have in constructing a critical social theory and emancipatory mode of politics.[95]

Marcuse was not the sole member of the Frankfurt School to level an attack at American pragmatism. Max Horkheimer took on the pragmatist school on multiple occasions, arguing essentially that the pragmatist philosophical movement in the United States was nothing more than positivism in sheep's clothing.[96] But Marcuse's critique of Dewey, as the essays we publish in this volume show, strikes specifically at the theory of valuation operating in Dewey's particular form of pragmatism. In short, Marcuse, differently from other Frankfurt School critiques, targeted Dewey's epistemology and theory of value that hinges on his notion of experimental inquiry.

At the most general level, Marcuse's critique of Dewey's experimental epistemology centers on Dewey's desire to utilize the standards and methodology of science in an attempt better to assess and guide industrial society's direction, which had produced an often non-functioning democratic public sphere. The goal of Dewey's "scientific democracy," which is perhaps most clearly articulated in his *The Public and its Problems* (1927), was to make more transparent and accountable the method in which communities within industrial society understood and communicated the problems associated with what he called "conjoint life."[97] As collectivities of individuals that were rapidly becoming more fragmented in social life—yet more interconnected in other ways through forms of industrial science and technology such as the telegraph, the urban factory, radio, and locomotive—Dewey turned to the methods and procedures of science to reconstitute what he saw as the heart to any living democracy: community.[98] The aim of *The Public and Its Problems* for Dewey thus was not only to offer a response to Walter Lippmann's famous claim that the public in the United States in the early twentieth century was nothing more than a nebulous mass guided by uninformed opinion, it was also an attempt to redefine what the public was and what it could be in a healthy democracy. For Dewey, an informed public that was self-determining and active in creating its existence had everything to do with cultivating the grounds for a democratic community to flourish. In opposition to Lippman's public that lacked a coherent community, Dewey theorized community from the ground up while stressing the importance of participatory "conjoint life" that rendered social and political decisions through the community based on forms of communication that were mediated by scientific methods.

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[94] For a critique of positivism in the German context, see Theodor W. Adorno, et al., *The Positivist Dispute in German Sociology* trans. Glyn Adey and David Frisby (Harper & Row Publishers, 1976).

[95] For our appreciation of Dewey's perspectives on education and of the relationships between the education theories and pedagogies of Marcuse, Dewey, Freire, Illich, and others, see Douglas Kellner, Tyson E. Lewis, and Clayton Pierce, *On Marcuse: Critique, Liberation, and Reschooling in the Radical Pedagogy of Herbert Marcuse* (Rotterdam, the Netherlands: Sense Publishers, 2009).

[96] See Max Horkheimer's *Eclipse of Reason* (New York: Continuum, 1974 [1947]) and his essay "On the Problem of Truth" in *Between Philosophy and Social Science*, translated by G. Frederick Hunter, Matthew S. Kramer, and John Torpey (New York: Continuum, 1993) where he takes a more general aim at the pragmatist movement in the United States. Thomas Wheatland in his book *The Frankfurt School in Exile* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009) has an entire chapter on "Dewey's Pit Bull: Sidney Hook and the Confrontation between Pragmatism and Critical Theory." Wheatland recounts the contacts between Hook, positivist Otto Neurath, and the Horkheimer group, and repeats Han Joas' claim that the Frankfurt School critique of pragmatism was skewed by overreliance on engaging William James' less rigorous and more spiritualist version (p. 363). This was not the case with Marcuse, however, whose critiques of Dewey that we offer here, published in the Institute journal, directly engage the form of scientific pragmatism that Hook himself took from Dewey and defended against the Frankfurt School.

It is within this aspect of Dewey's social theory, involving his turning to the methods of modern science for mediating social and political problems as a way to resurrect democratic life from the whims of progress under industrial capitalism, that Marcuse sees Dewey conflating human valuation and interest within the positivistic method of science. The thrust of Marcuse's critique of Dewey's epistemological framework is generated from the claim that experimental inquiry cultivates knowledge from an empirical context that has already been saturated with the rationality and cultural values of industrial society. Dewey's overreliance on existing socio-cultural environments for producing knowledge claims is thus problematic, according to Marcuse, because it accepts the extant political and material conditions of society while deriving solutions to social contradictions from established contexts without ever dealing with structural and socio-psychological features that underpin industrial capitalist society, especially in how they have been absorbed into the production processes under capitalism. How would Dewey's experimental epistemology take into account the effect of forms of industrial society and technology on the human psyche, or the ways in which machines disfigure a person's instinctual drives, for example? In what ways, in other words, is human subjectivity transformed within industrial society in a manner that naturalizes the given oppressive conditions instead of developing critical capacities that reject the underlying forces of production? Dewey's pragmatism in Marcuse's estimation allows progress as it has been defined through the development of liberalism to continue to shape the direction of society because the core values of liberalism (despite Dewey's strong critique of it) are allowed to advance uncontested precisely because the positivistic mode of science is unable to uproot the diseased values that have already taken hold in capitalist society and culture.[99]

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[97] The term "scientific democracy" that has been attributed to Dewey's theory of democracy can be found in Sheldon Wolin's classic work *Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006). This term is also used within the field of educational philosophy to describe Dewey's model of politics, which is informed by the methodology of modern science. See, for instance, James Scott Johnston's *Inquiry and Education: John Dewey and the Quest for Democracy* (New York: SUNY Press, 2006).

[98] Though Dewey's *The Public and Its Problems* articulates his idea of "scientific democracy" most clearly, it was his essay written for the International Encyclopedia of Unified Science, "Theory of Valuation," that Marcuse targeted in his critique, which we provide below. See Marcuse's critique of John Dewey, "Theory of Valuation" in the *International Encyclopedia of Unified Science*, vol. 2, no. 4 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), published below in this volume, pp. 87ff.

Marcuse's critique of Dewey's pragmatism highlights a core principle of critical theory in general, as well as Marcuse's unique approach to challenging dominant forms of thought in society: a critical appraisal of advanced industrial society should begin with an appreciation of the *negative and oppressive* dimensions of an experience of the empirical conditions of a society that has already been defined by the totalizing tendencies within the mode of production of capitalism and the attendant cultural values its production/consumption paradigm promotes. That is to say, from Marcuse's epistemological standpoint, the empirical contexts that make up the constellation of advanced society reflect the dominant culture produced by capitalism and thus are in dialectical opposition with concepts that could cultivate authentic growth of human freedom and equality in society. Marcuse's dialectical epistemology, in contrast, perceives empirical reality (especially within advanced industrial society) as something that is in direct conflict with ideas of human transformation, freedom, and the notion of a rational organization of life. In this sense, the value framework operating in Marcuse's epistemological model understands advanced capitalist society as a negative totality, whereas Dewey's experimental epistemology, which is shaped by positivistic principles according to Marcuse, proceeds from the point of view that society is a positive totality. Existing values for Dewey are thus adequate for realizing greater human freedom and equality so long as liberalism could be reclaimed by drawing upon the scientific method to undo the undemocratic features of industrial society.[100]

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[99] For Dewey's critique of liberalism and his conceptualization of "radical liberalism" see his *Liberalism and Social Action* (New York: Prometheus Books, 1991).

Marcuse's critique of Dewey's positivist turn thus strives to show that Dewey's "attempt to save the scientific validity of values" relies on "what common-sense considers to be reasonable: a happy and successful adaptation to existing conditions, a thorough weighting of means and consequences, of liabilities and resources." It also points out that "[t]he problem of validity of the ends is replaced by the problem of the adequacy and consequences of the means."[101] For Marcuse, Dewey's focus on the "consequences of the means" of science and technology fails to question what are taken to be objective facts in society. What Marcuse had in mind in his critique of Dewey's pragmatism, and what his study on Dewey's theory of value illustrates about his larger examination of positivism, is that as a lens for understanding social and political contradictions, positivism is unable to prevent existing facts within the objective structure of society from becoming part of an oppressive and brutal totality. Marcuse thus saw totalitarianism as the inevitable endpoint of liberalism and the turn to scientific methods for mediating public problems and social contradictions, even if it was critical of liberalism's overemphasis on the individual and senseless pursuit of wealth as Dewey certainly was. For Marcuse, Dewey's pragmatism forfeited the question of value, critique, and transformation to the "common-sense" knowledge embodied in the empirical reality and thus helped reproduce advanced industrial society.

The difference in approach to the question of where values and what values should enter the scientific process is not only present in Marcuse's critique, however, it is also clearly visible in Dewey's own critique of dialectical thought: "The considerations that apply to 'immediate' apply also to 'intrinsic' and 'inherent.' A quality, including that of value, is inherent if it actually belongs to something, and the question of whether or not it belongs is one of *fact* and not a question that can be decided by dialectical manipulation of the concept of inherency."[102] For Dewey, in other words, it is less a question of how interests and desires are involved in shaping human valuation, but is rather more how the means to a different end in valuation can occur. That is, how the scientific method of empirical investigation can identify and influence the habits of human individuals through "verifiable propositions regarding matters-of-fact" and direct them toward a better, well informed human life is what was of great concern for Dewey.[103]

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[100] Dewey certainly has a critical relationship to modern liberalism. Similar to Frankfurt School theorists, Dewey argued that liberalism had ceased to be a progressive form of politics and had become affirmative in industrial society. Dewey's call for a "radical liberalism," however, rests on the wager that scientific democracy can pull liberalism from its distorted industrial form. In this sense, Dewey is quite different from Marcuse in that one is betting on progressive reform while the other is looking to revolutionary transformation to provide emancipatory alternatives to bourgeois society. See John Dewey, *Liberalism and Social Action*, op. cit. On Dewey's liberalism, see Alan Ryan, *John Dewey and the High Tide of Liberalism* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997).

[101] This quote comes from one of Marcuse's lectures on "positivism and dialectical thought" that was accessed through the Herbert Marcuse archive in Los Angeles, p. 9. The title of the lecture is "On Positivism" and is dated 1939. This lecture was most likely given at Columbia in the late 1930s or early 1940s when the Institute for Social Research was temporarily residing in New York while in exile from Nazi Germany. It is likely that this lecture was part of a course led by Max Horkheimer titled "Authoritarian Thought and Institutions of Europe."

What makes the question of human values, of whether value claims are intrinsic or external to the practice of science and application of technology, so important and why we are emphasizing it here, is that it gives a greater depth to our understanding of how Marcuse viewed science and technology not as neutral methods and asocial objects, but also as a mode of cultural epistemology that enabled capitalism to expand and to control human thought and behavior. For Marcuse, such an affirmative quality is especially apparent in Dewey's experimental methodology because it has no way of differentiating between the underlying rationality of liberalism that, for Marcuse, leads to a totalitarian state as opposed to an alternative society that promotes the conditions for greater human freedom and a healthier and less destructive relationship with the natural world and other human beings. Dewey's experimental epistemology, in Marcuse's final analysis, thus had no way of averting the fact that the goals of fascism "are terribly reasonable if regarded in the continuum of ends and means, [and] did not arise 'casually' [but] were formed on the basis of existing liabilities and potential resources."[104]

As with Marcuse's critique of positivism, Dewey's experimental methodology, while attempting to involve scientific and technological decisions in a democratic framework, had no mechanism for assessing how human desires and interests co-evolve with the dominant tenets of liberalism in a way that self-justifies the foundations of capitalist society. Put differently, even if

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[102] John Dewey, *Theory of Valuation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939) p. 27. This publication was part of Otto Neurath's project to complete an "International Encyclopedia of Unified Science." For Marcuse's critique, see below, pp. 87ff). Other contributors included noted positivists of the pre-World War II period such as Rudolph Carnap, Bertrand Russell, Niels Bohr, and Carl Gustav Hempel. The names alone that comprise this group suggest that Dewey was active in contributing to positivist projects within the philosophy of science and thus set him up as a target for the Frankfurt School.

[103] Ibid., p. 66.

[104] Marcuse, "Idealism and Positivism," op. cit., p. 92. We should bear in mind that Marcuse's critique of Dewey in the late 1930s and early 1940s was during the fascist era. Later, Marcuse would see in the rise of one-dimensional society a new mode of totalitarianism.

Dewey's proposal to democratize the findings and actions of science through greater public dissemination, engaged community input, and an application of scientific standards to important public concerns, his experimental epistemology, according to Marcuse, still has no way of dealing with human valuations that have been deeply ingrained into human (sub)consciousness and social arrangements ever since Hobbes' individual stepped out of the wilderness and voluntarily agreed to enter into civil society. Security and protection from a nasty, short, and brutish existence that once promised the individual the space for greater human freedom to grow and develop, one might say for Marcuse, is the defining feature of liberalism and is at the heart of its system of domination. Further, it is the desire for security and prosperity through dominating nature and human groups that Dewey's epistemological standpoint fails to eliminate what Marcuse saw as the continued cultivation of the death drive within Western civilization as opposed to instincts that support and generate life and health—a topic we take up in following sections engaging Marcuse's encounter with Freud.

Thus, for Marcuse, Dewey offers no dialectical counterpart or normative standpoint from which to strive or challenge existing conceptualizations of freedom and equality in society. From the standpoint of Marcuse's latter work, Dewey's thought hypostatizes scientific investigation without an adequate inquiry into the context from which it is derived *and* the social and cultural contexts it simultaneously helps support and reproduce. Marcuse's detection of the positivist tendency in Dewey's pragmatism, when viewed alongside Marcuse's latter critique of culture in the United States, is an early documentation of American philosophy's inability to overcome its own success:

> In the entire endeavor to materialize traditional logic as a pragmatistic instrument of concrete research, Dewey's logic remains (in its decisive moment) idealistic. The fixed point to which logical thought should be applied is the "inquiry": the existing scientific investigation. Though the inquiry is seen in its organic and "cultural" conditions, its structure will not be altered by these conditions. In fact, it "produces" the world which stands in question for logic. It is a world "by grace of science," and further, [t]he subject of research is not analyzed by Dewey. All epistemological and even metaphysical problems, which are sovereignly pushed aside, will reappear elsewhere unanswered.[105]

In view of the central role science and technology played in economic development in the post-World War II period, Dewey's hope for a "scientific democracy" where the activity of science and technology could be mediated through an active and critically reflective democratic public seems quite unrealistic. With this said, however, it would have been difficult for Dewey to foresee the extent to which the potential for science and technology to be democratically transformed would erode at such a rapid rate. Massive entities such as university research laboratories largely funded by military and corporate interests, gigantic think-tanks designed to guide and influence social policy, and a vast array of policy-makers, scientists, bureaucrats, researchers, and investors who comprise shifting groups of stakeholders and actors in a complex and technocratic system of scientific and technological knowledge production is something that Dewey probably did not see on the horizon.[106] But what is of particular interest for the purposes of understanding and interpreting the development of Marcuse's philosophy of science and technology, is that for him scientific and technological methods could not be graphed onto a democratic public without first addressing the fact that the public already retains a qualitative and social being, one that has been shaped by the dynamic forces of capitalist society. In Dewey's pragmatism, which turned to positivism for methodological guidance, Marcuse saw a trend endemic in the culture of the United States, even in one of its most progressive thinkers of the twentieth century.

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[105] Herbert Marcuse, "Review of John Dewey's *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*" in *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* 8 (1939–40) pp. 221–28. Translated by Phillip Deen and published below, pp. 180ff.

We can see from our analysis of Marcuse's critique of Dewey that a key point of divergence is the question of value and specifically how it is dealt with in their respective theories of knowledge, experimental and dialectical. For Marcuse and his negative and critical framing of advanced industrial society, the social and cultural values produced through the totalizing structures of capitalism had to be overcome if real qualitative change was going to take place; society needed an alternative set of core values beyond what liberalism and modern science could provide. A transvaluation of values, in other words, had to begin at the cultural and individual levels for Marcuse, which, as we saw above, could not be achieved through a reconstruction of human subjectivity through the scientific method and experimental practice.

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[106] Marcuse indeed was very concerned with the actual production of scientific knowledge in research sites, especially universities. During our investigations into the Marcuse archive, we found numerous speeches and lectures Marcuse gave to working scientists and students of science and engineering that reflect a level of engagement by Marcuse in the actual arena of scientific production. Perhaps the most striking examples from these materials was a copy of a lecture Marcuse gave at Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California, San Diego. In this lecture Marcuse challenged the faculty as well as graduate students to reject capitalist values that underpinned research in many laboratories across the United States. Marcuse reminded the knowledge workers at Scripps that they had the abiliry to redefine science around non-aggressive and socially healthy values and aesthetics. In this volume we are publishing a more formal essay Marcuse wrote on the "Responsibility of Science" (below, pp. 155ff). Throughout the unpublished archival material, it is clear that Marcuse was actively investigating modes of scientific knowledge production in major U.S. research sites, as well as criticizing technological rationality and one-dimensional thought.

Tinkering with human values by subjecting them to methodological scrutiny after the fact would not eliminate the needs and desires that industrial society had cultivated in individuals; there needed to be a total rejection (cognitive and libidinal) of the existing values that comprised the aggressive and alienating culture that had been produced through the progress of industrial society. Dewey's claim, according to Marcuse, that positivism could dismiss existing values in society by judging their validity against results or consequences made it a particularly inadequate tool for politics if realizing greater equality, freedom, and social and natural harmony, rather than capitalist social efficiency standards such as productivity, were to be the ultimate goals.

Yet at the same time it must be acknowledged that Marcuse's unpublished essay on positivism (1939) from which his critique of Dewey is largely based, does not take into account Dewey's broader democratic theory, which is grounded in active and participatory forms of knowledge production within communities. Furthermore, Dewey's critique of capitalism and socialism is widely documented in much of his work; science and technology under the auspices of industrialized society were just as potentially destructive and dehumanizing to Dewey as they were to Marcuse.[107]

Finally, there is also the issue of historical context that must be taken into consideration. Marcuse's critique of Dewey was most likely done as part of the groundwork for *Reason and Revolution*, which was published in 1941. As such, Dewey would not live to see the transfiguration of pragmatism into its technocratic form that we see today, a theme much of Marcuse's later work would take up. The question still remains, however, as to whether or not Dewey's pragmatic epistemology, the heart of his project for rehabilitating democracy in an industrialized age, is an adequate model in which to deal with the depths to which the mode of production and culture in advanced industrialized society reach into the very being of the human subject.

What emerges from our analysis of Marcuse's treatment of Dewey is a standpoint better from which to view the development of Marcuse's model of dialectical thinking. Marcuse's critique of other philosophical movements such as idealism, positivism, and pragmatism offers us a strong position in which to assess the evolution of his dialectical philosophy. Though Marcuse's indictment of Dewey may be overly condemnatory, it nonetheless captures very well a key distinction between critical theory and pragmatism particularly in a time when some versions of pragmatism in the United States stood for little more than technocratic control of policy decisions—a far cry from Dewey's active and highly participatory model.[108] In this sense, Marcuse sees in positivism the same reluctance to critique material conditions of inequality that were latent within Heidegger's project. In both instances, what remains is a certain complicity with the structures of bourgeois society that in the end limit philosophical claims to "radical" interventions. Heidegger and Dewey might critique technology, but in the end, the extreme consequences of their views unchecked by a robust critical social theory dialectically transform into their opposites. What can safely be said therefore is that Marcuse perhaps anticipated how pragmatism's affinity for the methods and practices of modern science left it defenseless to capitalism's astounding ability to transform everything into its own image. A fair claim that could be made about the limitation of Dewey's pragmatism today, in other words, is that Dewey lacked a theory for understanding how human subjectivity was increasingly being habituated under a "Reality Principle" that mirrored the needs and desires of a highly affluent society. Thus Marcuse's integration of a Freudian–Marxist analysis of capitalist society into his critical theory of society is something Dewey's critique of industrial society lacks. As Marcuse puts it:

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[107] On Dewey's critique of capitalism, see Robert Kent, "Dewey & the Project of Critical Theory," *Social Thought & Research*, vol. 23, nos 1&2, pp. 1–43 and Peter T. Manicas, *Rescuing Dewey: Essays in Pragmatic Naturalism* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008).

> Mass democracy provides the political paraphernalia for effectuating this introjection of the Reality Principle; it not only permits the people (up to a point) to choose their own masters and to participate (up to a point) in the government which governs them—it also allows the masters to disappear behind the technological veil of the productive and destructive apparatus which they control, and it conceals the human (and material) costs of the benefits and comforts which it bestows upon those who collaborate.[109]

In the following section we will pose the question of whether or not Marcuse's psychoanalytic theory still remains useful for understanding the inter-subjective dimension of the individual in the contemporary era. More precisely, we suggest that Marcuse's blending of Freud and Marx, as a philosophical lens for interpreting human subjectivity in a postindustrial, global capitalist society, is still highly relevant today. Our claim is not based on any romantic yearning for an age long passed; neither is it an uncritical look at Marcuse's psychoanalytic theory's expansion of the Marxist understanding of forms of domination and oppression within capitalist society. In fact, we argue that critics within the Lacanian and psychoanalytic-Marxist literature that situate Marcuse as an "anachronistic" figure miss the point that his seemingly "obsolescent" brand of psychoanalytic Marxism is well suited for interpreting the current biopolitical landscape of contemporary global capitalism.

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[108] Not all former members of the Frankfurt School were in agreement that Dewey's pragmatism was merely a positivist theory of society. Remarking in a letter to Marcuse on his assessment of Dewey, Leo Löwenthal states: "Your demurer on Dewey has been duly noted and been dismissed at the same time. The guy [Dewey] is not bad at all." Letter from Leo Löwenthal to Herbert Marcuse, September 28, 1963, from the Leo Löwenthal archives in Frankfurt. It does seem that Marcuse perhaps unfairly lumps Dewey into the positivist camp without situating his experimental epistemology within his larger social and democratic theory. One reason we suspect Marcuse made the connection between the positivist movement in Europe and Dewey is the fact that Dewey was publishing work in prestigious positivist literature such as Otto Neurath's *International Encyclopedia of Unified Science*. Thus it is easy to see how Dewey might have been found by the Frankfurt School to be guilty by association.

[109] Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1974 [1955]), p. xii.

MARCUSE'S PHILOSOPHICAL APPROPRIATIONS OF FREUD

Following Marcuse's engagement with Marx's early writings, particularly the publication of the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, and his subsequent commitment to theories of desires, needs, and potentialities in a historical materialist framework, Marcuse ultimately abandoned his attempts to synthesize phenomenology and Marxism. Although Marcuse went significantly beyond Heidegger,[110] the original question fueling this inquiry remained: how to understand the self in relation to "world" and history? Thus the search for a Heideggerian "authentic self" became the search for real, vital needs set against false, destructive needs generated by capitalism. Likewise, Marcuse's stalled project to forge a dialectical phenomenology was sublated into the search for a new relationship between Freudian psychoanalysis and Marxist social theory. It was in a radical re-reading of psychoanalysis that Marcuse ultimately discovered the theoretical tools necessary to explore the multiple intersections between the individual, psyche, and society, thus overcoming Heidegger's pessimism, abstractness, and dismissal of public action. Perhaps the only way in which Marcuse was able to salvage the critical and emancipatory aspects of Heidegger was in the end to sublate Heidegger via Freud. Thus, in the late, metaphysical Freud, Marcuse discovered a new utopian kernel for resisting the internalization of instrumental reason and for the foundations of new revolutionary or multidimensional subjectivity lacking in the phenomenological, idealist, and pragmatist schools of philosophy.

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[110] In his book *Heidegger and Marcuse*, Andrew Feenberg argues that Heideggerian motifs remain operative throughout Marcuse's work, in particular concerning Heidegger's notion of a technological civilization that obliterates past forms of life. While we agree that Heideggerian motifs continue to be present in Marcuse's work during his last decades, he rarely explicitly refers to Heidegger and we see the Heideggerian motifs sublated in the Marxian–Freudian problematic that Marcuse henceforth explicitly develops. We suspect that the Heideggerian ontological problematic that Feenberg finds throughout Marcuse was kept more or less hidden, or implicit, due to the prohibition against ontology by orthodox critical theory, especially Adorno (although as with Marcuse, there is sometimes crypto or hidden ontology in Adorno). On Adorno's critique of metaphysics, see Buck-Morss, *Origins of Negative Dialectics.*

With Marcuse's previous philosophical perspectives in view, Marcuse's turn to Freud might seem surprising, although, with Wilhelm Reich, Erich Fromm, and others, Marcuse realized that a synthesis of Marx and Freud would fill gaps in the Marxian theory, such as lack of a theory of consciousness and subjectivity. A Freudian–Marxian synthesis could help explain why revolutionary consciousness had failed to develop among the masses of the working class in the twentieth century, why many members of various groups and class factions turned to fascism, and yet how emancipation could take place within the subject itself.[111] In any case, as we shall see, Marcuse offered an original and highly philosophical reading of Freud, one that was and still is immensely controversial.

Eros and Civilization articulates broad critical perspectives on domination and liberation that characterize Marcuse's mature philosophy. After an analysis of the obstacles to liberation in his theory of civilization and domination in the first part of the book, Marcuse discusses prospects for liberation. Marcuse is responding here to the cultural pessimism generated by the theories of Freud, Weber, and, as we have demonstrated above, Heidegger, as well as to the philosophical pessimism of Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and by the failure of the Marxian theory of revolution and socialism to produce what he took to be an emancipated society. *Eros and Civilization* appeared during a decade when pessimistic cultural philosophies were widespread in intellectual circles, and when social scientists declared the "end of ideology"—which meant the end of utopian-revolutionary projects of social reconstruction. In this climate of cultural despair among left intellectuals and conformity among dominant social theorists, Marcuse turned to study and defend the most radical ideas in the Western cultural heritage. The second half of *Eros and Civilization* contains sketches of Marcuse's utopian philosophy and outlines of his notion of a non-repressive civilization that directly counters theories that were rejecting such radical and utopian projects.

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[111] In a December 28, 1978 interview in La Jolla, Marcuse told Douglas Kellner that he turned to intensive study of Freud because he was aware of the absence in Marxism of emphasis on individual liberation and the psychological dimension. Marcuse claimed that he wanted to produce a theory that would explain why revolutionary consciousness had failed to develop and that could identify the subjective conditions that led individuals to conform to fascism, Stalinism, and consumer capitalism. He stated that he had read Freud in the 1920s, and had also studied the Marx–Freud debates at that time, recalling articles by Siegfried Bernfeld and others. He believed that the first of Wilhelm Reich's works which he read was *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* (New York: Farrar, Straus Giroux, 1980; third edition), but did not remember reading Reich's earlier work until later. Marcuse said that he and other members of the Institute for Social Research believed that Reich "moved too fast from subjective conditions to objective conditions" and "vastly oversimplified" fascism in claiming that sexual repression created personalities who were susceptible to fascism, and in explaining fascism's success through its ability to manipulate sexual repression and provide sexual surrogates. Marcuse claimed that he and his Institute colleagues thought that more adequate socio-economic analysis was needed to explain fascism and that a more thoroughgoing mediation between subjective and objective conditions was necessary as well.

Indeed, Marcuse's theory of Eros contains an admirable defense of the life-affirming, creative characteristics of human nature. Previous philosophers—from Plato, Augustine, and Kant to the present day—have tended to emphasize the destructive and asocial features of the derivatives of Eros (i.e., sexual obsessions and perversions, destructive passion, uncontrollable desire, and so on). Against this ascetic tradition, Marcuse defends erotic energies as the very principle of life and creativity. His linking of aesthetic and erotic dimensions of human experience is also important in both explicating features of an emancipated individual and a non-repressive society.

Marcuse finds testimony to the hope of liberation not only in Freud's instinct theory, but also in the classics of modernist art and an oppositional philosophical tradition that stressed the importance of human happiness and freedom. In the 1950s, Marcuse returned to his early interests in literature and aesthetics, taking up once again the study of Schiller, the aesthetics of German idealism, and modernist avant garde literature. At the same time, he began studying Fourier and utopian socialism. Marcuse sought to investigate the relation between cultural radicalism and political change, and the relation between art and liberation. He felt that Marx had neglected these themes and failed to describe the emancipatory political potential in art. Marcuse emphasized in an interview with Douglas Kellner the continuity in these concerns with his early interest in literature and aesthetics, but insisted that he now wanted to develop these themes in the context of the critical theory of society and Marxian revolutionary theory (interview in La Jolla, December 28, 1978).

Marcuse's appropriation of Freud thus led him to return to the aesthetic inquiries he was pursuing in the 1920s and that would henceforth be part of his critical theory that synthesized critical philosophy and social theory, aesthetics, and politics in a dialectic of domination and liberation, first sketched out in full in *Eros and Civilization*—a text that still has contemporary relevance for critical theory and psychoanalysis, as we shall argue below.

CRITICISMS OF MARCUSE'S INTERPRETATION OF FREUD

The general reception of Marcuse's utopian reading of Freud's pessimistic assessment of society was and is polarized. Criticisms of Marcuse have often taken one of two forms. Some have remained firmly within a broadly Freudian framework and have attacked Marcuse on the level of content. Here the issue lies with Marcuse's particular interpretation of certain key

Freudian concepts. Joel Whitebook, for instance, has argued that Marcuse's overly enthusiastic utopianism is predicated on a rather simplistic—if not hubristic—view of the unconscious as an uncontaminated resource for fighting against the reigning reality principle.[112] For instance, Marcuse wrote that the unconscious is "the immediate identity of necessity and freedom,"[113] and that perversions "place themselves outside the dominion of the performance principle [a historical manifestation of the reality principle] and challenge its very foundation."[114] From such statements, his critics claim that Marcuse does not recognize that perversion and phantasy are constituted through trauma and are thus always already mired by the reality principle which they rebel against. Others within the Freudian camp might convincingly argue that Marcuse's conflation of needs and instincts with the Freudian concepts of desires and drives, as well as conflating psychoanalytic repression with institutional oppression, lead to a series of confusing and imprecise pseudo-concepts that do not help clarify the relations between psychoanalysis and Marxism.

From a slightly different angle, Eugene Victor Wolfenstein further critiques Marcuse's utopian leanings.[115] Rather than face the inherently contradictory nature of intersubjective, political relations, Wolfenstein asserts that Marcuse retreats into an "either/or" logic that denies the power of his own dialectical thought process. To escape the anxiety of human interaction, Marcuse posits a "bad totality" in the form of one-dimensional society, which must be rejected in full for a multidimensional utopia. The ultimate consequence is that the focus on psycho-social relationships that Marcuse attempted to formulate is displaced into questionable and largely uncritical accounts to Freudian libidinal energy mapped onto political theory. Thus, in order to defeat time and live without anxiety, Marcuse slips into pure imaginary phantasy that does not help the struggle for emancipation so much as fall victim to what Wolfenstein calls "philosophical repression"[116]—a repression of the anxiety of psycho-social reality. For Wolfenstein, Marxist ontology and Freudian biology collapse into a utopian idealism in Marcuse's conceptions.

From this "false set" of premises, Marcuse's critics claim that he is proposing a correspondingly "naïve" politics of "perversion." Yet such a reading fails to recognize that Marcuse positioned his own psychoanalytic politics against those of Norman O. Brown precisely because of Brown's mystical proclivities.[117] As opposed to Brown, Marcuse's own theory of perversion was tempered by an equal emphasis on critical reason. Although Eros might be the strongest element of consciousness, reason is not abandoned. In fact, it is critical reason that sustains the order of gratification. Thus, Marcuse's theory of phantasy—speculative and imaginative as it is—cannot be read in isolation from his rehabilitation of reason, for all sensual daydreaming (phantasy) and sexual gratification (perversion) must be consistent with rational human action to achieve freedom beyond the limits imposed by bourgeois social norms, values, and pleasures. In fact, as Mark Stohs has demonstrated, Marcuse's brand of Marxian psychoanalysis is far from simplistic or naïve, synthesizing as it does cognitive, emotional, and social dimensions of existence in relation to the realities of poverty and global injustice.[118]

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[112] Joel Whitebook, *Perversion and Utopia: A Study in Psychoanalysis and Critical Theory* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996).

[113] Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization*, p. 18.

[114] Op. cit., p. 50.

[115] Eugene Victor Wolfenstein, *Psychoanalytic-Marxism: Groundwork* (New York: Guilford Press, 1993).

[116] Ibid., p. 89.

Indeed, Marcuse consistently called in *Eros and Civilization* and later texts for a reconstruction of reason involving a "libidinal rationality" and overcoming of divisions between reason and passion, mind and body. Hence, we would argue that Marcuse's overall gesture toward a new multidimensional notion of a revolutionary subject is a useful one and should not be foreclosed upon because of certain alleged inadequacies within his articulation. In fact, what appears problematic now from some current perspectives was, at the time, a genuine attempt to wrestle with the potentially radical political possibilities emerging from the New Left and social movements of the 1960s. As such, we cannot simply dismiss Marcuse's claims without first recognizing their historical specificity as well as the radical nature of the inquiry itself.

Here we meet the second criticism of Marcuse. Unlike the first, which remains within a Freudian world poised between biology (needs) and language (the symbolic order), the second critique of Marcuse is launched from within a communications model and attacks the very form of his reading.

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[117] Although Marcuse maintained a very cordial friendship with Norman O. Brown, in a letter to Leo Löwenthal he wrote on November 7, 1960 in regard to the publication of Brown's *Life Against Death*: "Dear Leo: A long time ago I should have answered your letter re. Norman Brown. You should have realized that I am in a peculiar situation: it certainly did not evade your all-embracing attention that the ideas advanced in this book bear great resemblance to those presented in *Eros and Civilization*. In fact I discussed these ideas with Norman Brown some time before his book was written. So much for that. I am aware of the fact that Norman Brown's book goes far beyond my modest suggestions but I cannot fail to note in his work two tendencies where are quite repulsive to me: 1—a strong revivalist, mystical religious undertone; 2—a complete escape from political conditions. In point of fact I think that much of the book is some kind of patricide committed against Father Marx." (From the Leo Löwenthal archives in Frankfurt). Marcuse offered a more nuanced published response to Brown in "Love Mystified: A critique of Norman O. Brown" and "A Reply to Herbert Marcuse by Norman O. Brown," in *Negations*, op. cit., pp. 227–47.

[118] Mark Stohs, "The Role of Hedonism in Marcuse's Early Thought" in *Man and World*, vol. 9, no. 4 (1976) pp. 325–41.

Thus authors such as Anthony Wilden have critiqued Marcuse for his return to a biological Freud as opposed to a linguistic reading (à la Lacan).[119] In this case, Wilden objects to Marcuse's uncritical endorsement of Freudian pseudo-science, which allegedly detracts from Freud's more radical communications theory and burgeoning theory of intersubjectivity. Also from within the Lacanian field of psychoanalysis, Adrian Johnston[120] has argued that Marcuse's major error resides in his insistence on the production of new revolutionary needs. For Johnston, a utopian break with the present is only possible through a "break with needs altogether."[121] For Johnston, utopianism should be rethought as a type of duty-based ethic beyond needs and beyond the theme of happiness (a radical deontological ethic). Because Freud's theory of the libido is inherently locked within the interaction between past and present, Marcuse's emphasis on the protests of the libidinal unconscious against society through dreams and phantasies will never really be able to turn itself toward the future. The future here is always already simply a return to the past and as such is not the radical rupture that utopia promises.

Yet this Lacanian reading proceeds too quickly, throwing the baby out with the bathwater. As a philosophical interpretation of Freudian biolinguistic theory, we would like to argue that Marcuse's theoretical insights remain highly provocative, initiating a series of generative and fruitful problematics. While we might agree with Wilden that Marcuse's acceptance of certain aspects of Freud's biologism goes too far, the general emphasis on the finite yet historical biological nature of the human animal is not to be rejected entirely. In fact, the biological Freud might very well be a new point of genealogical entry for a rethinking of biopower and biopolitics from within a Freudian/Marxist/Marcusean theoretical horizon. As with Benjamin and Adorno's concept of "natural history," we can argue that Marcuse's retention of the biological dimension of Freud's theory explores the transience of human needs.[122] In fact, Benjamin has argued that the history of humanity's organic life on earth—a life that amounts to mere seconds within the total history of the universe—is a model for the abridgment that one experiences in the historical moment of messianic revolution.[123] The key difference would be that whereas Benjamin and Adorno focus on decay as the dialectical mediation between nature and culture, for Marcuse, the inflection is toward growth and maturation of the unfulfilled potential within our biological drives and needs. Dialectically speaking, it is nature that makes us fully historical and it is history that calls into question the universality of "Nature" as a fixed biological substratum. Given the current emphasis on the connections between biology and social life as principle sites for political control and struggle,[124] Wilden's dismissal of Marcuse as "anachronistic" seems itself to be a grave theoretical mistake. Rather than see the erotic as simply symbolic poetics, Marcuse retains an emphasis on the actual body as an ontic (and thus fully historical) and biological locus of contestation, providing a site wherein biopower can be resisted by a new notion of biopolitics.

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[119] See Anthony Wilden, *System and Structure: Essays in Communication and Exchange* (New York: Routledge, 2003) and his specific critique of Marcuse in "Marcuse and the Freudian Model" in *The Legacy of the German Refugee Intellectuals*, special issue of *Salmagundi*, nos 10–11 (Fall 1969/Winter 1970) pp. 196–245.

[120] Adrian Johnston, "A Blast from the Future: Freud, Lacan, Marcuse, and Snapping the Threads of the Past" in *Umbr(a): Utopia*, no.1 (2008) pp. 67–88.

[121] Ibid., p. 79.

[122] See Beatrice Hanssen, *Walter Benjamin's Other History: Of Stones, Animals, Human Beings, and Angels* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

[123] Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken Books, 1969) p. 263.

If Marcuse's attempt to mediate the historical materialist ontology of Marx with the biology of Freud is not to be rejected but rather revisited in the spirit of revision and recuperation, then we must think through a series of problematics opened up by Marcuse. We would like to examine three of these problematics that emerge from a close scrutiny of Marcuse's relation to psychoanalysis. The separate problematics below are a bit artificial, for each blends into the other, demonstrating interconnections between the themes that need to be developed. Yet, for the interests of critical analysis, we will present each problematic separately so as to demonstrate its unique ramifications for reimagining Marcusian theory and politics today. In the end we will reassess claims that Marcuse has become "obsolete," arguing for a dialectical reading of Marcuse that does not romantically valorize his philosophy or dismiss it *tout court*.

THREE PROBLEMATICS

1. The Question of Myth and History

First we must engage Marcuse's attempt to historicize Freud. Like Freud, Marcuse finds in civilization a growing discontent, both arguing that libidinal repression is a necessary feature of labor. Yet there is also the point at which the two theorists diverge. Repression is necessary in Freud; likewise it is universal—a consistent feature of society as such. But for Marcuse, the necessity of repression is always a historical necessity, resulting from a particular form of social production and reproduction predicated on the scarcity of goods. "Scarcity," writes Marcuse, "teaches men that they cannot freely gratify their instinctual impulses, that they cannot live under the pleasure principle."[125] Thus Freud's theory of the reality principle and of repression must be given historical specificity. For instance, there is a need to rethink Freud's theory of the Oedipal struggle between child and biological father. For Freud, our basic psychological disposition is formed through our early childhood experiences with our parents. Young boys enter into an ambivalent relationship with their fathers, who interrupt the sensual pleasures gained from the mother. The resulting Oedipal drama creates a certain critical perspective on the authority of the father, who is both loved and also hated. On a personal and private level, the Oedipal drama crystallizes the more general and public tensions between individual needs and the social and economic realities of society.

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[124] See, for instance, Michel Foucault's *The Birth of Biopolitics* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008) and his *Society Must be Defended* (New York: Picador, 2003), which links biopolitics to neo-liberalism, as well as Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (London: Penguin Books, 2004), which focuses on the biopolitical struggles of the multitude against the globalized logic of war in the age of empire. Also see Roberto Esposito's *Bios: Biopolitics and Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

As such, the Oedipal complex develops the forms of submissiveness and rebelliousness that characterize our struggles in later life, providing a "semi-autonomous" sphere to develop resistance to one-dimensional, administered society. Yet in advanced capitalism, the traditional role of the private Oedipal drama is replaced by direct socialization—in other words, the familial father's primacy gives way to that of the institutional fathers of the media and of the social world at large. As Marcuse writes: "The classical psychoanalytic model, in which the father and the father-dominated family was the agent of mental socialization, is being invalidated by society's direct management of the nascent ego through the mass media, school and sport teams, gangs, etc."[126]

If one's relationship to society was at one time mediated through the private sphere of the family, now the psychological development of the ego is immediately identified with the social order. The distinction between the individual and the masses becomes increasingly blurred. For Marcuse, "The multidimensional dynamic by which the individual attained and sustained his own balance between autonomy and heteronomy, freedom and repression, pleasure and pain, has given way to a one-dimensional static identification of the individual with the others and with the administered reality principle."[127] The ego no longer has the capacity to resist social messages imposed from the outside, resulting in the evisceration of the negative and thus critical capacities of reason. The result is a standardization—a coordination of interior psychological dynamics and external social forces—that affects the whole mental structure and individual thought and behavior.

Taking into consideration Marcuse's critical assessment of Dewey, it is clear how Dewey's pragmatism had no way of dealing with the integration

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125 Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization*, op. cit., pp. 16–17.

126 Herbert Marcuse, *Five Lectures* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970) p. 47.

127 Ibid.

of instinctual drives into dominant consumer habits through leisure and mass communication technologies such as radio, television, movies, magazines, and advertising, which have as their aim increased profit margins and the assimilation of individual freedom into the framework of market needs. Similarly, Dewey's pragmatism for Marcuse fails to assess how human needs and desires have increasingly become calculated factors within a larger process of a predatory capitalism that sustains itself through militarism and corporate interests that are protected by technologies designed with values such as security, surveillance, and precision death in mind instead of the development of a more peaceful and healthy condition for human life.

If Freud's theory of the individual is problematic for Marcuse, so too is his theory of group psychology. For Freud, mass psychology is described as an "extrojection" of consciousness into an external agent—the leader. While Marcuse sees evidence of the evisceration of individual critical consciousness within mass society, he nevertheless calls into question Freud's account of the leader.[128] Within the affluent society, the leader as a substitute for the father has ceased to exist. Rather it is in "capitalism" or "nationalism" as pure abstractions that become highly cathected libidinal identifications. In other words, the principles of social control and libidinal repression are no longer located in specific individuals but rather in what Marcuse refers to as "the authority of the prevailing productive apparatus."[129] Here individuals act only as temporary ciphers for a much more complex system of social and institutional relations with which the subject directly identifies. The result is the overall death of the Freudian individual and of the Freudian concept of group psychology. These sweeping changes in both advanced industrial society and the accompanying primary psychological structures of the subject result in a return to what Freud would describe as the primal horde. The primal horde's libidinal economy is characterized by an overturning of Eros as a love of life with Thanatos in the form of pent-up aggression. Eerily, Marcuse argues that this aggression becomes "the normalized social and political use of aggressive energy in the state of permanent preparedness" and the "growth of popular extremism in the masses."[130] Such warnings ring true today in our own perpetual state of global emergency brought forth by the endless war on terror and rise of religious fundamentalism, as well as explosions of societal violence.[131]

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[128] See Sigmund Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1989).

[129] Unpublished draft of the essay "Obsolescence of Psychoanalysis" prepared for delivery at the 1963 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, New York City, Commodore Hotel, September 4–7, 1963, p. 8; published as "The Obsolescence of the Freudian Concept of Man" in *Five Lectures*, pp. 44ff. We have included "Obsolescence of Psychoanalysis" is this volume since it is unpublished and has the key points in the published version in their original form. While Marcuse is broadly correct that extrojection in the post-World War II era takes place on a systematic level in terms of identification with the social system more than identification and cathexis with leaders, in the 2000s, politicians and media pundits may become objects of adoration and extrojection, as was the case for some time after the 9/11 terror attacks for George W. Bush and as was evident in the reception of Sarah Palin and Barack Obama by ecstatic crowds in the 2008 election.

Given the weakening of the Oedipal drama as a supposedly timeless condition—what Fredric Jameson has rightly described as the "waning of affect"[132] in late capitalism—Marcuse has importantly historicized the Freudian reality principle in terms of the performance principle. As defined by Marcuse, advanced capitalist society formulates a performance principle that regulates social life "according to the competitive economic performances of its members."[133] On the one hand, the performance principle effectively internalizes the efficiency and productivity paradigm of industrial capitalism, creating a libidinal economy that mirrors a market economy based on commodity production. Here even the psyche becomes rigidified through social imperatives for standardization. On the other hand, the performance principle promises liberation, permissiveness, and fulfillment. If the world was once characterized by global scarcity and a coterminous need for repression, certain improvements in production have created abundance and a surplus of goods. This abundant surplus means that all needs can be met to a degree previously unimagined and that liberation from toil and from domination should logically follow. Marcuse writes: "The achievements of domination-based civilization have undermined the necessity for unfreedom; the degree of domination of nature and of social wealth attained makes it possible to reduce ungratifying labor to a minimum; quantity is transformed into quality, free time can become the content of life and work can become the free play of human capacities."[134]

Yet Marcuse emphasizes that the immense productive capacities of capitalist industry have created new forms of domination that chain us more effectively to our subjugation. Thus what might appear at first glance as sexual and libidinal liberation (as in the theories of Wilhelm Reich or Norman O. Brown) is for Marcuse a form of repressive desublimation of tendencies toward greed, violence, aggression, and emotional satiation that re-produces the repressive social order. It seems, as Marcuse argues, that the result is that "repression itself is repressed: society has enlarged, not individual freedom, but its control over the individual."[135] Thus hidden within repressive desublimation is still what Marcuse classically termed "surplus-repression." On this concept, whereas a minimal amount of repression is on a certain biological level inescapable, varying amounts of surplus-repression are required to sustain specific forms of social domination.

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[130] Ibid., p. 11.

[131] See Douglas Kellner, *Guys and Guns Amok: Domestic Terrorism and School Shootings from the Oklahoma City Bombings to the Virginia Tech Massacre* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Press, 2008). Crises in masculinity and patriarchy and a violent gun and media culture seem to be creating paroxysms of societal violence in the contemporary era, ranging from school and workplace shootings to domestic terrorism of various sorts.

[132] Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernisms, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995) p. 10.

[133] Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization*, p. 44.

[134] Marcuse, "Freedom and Freud's Theory of Instincts," p. 22.

This historicization of Freud also transforms Marcuse's understanding of Marxism. Here we see how Marcuse's theory of domination greatly complicates a more or less traditional notion of ideology. As Charles Rachlis points out, dehumanization as reconceptualized by Marcuse is not strictly alienation—a subjective response to exploited labor.[136] Broadly conceptualized, domination is "whenever the individual's goals and purposes and the means of striving for and attaining them are prescribed to him and performed by him as something prescribed."[137] Here domination is comprehensive and exhaustive, leading to a fully administered existence wherein "the difference between domination and freedom [becomes] smaller."[138] Unlike the received Marxian notion of the proletariat, Marcuse emphasizes on the basis of Freud that consumers within advanced capitalism and producers within the affluent society do not necessarily embody the negation of their historical condition. Rather the production of false needs, which the individual actively identifies with and strives to maintain, becomes normalized on a societal level. The result is what Marcuse terms "repressive desublimation" through which the system forecloses dissatisfaction with society through various libidinal compensations. If for Marx, industrialization resulted in a condition where "utter unnatural neglect, putrefied nature, comes to be his [the worker's] *life element*,"[139] forcing the worker to live in an inhuman state (neither human nor animal), then repressive desublimation produces an inhuman state in reverse order: now it is the appearance of administered pleasures, the individual biopolitical investment in social life, that comprises the dominant form of unfreedom.

Thus a sense of alienation—as the subjective realization of negation—becomes rendered obsolete, similarly to what Slavoj Žižek will later call the "disalienation" of the postmodern clarion call to "just be yourself."[140] Here it is not scarcity but superabundance that leads those who identify with what previous critical social theorists called an alienated existence accept their alienation with open arms as the "one best system." Second, if Marx's original theory of ideology is restricted to a "false-consciousness" that obscures the very real dynamics of production with a partial view of social relations, then for Marcuse, ideology becomes integrated into the very core of our psycho-sexual needs. This is strikingly different from Marx's own fleeting comments on sexuality. For instance, Marx once argued that within the alienated forms of industrial labor, the worker "no longer feels himself to be freely active in any but his animal functions—eating, drinking, procreating, or in his dwelling and dressing up."[141] For Marx, while work is alienated, then it is only in the realm of sensual needs that humans may still feel free. Yet for Marcuse, even this "free activity" is now fully administered by the biopolitical investment of capitalism into the life-world of the worker. While global oppression escalates, those in the affluent society can blissfully argue that "we never had it so good."[142] Thus in the face of material cultural abundance and sensual enjoyment, the happy consciousness becomes nothing more or less than a form of domination, a state of fleeting euphoria that effectively conceals the underlying surplus-repression that animates the injunction to Enjoy! Domination rather than ideology is thus situated on the level both of historical consciousness and of instinctual needs, complicating any direct causal relation between a worker's class consciousness and revolutionary action.

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[135] Marcuse, *Five Lectures*, p. 57.

[136] Charles Rachlis "Marcuse and the Problem of Happiness" in *Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory*, vol. 2, no. 1 (1978) pp. 63–88.

[137] Marcuse, "Freedom and Freud's Theory of Instincts," p. 1.

[138] Ibid., p. 3.

[139] Karl Marx, *The Marx-Engels Reader* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1972) p. 94.

[140] In his book *The Ticklish Subject* (London: Verso, 2000), Žižek outlines how contemporary capitalism has, as Marcuse argued, overcome Oedipalization leaving

If Marcuse's theory of the obsolescence of patriarchal domination is, for Wolfenstein, a dangerous overstatement that edges too close to a nostalgic longing for patriarchal Oedipal myths and romanticized memories predating the discontents of civilization, we must at least grant that this recasting of Freud represents the most advanced and ambitious attempt to write a new psychoanalytic mythology. Rather than a point of criticism (as with Wolfenstein's argument), we could claim that the scientific purification of psychoanalysis (psychoanalysis as a form of positivistic science, or as with Habermas, reduced to a model of scientific self-reflection) has eliminated those elements that oppose Freud's theory to the instrumentality and utility of the present reality principle and organization of contemporary society.

Marcuse's Freudian mythology is, in other words, potentially politically transgressive precisely because it remains transcendent of all positivism. The radical potential of mythology to which Marcuse gestures is of course found in Nietzsche's work—in particular *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*—but also in Hegel's early theses on philosophy infamously recorded in his "System-Programme" from 1796. In these notes, Hegel argues that human

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us with an acute sense of anxiety at our newfound "freedoms," which are nevertheless supported by the capitalist injunction to "enjoy!"

[141] Karl Marx, *The Marx-Engels Reader* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1972) p. 74.

[142] Charles Rachlis, "Marcuse and the Problem of Happiness" in *Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory*, vol. 2, no. 1 (1978) p. 73.

freedom necessitates a new "mythology of reason" where "philosophy must become mythological in order to make the philosophers sensuous"[143]; only then will eternal peace be achieved. In other words, philosophy must sublate reason and aesthetics, the romantic and the analytic, in order to reconcile all dualisms. But this defense of mythological reason still does not quite meet the demands of Wolfenstein's challenge, for how can we separate progressive myth from reactionary/escapist daydreaming? In a short article for *The Nation*, Marcuse speculated that there is in fact a set of criteria for judging the validity of psychoanalytic mythology, one of which is whether or not the myth sheds new light on historical facts and trends and thus sides with dialectical reason and a critical theory of the contemporary moment.[144] Using this criterion, we can begin to evaluate Marcuse's own mythology as a psychoanalytic *construction* in the classical Freudian sense. For Freud, a conceptual construction is not a representation with empirical truth-value, nor is it simply an arbitrary story. The construction hits real conditions underlying a certain social ideology, radically transforming the parameters of what can and cannot be thought. The value of a construction is therefore not in terms of descriptive accuracy but rather in terms of its efficacy in promoting social and psychic transformation. In Marcuse's language, this would mean that his myth is felicitous if and only if it has politically transformative results, helping to conceptualize both the dangerous and the potentially liberatory possibilities within the present—unleashing new, emancipatory needs against the performance principle and surplus-repression. Marcuse's rehabilitation of myth as containing within it the negative potentials of critique thus recalls his complex relationship with idealism discussed in an earlier section of this introduction.

While Marcuse would agree with Horkheimer and Adorno that enlightenment has currently been transformed from a liberating to an oppressive practice, he would nevertheless refrain from the general stigmatization of mythological thinking inherent in Adorno and Horkheimer's approach. For Adorno and Horkheimer, myth contains within itself the seeds of enlightenment's domination of nature, but for Marcuse it also—in another set of dialectical reversals—contains the potential imaginative resources for a further dialectical overcoming of these destructive potentials, hence his insistence on rehabilitating Narcissus as well as Orpheus. While a critical theorist such as Habermas[145] can be interpreted as attempting through his work to save reason (as a historical project and goal) from the snares of

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[143] See Andrew Bowie, *Aesthetics and Subjectivity: From Kant to Nietzsche* (Manchester University Press, 1990) for a full reproduction of the "System-Programme."

[144] Herbert Marcuse, "Theory and Therapy in Freud" in *The Nation*, September 28, 1957, pp. 200–201; published below pp. 106ff.

Horkheimer and Adorno's analysis, Marcuse importantly articulates the complementary second half of this rehabilitation process: saving myth from the jaws of rational instrumentality. If Marcuse's use of Freud is nothing more than a myth as Wolfenstein argues, it is through myth that history can be adequately felt and, dialectically, it is only through history that mythology can be written as the sublimation of critical reason via the imagination.

In sum, a turn to conceptual mythologies should not be summarily dismissed. If Marcuse once argued that psychoanalytic mythology contains a radical kernel disruptive of the performance principle, then could we not argue that the seemingly outlandish exaggerations and unverifiable claims of Marcuse's Freudian mythologies are precisely what are most oppositional of the postmodern "death of the metanarrative" or the scientific empiricism of psychological research? Stated differently, perhaps Marcuse's own myth-making is in the last instance the "hunchback dwarf" that Walter Benjamin argued lies beyond the back of historical materialism.[146]

2. The Politics of Happiness

This conclusion leads into the second major problematic opened by Marcuse: the political implications of happiness as a truly reasonable and pleasurable existence. What is unique in Marcuse's re-reading of Freud, Marx, and Hegel is bringing together their thought on the problem of happiness.[147] If Hegel's unhappy consciousness was once a source for psychological negation of reality, then the standardized happiness of the affluent society becomes a site of struggle against the performance principle. For Marcuse, human beings strive for pleasure, which is the culmination of liberty and happiness—both of which are defined as the satisfaction of real needs. Thus pleasure—as an authentic expression of being-in-the-world that synthesizes both a Marxist notion of non-alienated labor and a Freudian notion of non-repressive sublimation—forms an ideal of emancipation. Marcuse's theory of liberation implies a theory of the liberation of Eros from aggressive and possessive individualism to an active, non-dominating reconstruction of nature—both internally in terms of our biological instincts and externally in terms of our relation to the environment.

Marcuse thus prefigures a transvaluation of values into a new libidinal economy of needs and reason, one that recognizes the manipulated "happy

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145 Jürgen Habermas, "The Entwinement of Myth and Enlightenment: Re-Reading Dialectic of Enlightenment" in *New German Critique* 26 (1982) pp. 13–30.

146 In "Theses on the Philosophy of History," Benjamin writes: "The puppet called 'historical materialism' is to win all the time. It can easily be a match for anyone if it enlists the services of theology, which today, as we know, is wizened and has to keep out of sight," in *Illuminations*, p. 253.

147 Rachlis, "Marcuse and the Problem of Happiness."

consciousness" of consumer capitalism that reflects a comfortably numb, anaesthetized condition of domination. Genuine happiness, by contrast, emerges through a radicalized, revolutionary subjectivity oriented toward a utopian social horizon of another way of life. As Fredric Jameson argues, happiness is therefore united with reason through negation "for it is only when individual happiness, subjective contentment, is not positive (in the sense of ultimate satiation by the consumer's society), but rather *negative*, as a symbolic refusal of everything which that society has to offer, that happiness can recover its right to be thought of as a measure and an enlargement of human possibilities."[148]

This question of pleasure is no less pressing today than it was in the sixties. As Jameson once wrote: "it becomes clear that the question of the originality of our own situation—consumer capitalism, postindustrial society, or, better still, what Ernest Mandel calls 'late capitalism'—will have to be reckoned into any discussion of the relationship between pleasure and politics."[149]

With Jameson, we would like to argue that we must further historicize the problematic of happiness and our historical era in the light of material transformations in the mode of production as well as engaging theoretical insights into pleasure generated by (1) feminist philosophers (who stress the ostensibly phallocentric nature of all pleasure); (2) Lacanians (who situate the problematic of pleasure in terms of *jouissance*, which complicates any clear distinction between real and false needs or any distinction between repression and surplus-repression); and (3) postmodernists (who connect pleasure with genealogies of the body and with power in such a way as to undercut normative claims). Yet we must also question the ubiquity of Marcuse's theory of the "happy consciousness." In an era of rampant worker apathy, angst, and nihilism (as witnessed in the nineties by the commodification of anger and resentment in the so-called Generation X and intensified further in the present world economic crisis) is it not more adequate to argue that a shift has occurred from the happy consciousness back to the unhappy consciousness denuded of its negative critical and thus transformative qualities? Has not the psychology of late capitalism made disenchantment with the system a "chic" and thus a marketable disposition? If this is the case, then we must ask how happiness is to be reunited with negation? Such historicization is not a rejection of Marcuse so much as a furtherance of his own project in light of the present historical moment.

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[148] Fredric Jameson, *Marxism and Form* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974) p. 112.

[149] Fredric Jameson, *Ideologies of Theory Essays 1971–1986: Volume II: Syntax of History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988) p. 62.

3. Revolutionary Refusal

The third problematic—which is in reality merely a restatement of the other two—turns to the question of Marcuse's clarion call for a "Great Refusal" of social values and norms that conform to the repressive performance principle. Marcuse defines this refusal as "the protest against unnecessary repression, the struggle for the ultimate form of freedom—'to live without anxiety.'"[150] Militant and radical, this concept has, in the last several decades, come under theoretical fire from the political Right and Left. With the rise of postmodernism and the discourse of power—in particular Foucault's critique of the Great Refusal—it has become fashionable to replace revolution with the terms *resistance*—or even with *micro-resistance*.[151] Resistance is here internal to power, and ultimately produced by power, thus challenging power from the inside. Judith Butler summarizes this position most astutely when she writes:

> The subject might yet be thought as deriving its agency from precisely the power it opposes, as awkward and embarrassing as such a formation might be, especially for those who believe that complicity and ambivalence could be rooted out once and for all. If the subject is neither fully determined by power nor fully determining of power (but significantly and partially both), the subject exceeds the logic of noncontradiction, is an excrescence of logic, as it were.[152]

Resistance is thus not external to the deployment of power but rather internal and thus prefigured within systems and apparatuses of power, and thus the subject cannot be fully separated from that which he/she resists.

Yet it is precisely emphasis on strategic, tactical, and subversive resistance that prevents a socially transformative and emancipatory radical politics from taking shape. Thus Slavoj Žižek, drawing from Lacan's theory of the "traversal of the phantasy," argues "Butler is thus simultaneously too optimistic and too pessimistic. On the one hand she overestimates the subversive potential of disturbing the functioning of the big Other through the practices of performative reconfiguration/displacement: such practices ultimately support what they intend to subvert . . . . On the other hand, Butler does not allow for the radical gesture of the thorough restructuring of the hegemonic symbolic order in its totality" through what Žižek refers to as "the act."[153] These contemporary debates recall Marcuse's own insistence on "The Great

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[150] Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization*, pp. 149–50.

[151] Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality: Volume One* (New York: Bantam Books, 1990).

[152] Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997) p. 17.

[153] Judith Butler, Ernesto Laclau, and Slavoj Žižek, *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality: Contemporary Dialogues on the Left* (London: Verso, 2000) p. 264.

Refusal" as a negation of the total system of capitalism in the name of a utopian possibility for realizing human happiness. Thus while the idea of the Great Refusal might be labeled a "romantic lost cause" by certain postmodern theorists, it would seem that in an age where, as has been argued, it is easier to imagine the total destruction of the planet than the end of capitalism, it is to Marcuse's utopian militancy that we can turn for political renewal.[154] The act of the Great Refusal is a total negation, and as such, is not complacent with mere "tweaks" of the system of power. If Wolfenstein argued that Marcuse's diagnosis of a "bad totality" is simply an avoidance of the anxiety of very real and very complex social interaction, then we could equally argue that Wolfenstein's rejection of Marcuse's total negation is unable to face the anxiety of utopian thinking which demands the event of total rebellion.[155] For Marcuse, it is in psychoanalytic theory that we find the theoretical kernel that unites economic and social revolution with a fundamental internal revolution of the self—thus overcoming the limits of Heidegger's retreat into an "authentic self" antithetical to public action. In his analysis of psychoanalytic therapy, Marcuse argues, "therapy aims at curing the individual so that he [sic] can continue to function as part of a sick civilization without surrendering to it altogether . . . therapy is a course in resignation."[156] In this sense, "health" is conformity to the standards of a sick society and the claim to happiness is sanitized of its transformative potentials. The *theory* of psychoanalysis, on the other hand, still contains within it a strong social critique through which the sickness of the individual is seen as an allegory for the sickness of society as a whole. In the realm of theory, psychoanalysis suggests that the only way to realize happiness or health is precisely to rebel against the status quo, which denies such potentials precisely by realizing them in distorted forms via the culture industry and consumer society.

Thus Marcuse heavily criticized all forms of American ego psychology as well as revisionist Freudians, including Erich Fromm. His analysis of Fromm is particularly revealing, for it is in Fromm's work that Marcuse sees the conflation of Marxist humanism with idealistic ethics that are at their base nothing more for him than conformist features of the status quo without any negative transcendence. Fromm's notions of productive love and sanity are, for Marcuse, forms of alienation as they are measured in terms of the existing capitalist society and performance principle. In other words, for Marcuse Fromm loses sight of the radical nature of Freudian theory. Like

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[154] See Fredric Jameson, *Seeds of Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994). Yet, as with the 1930s, the current global crisis of capitalism makes it possible once more to imagine the death of capitalism through its own self-destruction.

[155] See, for instance, Fredric Jameson's analysis of utopia and anxiety in *Jameson on Jameson: Conversations on Cultural Marxism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007) p. 35.

[156] Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization*, pp. 245–46.

Žižek 's critique of Butler, Marcuse argues that Fromm is too optimistic about the ability of bourgeois ethics of love and care to be truly transformative. Whether or not Marcuse's reading of Fromm is accurate,[157] the emphasis of the critique is what remains important. Marcuse insists on the Great Refusal and rebelling against all conformity with the performance principle of late capitalism and the affluent society constitutes a gesture of radical refusal that should not be lost in current debates.

But what is the shape that the Great Refusal is to take in late capitalism? K. Daniel Cho has argued[158] that it is to the theme of Thanatos rather than to that of Eros that we must turn in order to understand the radical desubjectivization necessary for the Great Refusal. Likewise, in rejection of Marcuse's biopolitical emphasis on vital and revolutionary needs, Adrian Johnston argues that "the possibility of utopia today depends on death, necessity, and something other than the pursuit of happiness."[159] In both cases, it is Marcuse's insistence on retaining the centrality of thinking the human in its biopolitical dimension that forecloses his utopian aspirations.

Yet the call for Thanatos over and against Eros is not so much a break from Marcuse as it is a furtherance of his attempt to redefine death and the aggressive-destructive instincts—Thanatos. As Marcuse has argued in *Eros and Civilization*, death has more often than not been given repressive moralistic or ontological value in metaphysics, thus confusing an empirical fact with transcendental Truth. Marcuse is clear that this confusion results in social oppression for "the cohesion of the social order depends to a considerable extent on the effectiveness with which individuals comply with death as more than a natural necessity; on their willingness, even to sacrifice themselves and not to fight death 'too much.'"[160] Thus, "compliance with death is compliance with the master over death: the polis, the state, nature, or the god."[161]

For Marcuse, it is through technological and social transformations within life that humans can reconstruct their understanding of and control over death. No longer given ontological weight or imbued with heightened moral importance, the ideology of death will cease to inhibit freedom and death will be placed back into the service of life. If we are to remain faithful to

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[157] For a balanced critique of Marcuse's sharply polemical perspectives against Fromm, see John Rickert, "The Fromm–Marcuse debated revisited," in *Theory and Society*, Vol. 15 (1986) pp. 351–400.

[158] K. Daniel Cho, "Thanatos and Civilization: Lacan, Marcuse, and the Death Drive" in *Marcuse's Challenge to Education*, edited by Douglas Kellner, Tyson Lewis, Clayton Pierce, and K. Daniel Cho (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009) pp. 59–78.

[159] Adrian Johnston, "A Blast from the Future: Freud, Lacan, Marcuse, and Snapping the Threads of the Past" in *Umbr(a): Utopia*, no. 1 (2008) p. 80.

[160] Herbert Marcuse, "Ideology of Death" in *The Meaning of Death*, edited by Herman Feifel (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959) p. 74; published below, pp. 122ff.

[161] Marcuse, "Ideology of Death," p. 130.

Marcuse's psychoanalytic and Marxian problematic then it is to biopolitics that we must turn in order to understand how the theme of death and rebirth on the linguistic level does not coincide with what has more recently been described as "thanatopolitics"—the power of death over and against life of Empire.[162] When Cho and Johnston shift to thanatopolitics and away from Marcuse's theory of Eros and his biopolitics, they miss the fact that *death is the logic of life in late capitalism*—death is, as Marcuse argues, life's ideology, as capitalist ideologues like Joseph Schumpeter attest in extolling capitalism as "creative destruction." To sustain life, life has infected itself in capitalism with the stain of death, creating a dialectic whereby what appears to be the flourishing of Eros is in fact its historical withering. Without understanding this dialectic, the rehabilitation of the death instinct outside its mythological/political philosophical ideology simply founds the same problematic that Marcuse was attempting to overcome: there is only room for life within politics as an exception, as a remainder. Thus Cho and Johnston miss that Marcuse's theory of life already anticipated their criticisms in that a life of genuine happiness can only be thought of in relation to a rethinking of a politically radical rehabilitation of death.

If Marcuse once argued that Freud's theory of psychoanalysis was in fact obsolete perhaps it would not be inappropriate to argue that Marcuse is now obsolete. But this obsolescence must be viewed in a purely dialectical sense as the very strength of Marcuse's problematic in light of certain trends. As Marcuse writes in relation to Freud, "psychoanalysis draws its strength from its obsolescence: from its insistence on individual needs and individual potentialities that have become outdated in the social and political development."[163] Freud's great refusal is located in the very concepts that seem most anachronistic, which seem most false to the performance principle. The case remains true for Marcuse himself. His emphasis on the biological Freud in spite of the linguistic turn in many versions of psychoanalysis, his insistence on mythological metapsychology in light of empirical sciences, and his belief in a Great Refusal in opposition to all strategic forms of subversion, all remind us that to be untimely in a Nietzschian sense is a mode of critique rather than simple falsification. To return to Marcuse is thus not to repeat Marcuse but rather to investigate his obsolescence as a potentially powerful tool for unlocking the triangulation of a form of Marxism–psychoanalsyis–biopolitics that can be highly useful for interpreting how complex forms of repression, dominance, and power operate on both global and local stages. One such area in Marcuse's research where we can see how the blending of Marxism, psychoanalytic theory, and biopolitical insights served as a fruitful hermeneutic lens is that of his investigations of technological rationality in the contemporary era.

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[162] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

[163] Marcuse, "Freedom and Freud's Theory of Instincts," p. 12.

TECHNOLOGICAL RATIONALITY, FREUD, AND ONE-DIMENSIONAL THOUGHT

If Marcuse's formulation of a psychoanalytic critical theory can perhaps best be interpreted in the contemporary moment within a biopolitical framework, that is, as a philosophical project oriented toward recuperating life and death in a time of rampant thanatopolitics, then how should we rethink his application of Freudian theory to technological society? After all it was Marcuse's philosophical appropriations from Freud that reconfigured his critical theory of society in a way that also allowed him to expand his initial research on technological rationality that he began in the late 1930s and early 1940s.

Marcuse's philosophical reinterpretation of Freud's psychoanalytic theory, in other words, recalibrated his critical theory for investigating entirely new dimensions of human domination within the quickly evolving capitalist and socialist societies of the post-World War II epoch. After Marcuse's critical reading of Freud we can see a new theoretical and conceptual language emerging that pushed his investigations into a conceptualization of how the biological drives of individuals had been drawn into the productive apparatus of advanced industrial society. Thus what develops out of Marcuse's encounter with Freud is a theory of society that at least partially registers as a biopolitical critique of the ways in which human subjectivity is shaped through new forms of control and administration within late capitalism. Indeed, in an important essay Marcuse wrote just before *One-Dimensional Man* (*ODM*), we can see that a central feature of his research started to focus on a philosophical shift "from ontology to technology." Life in technological society, for Marcuse, was undergoing a fundamental change that was affecting the ontological foundations of individuals within society.

Marcuse's 1960 essay "From Ontology to Technology: Fundamental Tendencies of Industrial Society" (published below, pp. 132–40ff.) is in many ways a primer for arguments that would be further developed in *ODM*. Yet the essay is also a remarkable moment within the continuum of Marcuse's thought in that it designates an evolutionary leap in the way in which technological rationality is understood for Marcuse and, by extension, critical theory in general. This essay on the ontological effects of technology on human life under capitalism clearly shows that Marcuse had reached a deeper understanding of how apparatuses of control are able to exercise practices of domination on individuals within society, not just through the organizational structure of labor via the increased mechanization of work and bureaucratic ordering of the workplace, as he argued in "Some Social Implications of Modern Technology." Now the totality of the life of individuals beyond the factory or office is also transformed through the technological rationality that had subsumed culture in the single-dimensional society of the post-World War II era. If the potential for critical human rationality was being eclipsed by the technological rationality produced through the growth of advanced industrial society by the 1940s for Marcuse, human life as a site of the production of thought and behavior was now its target by the 1960s.

Marcuse's essay "From Ontology to Technology" thus lays out a biopolitical terrain in which technological rationality has further enveloped the affective, communicative, and social aspects of life within the structures of advanced capitalist society:

> The progress of civilization rests therefore upon this essential modification of the "nature" of human beings. Henceforth, individuals make repression their own project and their own enterprise (super-ego, guilt feelings, etc.). Their instincts themselves become repressive; they are the biological and mental bases which sustain and perpetuate political and social repression. To the extent to which the social reorganization of instincts represses spontaneity, eroticism, etc., the instincts of destruction and death become more powerful. Transformed by turn into aggressiveness, which is more or less controlled and useful, these instincts become an inherent force of the progress of civilization. Thus, the progress of civilization is a double process which dialectically intervenes as much in the biological and mental domain as in the domain of political economy; each supports and fortifies the other.[164]

Here it is clear that Marcuse's integration of Freudian forms of social analyses gave him not only a new conceptual language but also a more precise locus in which to chart forms of human domination within advanced industrial society. Marcuse's investigation into the technological society as described in *ODM*, for example, suggests a biopolitical dimension that can be recognized in the passage above. For Marcuse, the rhythms of the technological workplace, the streamlining of efficiency that managed productivity and life at work, had moved beyond the industrial paradigm of producing the proletarian subject. The transference of instinctual drives such as pleasure, desire, and anxiety into the daily life of the individual had now for Marcuse become part of an overall strategy of integrating individuals more fully by constituting a higher level of pacification within the consumer and media culture of one-dimensional society. This biopolitical project embedded within Marcuse's critique of advanced industrial society is one that, we suggest, was mapping out how technological rationality had attained a new sphere of influence on human life in the contemporary era.

The stakes for human liberation had indeed risen for Marcuse in a very troubling way in his later work. The norms of rationality and efficiency of work under technological rationality had achieved a dimension of control and management that went far beyond the corporate society's wildest dreams: the individual's internalization of technological rationality produced a subject that was in fact counter-revolutionary. One-dimensional life, in other words, ran counter to instincts that could be directed toward projects for human liberation and radical social transformation. This frightening "achievement" that took place through the progress of advanced industrial society was one of the bleakest visions projected by Marcuse's studies, and remains today as relevant as it was when it was first published.

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[164] Herbert Marcuse, "From Ontology to Technology: Fundamental Tendencies of Industrial Society," translated by Micheline Ishay in *Critical Theory and Society: A Reader*, edited by Stephen Eric Bronner and Douglas MacKay Kellner (New York: Routledge, 1989) p. 125; see below, pp. 142ff.

What we see today when we look at Marcuse's analysis of the individual in advanced industrial society is a stark prognosis of the fate of the individual in the contemporary era. Taking into account the full implications of human life within one-dimensional society, in particular the assimilation of technological rationality as the dominant socio-cultural mode of being human, Marcuse was one of the first to point to a new productive feature of technocapitalism that harnessed the instinctual mechanisms within the individual through the manipulation and control of one's desires and fears.[165] Technological rationality, one-dimensional society's defining characteristic, understood as a biopolitical concept, points in a powerful way as to how human needs and wants are patterned after a hyper-consumptive and destructive culture. Marcuse's recognition that human satisfactions are increasingly tied to one's ability to possess and obtain commodities and success is one of the most enduring features of his studies on advanced industrial society. Resistance to this new level of production within advanced industrial society, the production of the consumer and conformist self, in Marcuse's highly original studies on the affects of technological rationality on society by the 1960s, unmistakably reveals a new terrain of struggle for overcoming the unsustainable and aggressive power and domination of contemporary capitalism.

In an unpublished piece Marcuse titled "Anthropological Perspectives of a Technological Epoch," which followed directly after *ODM*, the biopolitical stakes of his analysis are made even clearer:

> The systematic management of needs turns the depth-psychological constitution of humanity *against* its liberation. Under these conditions, the emergence of a new, free type of human being cannot be seen as the consequence of transformed institutions: rather it is the very possibility of transformation that

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[165] Indeed, Marcuse predates Michel Foucault's work on theorizing the history of biopower in society. Though there are strong differences in approach and agreement as to where the sources of control and manipulation of human subjectivity historically emerged, both Marcuse and Foucault overlap in their respective analyses on how the formation of life is increasingly affected by technologies of discipline and control; on Foucault and biopower, see the sources in note 124 above.

> is up for grabs. This presupposes human beings having a different depth-psychological structure: for whom transformation is a vital, *biological* necessity.[166]

Indeed, it is this biopolitical aspect of Marcuse's research on the social and political effects of technological rationality that constitutes much of his work in the 1960s, and is a theme that remains consistent throughout all his subsequent work up until his death. For instance, the development of Marcuse's argument that stresses the need to produce new forms of life that are antithetical to one-dimensional society is developed in *An Essay on Liberation* where Marcuse sketches a project for a new "biological foundation for socialism" that must take place within the human organism in order to liberate individuals and society from a constellation of repressive forms of domination in capitalist society.

Here one could interpret Marcuse as locating the potential for a new revolutionary subject as emerging from projects oriented toward reconstructing individuals within advanced capitalist society, in a new practice of human life that rejects the biopolitical conditioning that one-dimensional society requires from subjects. The loci for a Great Refusal of the biopower of the administered society, and thus a transformation of human subjectivity, was to be found for Marcuse in shifting sites of social and political struggle such as the student movement, the developing world, and the variety of liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s that fought for equality and freedom against an unequal and brutally violent society. The act of "refusal" to one-dimensional society's technological rationality and its pacifying quality for Marcuse thus could only take place in an active struggle to retake life from the hands of social apparatuses such as the media, schools, military, corporate government structures, the supermarket, mall, office, factory, and other domains of social life.

Developing within the structure of Marcuse's critique of technological rationality, and what is ultimately an extension of his larger critique of positive modes of thinking, is a philosophy that is very much concerned with the production of life under controlling apparatuses that have evolved through the developmental model of capitalism. Reinterpreting Marcuse through a biopolitical lens reveals how his studies of technological rationality after Freud took theoretical directions of which the full implications are perhaps just now finally being realized. In the final section below, we will conclude by focusing on this evolving trend in Marcuse's thought and activism: the reformulation of a critical theory that engages the material and historical circumstances of the contemporary moment, a trend that can be traced throughout all of Marcuse's later work and that helps account for its continuing contemporary relevance.

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[166] This excerpt is from a short unpublished piece titled "Anthropological Perspectives of a Technological Epoch" that Marcuse wrote in 1966. This translation was done by Charles Reitz and appears below, p. 145.

LATE DIRECTIONS IN MARCUSE'S THOUGHT: A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE AGAINST TECHNOLOGICAL CIVILIZATION'S "PRODUCTIVE DESTRUCTION"

Just before his passing in the summer of 1979 Marcuse gave a stirring and prescient lecture in Berlin titled "Children of Prometheus: 25 Theses on Technology and Society." In many ways, these penetrating insights can be read as cartographic points of reference that are mapping out the expanding terrain of control and administration of the conditions of life within techno-capitalist, administered society. Yet, at the same time, it also seems here that Marcuse is issuing to his audience an earnest warning as well as a prognosis for hope on the eve of the neoliberal revolution of the 1980s:

> Advances in the development of capitalism's forces of production are compelled by its own internal dynamics: exploitation of nature intensively and extensively, necessary increases in the productivity of labor through the pressures of expanded accumulation and the rate of profit. The result: development of the forces of production according to the principle of productive destruction, i.e. the nuclear power industry, poisoning the environment, dehumanization of work, aggression even in "popular culture," sports, traffic, music, pornography. The process of productive destruction within the framework of a capitalist society is irreversible. Overcoming the principle of productive destruction contradicts the organizational principle of capitalism.[167]

Marcuse goes on in his twelfth thesis to sketch a point of departure in which to rethink the relationship between life (human animal and nonhuman animals) and technocapitalist progress. Developing a mode of subjectivity that rejects "productive destruction" is thus a clear goal of Marcuse's vision for a future that breaks free of the value universe of capitalist society:

> But it is perhaps fallacious to conclude that only the misuse of science and technology is responsible for the ongoing repression: the transvaluation of values and compulsions, the emancipation of subjectivity, of consciousness, might very well have an impact on the very conception of technology itself and in the structure of the technical–scientific apparatus . . . Perhaps technology is a wound that can only be healed by the weapon that caused it: not the destruction of technology but its re-construction for the reconciliation of nature and society.[168]

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[167] "Children of Prometheus: 25 Theses on Technology and Society" is a later lecture that Marcuse gave in May 1979 in the Frankfurt "Romberg-Gespräche." It was published in *Neues Forum*, 307/8, and reprinted in the Tübingen publication *Tüte*, 23–25. It appears in translation by Charles Reitz below, pp. 222ff.

[168] Marcuse, "Children of Prometheus," p. 223.

Here, in Marcuse's last work, the sphere of life that falls under the management of technological rationality clearly extends beyond the realm of human subjectivity and is linked to a larger adversarial mode of being that sets humans against nature through the organizational mode of production within contemporary capitalist society. The recognition of how the production of death over life is an internal feature of late capitalist society is one of the greatest challenges Marcuse left for critical theory to continue to map and locate new points of social and political refusal and social and technological reconstruction.[169]

Marcuse advocates a move toward a reconciliation with nature and a life-affirming mode of politics through the development of a more rational, aesthetically beautiful, and ecologically healthy mode of technics, a project that has become even more pressing today. This is particularly true in the case of Marcuse's assessment of how radical ecological concerns are, more times than not, instantly co-opted within a corporate solution framework that usually promotes green consumerism as opposed to the elimination of the aggressive and destructive values that are infused within the dominant modes of scientific and technological practices in capitalist society.[170]

Marcuse also emphasizes the need for the reconstruction of science and technology and a new science and new technologies. Once toil and scarcity were reduced, technology could be directed toward new ends that would represent a qualitative advance beyond previously existing civilization. Marcuse envisages a *science of liberation* that would combine reflections on human emancipation with thought about how to reconstruct our technology, environment, human relations, and sensibility to increase dramatically human freedom and well-being. Reversing Comte's theory of the three stages of thought (religious, metaphysical, scientific) Marcuse argues that metaphysical concepts could project and define the possible reality of a pacified existence.[171] Since the limits of the historically possible are continually extended with the development of technology, "speculations about the Good Life, the Good Society, Permanent Peace obtain an increasingly realistic content; on technological grounds, the metaphysical tends to become physical."[172] In such a "science of liberation":

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[169] Indeed, André Gorz's *Ecology and Politics* (Boston: South End Press, 1980) was clearly a response to Marcuse's challenge of theorizing how a reconciliation between humanity and nature might begin from a framework that doesn't reproduce both socialist and capitalist models of progress. Largely forgotten in the area of critical theory, Gorz's attempt to rethink Marcuse's ecological challenge, which also echoes other radical ecological thinkers such as Ivan Illich, powerfully emphasizes how the lack of limits on capitalist and socialist development are patently unsustainable and ultimately dehumanizing and ecocidal. In the U.S., Joel Kovel took up Marcusean perspectives on ecology in *The Enemy of Nature: The End of Capitalism or the End of the World?* (New York: Zed Books, 2002 (2nd edn)).

[170] In another lecture late in Marcuse's life titled "Ecology and the Critique of Modern Society," which he gave to a wilderness class in California, which we are publishing here, the transformation of radical ecological critiques into corporate friendly solutions is a major theme. Herbert Marcuse, "Ecology and the Critique of Modern Society" in *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism*, vol. 3, no. 3 (1992) p. 37; see below, pp. 206ff. In the present era where global climate change and ecological destruction have become visible crises which more scientists, governments, and citizens are aware of, the turn to technocratic and market-based solutions is also the default approach. See Richard Kahn's essay "From Education for Sustainable Development to Ecopedagogy: Sustaining Capitalism or Sustaining Life?" in *Green Theory and Praxis*, vol. 4, no. 1 (2008) pp. 1–14, and its development in his book *The Ecopedagogy Movement: Critical Pedagogy, Ecoliteracy, and Planetary Crisis* (New York: Peter Lang, 2010).

> The free play of thought and imagination assumes a rational and directing function in the realization of a pacified existence of man and nature. And the ideas of justice, freedom, and humanity then obtain their truth and good conscience on the sole ground on which they could ever have truth and good conscience—the satisfaction of man's material needs, the rational organization of the realm of necessity.[173]

Marcuse's projected new science and new technologies would demand a reversal from the construction of technology as an instrument of domination and destruction to its construction as an instrument of pacification and emancipation. This would entail a shift from "war technology" to "peace technology" and social transformation from a "warfare state" to a "welfare state." Presently, technology is produced to create ever more deadly and destructive weapons, and under capitalism creates waste, planned obsolescence, superfluous luxury items and poisonous chemicals that pollute the environment and destroy human beings. In addition, technology is used to create ever more efficient instruments of social control and an apparatus of social domination. To eliminate the evils of the current forms and uses of technology would require, Marcuse claims, a reversal of both the ends of technological progress and the very forms of technology. For example, achieving the liberation of labor would necessitate a radical subversion of capitalist organization and technologies of labor such as the assembly line, fragmentation and stratification, and those elements that primarily serve the ends of profit and social control and provide obstacles to the full development of human potentialities.

In non-alienated labor, on the other hand, the productive imagination could enter the labor process and workers could experiment with new technical possibilities and uses of technology. For example, new vehicles of transportation could be produced by work teams who design, develop, and build the entire vehicle. New technologies of entertainment and communication could be devised; a reconstruction of our cities and homes could take place; new sources of energy could be sought and developed; novel devices to do housework could be invented; alternative organizations of education could be developed that would combine technical and humanistic training, utilizing emergent information and communication technologies for democratic ends. Such development and use of technology would strive to eliminate the oppressive features of current technologies and could make possible radical social reconstruction and the development of many-sided human beings.[174]

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[171] See Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*, pp. 224f.

[172] See ibid., p. 330.

[173] See ibid., pp. 234–5.

Marcuse's historical vision emphasizes how the evolution of the human organism in all its facets (instinctual, political, aesthetic, and philosophical or reflective) has increasingly been shaped within late capitalist society by values that cultivate a dependence and reliance on a particular socio–political–technological system while stripping the capacity of the individual to refuse such a form of life. As Marcuse put it,

> The body and soul of individuals have always been expendable, ready to be sacrificed (or to sacrifice themselves) for a reified, hypostatized whole—be that the State, the Church, or the Revolution. Sensibility and imagination are no match for the realists who determine our life. In other words, a certain powerlessness seems to be an inherent characteristic of any radical opposition which remains outside the mass organization of political parties, trade unions and so on."[175]

Marcuse's point here is that it is precisely in the cracks and crevices of the mass organization of society where the seeds of radical change grow—yet it is in these marginalized zones where alternative sensibilities can emerge to change the genetic social structure and subjectivity of human beings along more emancipatory, ecological, sustainable, and peaceful lines of development, ultimately affirming life against death.

Yet the salient message Marcuse's "Children of Prometheus" offers is that only through a radical reconfiguration of technology and society, one that cultivates and supports life and health instead of serving to prolong the reign of exchange value and the unencumbered flow of commodities across the global landscape, can civilization escape the trajectory that capitalist development has set humanity upon. On this point we have reached one the most timely and relevant features of Marcuse's critical philosophy: the manner in which it shows how death and aggression are cultivated within capitalist society through its seemingly limitless ability to expand, develop, and territorialize—even movements that stand in seemingly direct opposition to its thanatopolitical tendencies (such as the ecological movement) are highly susceptible to the absorption rate of late capitalist society's metabolism.

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[174] For further reflections on Marcuse's concept of the new science and new technologies, generally underappreciated in Marcuse literature, see Kellner, *Herbert Marcuse*, pp. 330–38.

[175] Marcuse, "Ecology and the Critique of Modern Society," p. 213.

Hence, Marcuse's philosophical perspectives operate with a dialectic of domination and emancipation where he critiques all forms of domination and advocates emancipation from oppressive conditions and alternative ways of thought and life.[176] Marcuse makes abundantly clear in his culminating philosophical statement "Children of Prometheus" that human civilization cannot be sustained if the value framework of capitalism continues to guide our destiny. The choice Marcuse poses in this text, as well as much of his post-1968 work, is between two models. The first model offers a life-negating ethos that is built upon the values of domination, efficiency, and the ability to control and administer the conditions of life in society and nature. The second model, the alternative that Marcuse sees as a real possibility for our future, is one that reconstructs politics, society, and technology around life-affirming practices, one that rejects and refuses productive destruction from the biological core of each individual in society. This model of course contains utopian aspirations, but—as Marcuse frequently reminds us—these utopian values can become concrete as soon as we begin to follow the tendencies of life over of death that our present society already contains. In a situation of global economic crisis, the radical alternatives offered by Herbert Marcuse are increasingly necessary and realistic, signaling the continued contemporary relevance of his thought. If there ever was a time to adjust the human organism to an alternative social and cultural framework outside neo-imperialism set within global capitalism, now is the time. Thus, in this sense, Marcuse's "obsolescence" is truly an untimely intervention into the present . . .

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[176] For further reflections on Marcuse's concept of emancipation, see Chapter Ten of Kellner, *Herbert Marcuse* and the recent book by Arnold Farr, *Critical Theory and Democratic Vision. Herbert Marcuse and Recent Liberation Philosophies* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009). Farr's ground-breaking book connects Marcuse's thought to liberation philosophies and democratic social movements organized around gender, race, class, sexuality, and the environment, thus demonstrating Marcuse's contemporary relevance. On Marcuse's relation to the global New Left and the "new social movements" of the 1970s, see Kellner, *Herbert Marcuse*, Chapter Nine, and *Herbert Marcuse, The New Left and the 1960s*.

I

PHILOSOPHICAL INTERVENTIONS

THESES ON SCIENTIFIC PHILOSOPHY*

1) Insofar as modern positivism occupies itself with research into the philosophy of science, an examination or refinement of the concepts and methods of science, etc., it will not be criticized; it might perform useful work here. But above and beyond those investigations, it presents itself as attaining an original and even the most advanced universal theory (as demonstrated by the claims at its conferences and in its journals to be scientific philosophy, unified science). And this is where the critique begins.

2) Scientific philosophy pursues theory as a system of sentences valid for each and every science, within which each particular sentence contains only elements that have been derived from "experience" (facts). Only perception counts as experience (under certain conditions, the unity of diverse perceptions). Its outcomes are set down in "protocol sentences." Theory culminates in a system of logical-mathematical axioms, which are the standard for all types of valid scientific claims.

3) The point of criticism here cannot be to dispute the possibility or validity of such a system (these are simply taken for granted). Any "immanent" critique is bound by the false presuppositions of scientific philosophy.

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* *Editors' note*:
"Theses on Scientific Philosophy" provides a translation of an unpublished text found in the Marcuse archives with the original title "Thesen über wissenschaftliche Philosopie," and appears here in a translation by Charles Reitz. The text is a typed two-page document in German with the year 1932/1933 sketched out on a version found in the Herbert Marcuse archive in the Stadt-und-Universitätsbliothek Frankfurt am Main. It appears to be part of the preparatory work Marcuse was doing to develop a critique of philosophy in his work with the Institute for Social Research, anticipating his 1937 text "Philosophy and Critical Theory," translated in *Negations* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968) pp. 134–58.

It is the task of critique to show instead that scientific philosophy operates on a foundation that per force becomes an opponent of a true theory of society. Criticism needs to point out the reactionary function of scientific philosophy.

4) The danger of scientific philosophy lies in this: it appears to take positions and deploy concepts that also "crop up" in the authentic theory of society, and thus evokes an aura of radicality and progressivity. These positions and concepts are to be unmasked by confronting them with their real material content (for example: generalized practice and transformational practice; verification and success; the unity of science in the "science of standardization" and the unity of science in the universal theory of society; facts beyond criticism and critical facts; bourgeois and Marxist opposition to metaphysics . . .).

5) The positivistic criticism of idealistic metaphysics contains progressive elements, insofar as it directs philosophy back from heaven to earth and points it to reality as its object of study. The positivism of scientific philosophy today represents the undialectical negation of metaphysics. By limiting itself to a reality of the "fact" it functions as a scientific and philosophical apprehension of the given reality just as it is. The decisive concepts for scientific philosophy, fact, verification, practice, all contain this shift in meaning from knowledge to apprehension.

6) The factuality of a fact does not yet justify its appropriateness to serve as starting point and principle of theory. The facts are not undifferentiated material, they are in and of themselves structured . . . by the fundamental interests of the theory and practice that "apprehend" them. For a true theory facts are "signs" for particular tendencies in whose context the meaning of a fact, its factuality, first becomes intelligible. Scientific philosophy isolates and abstracts the facts from these contexts and reduces them to their "pure" givenness. It is just this abstract "purity" that then makes it possible to organize these facts as generally valid elements within a context of formal logic. In addition to their concrete meaning, the facts lose all their dangerousness, urgency, and intimidation. In their "purity" they become generally observable and useful.

7) The interest of scientific philosophy in facts converts into a complete disinterestedness: the "value" of the facts is not questioned at all. The fundamental interest concerns itself more and more with an unconditionally certain, universally valid, system of axioms, that necessarily becomes more formal and more empty, the more formal it is supposed to be. By pursuing an unconditional "ultimate foundation for knowledge" (Carnap), which is indifferent to all facts, scientific philosophy concurs precisely with the metaphysics that it opposes.

8) The same process – as when an undialectical perspective converts a principle that is in itself correct into one that is false thereby acquiring a reactionary function – unfolds with the concept of verification (see Horkheimer). The requirement that each true proposition must be verified

ultimately through practice as such, is converted by scientific philosophy into verification through mere "success." It is not asked, which practice alone is decisive in verification, or whether verification itself does not occur under particular historical circumstances, which can "preclude" and obstruct it – without that-which-is-to-be-verified becoming false thereby.

9) Scientific philosophy believes that it is critical and progressive insofar as it "assimilates" into its own theory the critical components of the different theories that it processes as so much material. But through this "assimilation" critical components become uncritical. Typical of this is the way in which scientific philosophy dispenses with theory as being conditioned by social interests. It converts social interest into something personal. The nature of this interest is something merely accidental and of no consequence whatsoever. Every interest of whatever kind can be refined into a "pure fact" and as such it can be set down in protocol sentences. Scientific philosophy has no capacity to make a critical judgment among differing interests: they are all "facts" in the same way.

10) The struggle of scientific philosophy against metaphysics is directed unconditionally against concepts and judgments that are not demonstrable through "facts" or the logical inferences from statements of fact. In this manner all of those things that have delivered humanity from suffering and deprivation are lost to positivistic condemnation. – The image of a better social order in the future is held to be just as "metaphysical" as the crudest superstition: it must be driven out of science. From the perspective of a materialist dialectics, which always examines the specific function metaphysics within the mentality of its time period, scientific philosophy's antipathy toward metaphysics has an extremely reactionary character.

SCHILLER'S HUMANISM*[1]

Theses:

XIII, 115 1) The whole person as subject of philosophy.

XI 2) Experience as given = the world "just as it is" as "natural point of departure."

* *Editors' note*:
As Charles Reitz notes in his comment on his translation of a two-page handwritten set of notes in German found in the Marcuse archives on "Schillers Humanismus," the Schiller referred to is F. C. S. Schiller (1864–1937), an American pragmatist philosopher and not Friedrich Schiller, who deeply influenced Marcuse. Marcuse's notes on F. C. S. Schiller are part of his work in the critique of contemporary philosophy that he was undertaking in the 1930s in his work with the Institute for Social Research.

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[1] Translator's note: F. C. S. Schiller, *Humanismus, Beiträge zu einer pragmatischen*

3) (biological and psychological) interest-laden quality of all judgments.

4) The fact, as the result of an interest-laden judgment, is value-laden. The conception of value has priority to the conception of the true and the real: 128, 130.

9, 196 5) Every truth has to validate itself through its "usefulness" (utility, success).

6) Validation is a process that never comes to an end.

7) To begin with, it is relative to the (biological and psychological) goals of the individual.

194 8) However "society" undertakes a selection from among the individually produced truths according to the principle of social utility. "Objective" truths arise only as the outcome of this selection.

195 9) In the competition among truth claims, as a rule the more useful truth wins. Still, it "may happen" that something useful is taken to be "useless" and vice versa. But ultimately though, "the perfect harmony of our collective life" will figure it out.

13f. 10) In principle there exists no contradiction between truth and fact; the "begetting: of reality is simultaneously also the begetting of truth.

90 11) The belief in immortality is necessary to preserve the uprightness of the idea of a "moral" universe.

Philosophie, German version by Dr. Rudolf Eisler, *Philosophisch-soziologische Bücherei* XXV (Leipzig: Klinkhardt Verlag, 1911). The pragmatist humanism of twentieth-century German–English–American philosopher Ferdinand Canning Scott Schiller (1864–1937) is not to be confused with the eighteenth-century classical humanism of German poet, dramatist, and historian Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805). F. C. S. Schiller opposed democracy and came to praise British fascist Oswald Mosley. See Ruben Abel, "Ferdinand Canning Scott Schiller" in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan. 1967) Volume 7, p. 311; also http://www. philos-website.de/index_g.htm?autoren/schiller_FCS_g. htm~main2.

REVIEW OF JOHN DEWEY'S *LOGIC: THE THEORY OF INQUIRY**[2]

Dewey's book is the first systematic attempt at a pragmatistic logic (since the work of Peirce). Because of the ambiguity of the concept of pragmatism, the author rejects the concept in general. But, if one interprets pragmatism correctly, then this book is 'through and through Pragmatistic'. What he understands as 'correct' will become clear in the following account.

The book takes its subject matter far beyond the traditional works on logic. It is a material logic first in the sense that the matter of logic (the 'objects', that with which logical thought has to do) is thoroughly included in the cycle of investigation, and logical 'forms' are discussed only in their constitutional connection with this material. Furthermore, logic is treated in conjunction with the development of the natural sciences, and to a lesser extent the social sciences as well. There are chapters on biology, culture, mathematics and sociology. On the other hand, in stark contrast to the European tradition, it lacks a discussion with the history of western logic (apart from Aristotle's); transcendental logic remains unconsidered, Hegel does not appear, nor Husserl's attempt at a new foundation of logic.

Such a position is grounded in the essence of the logic itself. The starting point and overall level of the problem's treatment is such that a bridge to the European tradition is hardly built. As Dewey once formulates it when he addresses the basic problem of epistemology: the relationship of the concept's content to actuality is presented as a non-existent problem. These questions are, for him, not questions at all. They cannot appear in the consequent pragmatistic investigation.

Dewey holds together the principles of his logic in the following manner: "The theory, in summary form, is that all logical forms (with their characteristic properties) arise within the operation of inquiry and are concerned with control of inquiry that it may yield warranted assertions. This conception implies much more than that logical forms are disclosed or come to light when we reflect upon processes of inquiry that are in use. Of course it means that; but it also means that the forms originate in operations of inquiry. To employ a convenient expression, it means that while inquiry into inquiry is the causa cognoscendi of logical forms, primary inquiry is itself causa essendi

* *Editors' note*:
Marcuse's review of John Dewey's *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* was initially published in German in *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* 8 (1939–40) pp. 221–28 and is translated by Phillip Deen. The two Dewey reviews are part of Marcuse's engagement with American pragmatism and are discussed in detail in the Introduction to this volume.

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[2] The translator, Phillip Deen, would like to thank Greg Sadler and Christiana Hochkoeppel for their aid in the translation. Also, I appreciate the permission granted by Douglas Kellner and Peter Marcuse to translate this piece.

of the forms which inquiry into inquiry discloses".[3] These logical forms arise "in operations of inquiry", "inquiry" is their "causa essendi". There are no unchangeable, universally valid and fundamental propositions or categories; the "rationality" of logic is exclusively a concern of the relationship of "means and consequences". The fundamental propositions "state habits operative in every inference that tends to yield conclusions that are stable and productive in further inquiries".[4] Their validity is based on the "coherency of the consequences produced by the habits that they articulate".[5] Categories obtain their universality and universal validity as a result of operations, by which it is established that the determined qualities combined under a concept in praxis (many different things to one "type") yields useful consequences. "Modes of active response"[6] are the ground of the universality of logical forms. As we will see later, "praxis" (actions, modes of operation) for Dewey means fundamentally the praxis of science (inquiry) or is characterized according to the model of scientific praxis, once everything has been done in order to adjust scientific praxis to, on the one hand, everyday experience that lies in front of us (the world of "common sense") and, on the other hand, to societal praxis.

Following these theses that logical forms, as the basic principles of inquiry, arise from the research[7] itself, remain referred to the sense of the research, and – just as much as their "subject-matter" – alter themselves with the research, the "components" of logical thought are then treated. The necessary discussion with Aristotelian logic consists essentially in reference to its historical embeddedness. The progress of science, the overcoming of the doctrine of the epistemological priority of the unchangeable and unmoved and of the substantial Forms, makes the thoroughly ontological logic of Aristotle useless. It was, corresponding to the class structure of Greek society, a logic of "rational discourse"; its concepts were isolated "from the operations by means of which meanings originate, function and are tested".[8] The endeavor to retain the forms of Aristotelian logic, when their material conditions ceased to exist a long time ago, is for Dewey the main reason for the empty formalization of logic.

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[3] LW 12:11–12. All page references to Dewey's work are inserted by the translator and are from the critical edition, published by Southern Illinois Press. Their form is by volume and page. For example, LW 12:11–12 is Dewey's *Logic*, pages 11–12.

[4] LW 12:19.

[5] LW 12:20.

[6] LW 12:257.

[7] Regarding the use of the term "research" to translate "Forschung": Though Marcuse had Dewey's term 'inquiry' in mind when writing the review, using "research" calls to mind the Frankfurt School's Institute for Social Research (*Sozialforschung*). In addition, it draws attention to the difference between research as Marcuse understands it and a Deweyan inquiry. (Trans.)

[8] LW 12:64.

From the functional idea of logic as a manifold of propositions and concepts representing the conditions of research, the following general determinations come to light:

1) Logic is a "progressive" discipline that changes itself with the progress of research and not a final, self-enclosed system.
2) Logical forms have the character of postulates insofar as they formulate conditions which the research must fulfill in order to be able to lead to well grounded results. In this sense alone logical forms may also be called a priori: as a contract regulates certain social undertakings in advance, so logic regulates scientific research enterprises in advance.
3) Logic is a "naturalistic" theory insofar as there is a continuity between the natural (physical and biological) and the scientific types of human behavior. All of these kinds of behavior signify constant adaptation of the means to the ends to be achieved. But since man is "naturally" a social organism,
4) Logic is at the same time a "societal" theory. Research is conditioned by the total "culture" of a time. Its basic principles and concepts cannot be separated from its conditioning.

The natural ("biological") and social ("cultural") conditioning of logic is examined next. The subject of research is never an isolated I, consciousness, or spirit. Rather, it is a living organism with "natural" actions and reactions to and on its environment. The transition from animal to human behavior is determined essentially by the development of language. In connection with the ruling moral customs, habits, and institutions, language contributes decisively to the construction of rationality, objectivity and ("relative") universality of logic. It is first the universality of language which compels the individuals to work from a standpoint that is no longer an "individual" one, but rather a "common" one and that can lead to identical results for everyone.

The main part of the logical investigation begins with an analysis of the structure of research and the construction of judgment. Thought (in the logically relevant sense) means nothing but the means and ways by which men engage in research at a given time. Inquiry is "the controlled and directed transformation of an indeterminate situation into one that is so determinate in its constituent distinctions and relations so as to convert the elements of an original situation into a unified whole".[9] The transformation of an indeterminate situation into an adequately determined one happens through 'operations' which are oriented (since they consist in actions in which technique and the 'organs' of observation work together) to an essential part of 'existential' nature and genuinely change the present situation.

This intervention of logic into factical alteration of the world is strongly emphasized by Dewey. Ideas present themselves as possible solutions. They are anticipations of what will happen when certain undertakings are carried out under certain conditions. Ideas are to be so defined only functionally in regard to certain problematic constellations of facts. For their part, facts are adopted in the logic only as "operational facts". Only if these facts are organizable among themselves in a continuum of research can they serve as a "test" for ideas and possess the character of evidence.

A judgment is the "settled outcome of inquiry".[10] As such, it is delimited from "proposition" (a delimitation which is not clearly maintained in the progress of the investigation): the judgment always has a direct "existential" meaning, "everything that exists in the judgment and for the judgment is spatio-temporal". The judgment is essentially "individual", since it always decides about a determinate existent situation, while the proposition is either universal, individual or particular and can only be existentially referred to mediately through "symbols". The model for the judgment in the defined sense is the judgment of the court which determines (settles) a controversial case. There follows a discussion of the traditional "components" of the judgment; subject, predicate, copula. First is the destruction of the concept of "substance" – since Aristotle the given ontological subject of judgments. Substance is no ontological, but rather a merely logical determination. An object can be appealed to as substance if, on the basis of a number of operations, a multiplicity of coherent qualities has proven itself as usable, that is, it can be put to use as a unified whole. Such a multiplicity of coherent qualities that represent, for example, a chair or a meteor, "constitute in their ordered conjunction with one another valid signs of what will ensue when certain operations are performed. An object, in other words, is a set of qualities treated as potentialities for specific existential qualities."[11] The predicate means the proposed possible solution of a given problem (determination of a still undetermined "situation"). For example, if one judges of an object (sugar): "that is sweet", it is also anticipated that when this object is put in fluid, the fluid becomes sweet.

Finally, the copula represents the actual execution of the constitution of the subject in a now well-grounded and determined "situation". Through this, the judgment is "accomplished" in a strictly temporal sense. It comes to light as the result of a series of operations (partial judgments) according to the following model: any existing (and for the prevailing context of "inquiry" not satisfactorily determined) facts of the case should become resolved as something determinate. Certain possible solutions (predications) are yielded out of this general ("cultural") and particular situation in which the research takes place. They will be "tried out" and weighed against one another. If one of these possible solutions shows itself as one that determines the facts of the case in a way that is adequate for the goal of the research, the judgment is complete.

Such interpretation of judgments requires the determination of judgments to be strictly temporal. The "is" of the copula always means an "is now" (in contrast to the "is" in the proposition which establishes a non-temporal, purely logical relationship). "This is red" says: this is red now, under these given circumstances, in this present situation. However, the proposition "Justice is a virtue" intends a non-temporal relation between two abstractions and, as such, has no "existential" reference.

We have now the decisive points of Dewey's doctrine for the development of concepts. The characteristics, by which a "type" is conceptually determined, are selected and determined according to their suitability to allow the progress of research. No "type" is "universal" in itself, just as little as any quality is. Universality means exclusively universal usability within the research. "'Common' designates, not qualities, but modes of operation".[12] Each concept that fulfills the requirements of such a universality and which therefore represents a "possible mode of operation"[13] can function as a "category". A category is the logical equivalent of that which in praxis is denoted as an "attitude".

From the theory of propositions let us emphasize only that truth and falsity are not qualities of propositions. Propositions are only mediating steps to reach a judgment within a context of research. They are therefore a means to an end. Means are neither true nor false, rather they are useful or useless. For example: "The syllogism 'all satellites are made of green cheese; the moon is a satellite; therefore the moon is made of green cheese' is formally correct. The propositions involved are, however, invalid, not just because they are 'materially false', but because of instead of promoting inquiry they would, if taken and used, retard and mislead it."[14]

The positive determination of truth in the logical sense is given only in a footnote which quotes Peirce: "Truth is that concordance of an abstract statement with the ideal limit toward which endless investigation would bring scientific belief; which concordance the abstract statement may possess by virtue of the confession of its inaccuracy and one-sidedness, and this confession is an essential ingredient of truth."[15] In fact, truth is not the regulative principle of this logic. If each concept and each proposition is what it is only by its function in the continuum of a determined research, then it is not truth, but order, that is the principle which decides the significance of concepts and propositions. The traditional distinction between the concept and its object (form and subject matter) – the foundation of the traditional definition of truth – vanishes, because each object "is" only through the concepts by which the present research determines the object. Meanwhile concepts, for their part, are "adapted" to the objective status of the research. Epistemologically formulated: as soon as reality becomes conceptually determined only by its relevant function within a research project, the difference between concept and reality does not exist at all.

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[12] LW 12:250.

[13] W 12:272.

[14] LW 12:227–28.

[15] LW 12:343 n.6.

The last part of the book, *The Logic of Scientific Method*, concerns itself more closely with the relation of "logical forms" to their object. "Logical forms accrue to subject-matter in virtue of subjection of the latter in inquiry to conditions determined by its end-institution of a warranted conclusion."[16] As legal forms, in the course of historical development, adapt to the changing conditions of societal action and its conflicts, and as new types of conflict evoke new legal forms, so also logical forms develop with the development of scientific research. This determination of the relation of form and matter in logic leads Dewey to a rejection of formalistic theory. Logical forms are never indifferent in regard to their application to a determinate material, so much so that their application even constitutes their "form".

Given the basic position of Dewey's logic has already been touched on through the debate between pragmatism and positivism (that was presented at another place in this journal[17]) this critique will not be presented here. Let us only indicate a few tendencies that make this position and its criticism particularly clear. Characteristic is the universal leveling out of theory to mere method. It is important that Dewey lays such great value on decreasing the distance between science and everyday praxis, to show that theory does not genuinely do anything other than what everyday praxis – only unmethodically – does as well. "Inquiry" is really hardly more than "common sense" extended within the academic. The critical function of theory is restricted to the criticism of existing research methods and conclusions, the necessary consequence of a doctrine for which concepts function only as means of investigation and judgments only settle a context of research. This unbroken continuity which is established between a theory leveled to the work of science and everyday praxis grows into a continuum of "common sense". In *Studies in Logical Theory* (1903) Dewey once stated: "This point of view knows no fixed distinction between the empirical value of unreflective life and the most abstract process of rational thought. It knows no fixed gulf between the highest flight of theory and control of the everyday

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16 LW 12:370.

17 See this journal yearbook VI (1937) p. 4ff. (Marcuse here refers to Max Horkheimer's "Der Neueste Angriff auf die Metaphysik", reprinted as "The Latest Attack on Metaphysics" in Max Horkheimer, *Critical Theory*, translated by Matthew O'Connell (New York: Heider and Heider, 1972).)

details of practical construction and behavior."[18] Such hasty unification of theory and praxis must deliver theory in the whole over to a theory-less praxis. Theory is in truth more than methodological doctrine for scientific research. It always transcends the given praxis of what can be – can be not according to the ruling of research alone, but to Reason, Freedom, Right and similar "metaphysical" authorities. Theory's fate depends on not covering up the chasm between "empirical values" and Reason, between thought and reality, but on maintaining it and repeatedly opening it wide until it is closed by a praxis escorted by an unmutilated theory. Then alone would it be possible to no longer see a gulf between the highest flights of theory and the control of everyday praxis.

The shriveling of theory to the methodology of scientific experimentation and of praxis to the experimentation itself encroaches onto the theory of society. For social science, according to Dewey, there is only research as "complete abstraction from the qualities of sin and righteousness, of vicious and virtuous motives that are so readily attributed to individuals, groups, classes, nations."[19] Spinoza's thought that moral questions should be handled in the same manner as the genesis of thunder may be admitted – but can this "naturalistic" attitude toward the facts still claim truth today? Even in social questions all goals to be achieved should be regarded as hypotheses which, in the same way as in all other sciences, must be tried out and verified. On the other hand, it is precisely the concepts of hypothesis and of verification that lead Dewey to a rejection of modern logical positivism. The hypothesis at least goes beyond the field of determined facts and their organization. Dewey emphasizes that facts can become determined and organized in a scientifically indisputable way without them being understood. They are understood only when their real meaning, that is, their consequences, are conceived. The consequences, in reference to the objects of the social sciences, are in turn sublated [*aufgehoben*] only in the societal praxis of humans. This praxis also alters the concept of verification. Verification may not be possible at a given time, yet a societal hypothesis may not in general be "directly" verifiable without by that fact becoming meaningless. History has long shown that the verifiability of a hypothesis is not as important as its "directive power". – Dewey unfortunately does not evaluate his own insights. They would have exploded the theory of the purely immanent-scientific function of concepts.

In the entire endeavor to materialize traditional logic as a pragmatistic instrument of concrete research, Dewey's logic remains (in its decisive moment) idealistic. The fixed point to which logical thought should be applied is the "inquiry": the existing scientific investigation. Though the inquiry is seen in its organic and "cultural" conditions, its structure will not be altered by these conditions. In fact, it "produces" the world which stands in question for logic. It is a world by grace of science. This is expressed in many places. What exists, says Dewey, is in itself indifferent to the demarcations of beginning and end, origin and decline. All whence and whither is "strictly relative to the objective intent set to inquiry by the problematic quality of a given situation."[20] "*Event* is a term of judgment, not of existence apart from judgment."[21] History is a "selection" of movements which in turn is itself further determined through the task and condition of the research. The concept of a causal law is a "figure of speech". The category of causality has purely logical meaning: it serves research as a means of orientation until each of its given goals are accomplished. The subject of research is not analyzed by Dewey. All epistemological and even metaphysical problems, which are sovereignly pushed aside, will reappear elsewhere unanswered.

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[18] MW 2:305.

[19] LW 12:488.

While Dewey's logic is thus on the one hand idealistic, without the meaning and the consequences of such an idealism being clarified, it remains on the other hand naturalistic. The secure and firm unity and universality, which research can not provide, should be established by biology. "The experiential continuum has a definite biological basis. Organic structures, which are the physical condition of experience, are enduring. Without, as well as with, conscious intent, they hold the different pulses of experience together so that the latter form a history in which every impulse looks to the past and affects the future."[22] Hume's attack on the necessity and universal validity of categories is answered by biology. The development of biology made Hume's well worn unity of habit superfluous. The unity of man's "organic behavior" can to a large extent take its place. How logical thought builds itself up out of these behaviors remains unclarified. Pointing out the continuity of "lower" and "higher" types of behavior is no answer.

CRITIQUE OF DEWEY'S *THEORY OF VALUATION*[*]

Faced as we are today with a thoroughgoing positivist repudiation of metaphysical concepts and transcendental principles, it may be well to recall the original relation of positivism to such concepts and principles. Ideas like natural law, the rights of man, the quest for happiness first gained momentum in the context of a positivist and not of a metaphysical philosophy (Locke, Montesquieu, the French enlighteners),—they could not be, and were not meant to be, verified by observation, because the reality they indicated did not belong to matter-of-fact reality, but presupposed the operation of certain laws and standards that contradicted those governing the matters-of-fact. It was of such laws and standards that the concept of reason was composed. Reason was an opposing force to the state of affairs as given; it asserted its own right as against that of authority. To think and to act according to reason was almost identical with thinking and acting in opposition to accepted norms and opinions. Reason was held to be the result of free and autonomous judgment, and the rational was that activity which followed this judgment. Appeal to the facts was meant to corroborate reason, not to override it; if the facts were at variance with reason's dictate, the former were "wrong" and had to be changed in conformity with the latter's demands.

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[20] LW 12:221.

[21] LW 12:222, italics appear only in Dewey's original text.

[22] LW 12:244.

[*] *Editors' note*:
Marcuse's review of John Dewey, "Theory of Valuation" published in the *International Encyclopedia of Unified Science*, vol. 2, no. 4 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), was initially a book review published in *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science*, vol. 9 (1941) pp. 14–18. This little known review of Dewey's work is

The idea of reason which animated positivist philosophy in the 18th century was a critical one, in the sense we have just outlined. Within that same period, however, positivism began to relinquish its critical function and to replace it with a conformist and apologetic one. Both tendencies combine in Hume's philosophy, but the force of his struggle against oppressive religious and metaphysical concepts is attenuated by his concessions to "custom," which takes shape as the basic operative element in reasoning. Comte's positive philosophy completed the process of altering positivism's function. The principle of verification through facts, instead of serving to illuminate a truth which ought to be and yet is not, reinforced the truth of that which is Reason was rendered subordinate to the observation of facts, and "facts as they are" became the final criteria of truth.

This apologetic form of positivism swept the second half of the 19th century. It did not stand alone in the struggle against autonomous and critical thought. After the breakdown of German idealism, metaphysics tried to outdo positivism in its apologetic for the given state of affairs. Freedom, critical reason, spontaneity were all relegated to a realm of "pure knowledge" where they could do no harm and generate no counter-drive against man's actual condition in empirical reality. In the latter reality, anti-positivist philosophy bound men as strongly to the authority of matters-of-fact as did positivism. In the current interchange of arguments concerning the supposed affinities between positivism and authoritarianism, one general misconception among many requires correction. The claim has been made

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important in the sense that it sheds more light on the Frankfurt School's relatively negative view of American pragmatism and documents that they were actively reviewing the work of some of its biggest figures. Although Marcuse unfairly lumps Dewey into the positivist camp in this review, he nonetheless raises some serious questions about the project of pragmatism from the perspective of critical theory.

that it was not positivist but anti-positivist philosophy that held sway in the intellectual cultures of the authoritarian countries prior to the advent of fascism. This is correct, but anti-positivist philosophy was itself everywhere saturated with positivism, in Germany as well as in Italy. It may suffice to refer in this connection to the positivistic tendencies in *Lebensphilosophie* and Phenomenology, and in the pseudo-Hegelianism of Giovanni Gentile.

Even so, it is meaningless to ask whether positivism contributed to the rise of authoritarianism. Positivism cannot take active part in producing a change that involves and establishes total oppression, total warfare, total control and total intolerance. In a certain sense, indeed, freedom is of the very essence of positivism, the freedom to investigate, to observe, to experiment, to refrain from premature judgment and decision,—even the liberty to contradict. All this freedom, of course, occurs in the realm of science, and a scientific behavior is the condition of positivistic freedom. The truth which is to be verified by observation is, in principle at least, based upon free consent; recognition and not compulsion is its standard.

There is another reason why positivism cannot be held responsible for fascism. Positivism does not affirm anything unless it is an established fact. The positivist judgment hangs in the balance until a scientific verification has been provided. Positivism is of its very nature *ex post*. The conditions that prevail in matters-of-fact point the direction for numerous experiments, and positivism follows this lead: its approach is not an acquiescent but an experimental one, and it does not sanction change unless the experiment has been successfully completed.

It is precisely in this light that we must reformulate the question of the relation between positivism and authoritarianism. Experiments can be applied in the social as well as in the physical world. If the fascist experiment has been completed, if fascism has succeeded in organizing the world, does positivism possess any right to deny it sanction and acceptance? Is positivism not compelled, by its own principles, to comply with this world order and to work with, not against it? And, should we arrive at an affirmative answer, we can venture the further question: does not positivism "reflect" a reality in which man has surrendered to the authority of facts, in which reason, autonomous and critical thinking, is actually subordinate to observation of facts? Does the term "positive" in positivism not really imply a positive, that is to say, affirmative attitude towards the matters of fact—whatever they might be?

Dewey's *Theory of Valuation* provides an appropriate occasion for discussing the social function of positivism. Such discussion requires an analysis of positivism's attitude to value judgment, especially since positivism refers to experiments in the field of human behavior, and "human behavior *seems* to be influenced, if not controlled, by considerations such as are expressed by the words 'good–bad,' 'right–wrong,' 'admirable–hideous,' etc. All conduct that is not simply either blindly impulsive or mechanically routine seems to involve valuations" (p. 3). The experiment to create a new social and political order can be adequately described in a system of propositions about observable facts, but the description will be adequate only insofar as it contains "value concepts." Human desires and interests inevitably enter into an experiment that aims to create a new order of life, for such an experiment presupposes the judgment that the experiment is desirable. Valuations "occur only when it is necessary to bring something into existence, which is lacking, or to conserve in existence something which is menaced by outside conditions" (p. 15). To a considerable extent, the impact of John Dewey's work and personality may have been responsible for the fact that positivism no longer maintains the ideal of a social science which is void of value judgments, but attempts to treat such judgments "in verifiable propositions." This attempt is based upon the fact that desires occur within definite "existential contexts," namely, those indicated in the last quotation above, and that they can be investigated with respect to the empirical possibility of their fulfillment and the consequences involved in it. This existential context places the propositions containing valuations in the relation of means-ends or means-consequences (p. 24), and the "continuum of ends—means" is the continuum in which the positivistic testing of valuations takes place.

Here, however, the limits of positivism have already been reached. For positivism is unable to state anything "scientific" about the desirability of the ends themselves. The positivist can weigh the ends against the means necessary to achieve them, he can investigate the conditions of their realization and ask whether it is "reasonable" to realize certain ends, he can show the consequences which are implied in this realization. But this is about all he can do. His analysis stops short at the prevailing desires and interests of men, which are the given facts, and therefore stops short at the multitude of ends prevalent in these desires and interests. He recognizes that desires and interests can still be submitted to the question as to whether they are reasonable or unreasonable (p. 29). This question is precisely the decisive one. For, if positivism measures human desires and interests according to whether they are or are not reasonable, then positivism, at least on one most fundamental point, aims at that which ought to be rather than at that which is. If the distinction between reasonable and unreasonable desires is meaningful at all, it cannot be derived from the given existential context which provoked the distinction. The standards of reason must somehow lead beyond this context,—nay, even question this context in its totality.

What are the standards according to which desires and interests can be classified as reasonable or unreasonable? Certainly not the accepted standards of custom, the current social taboos and awards—if this were the case, the very idea of real experiments in society would be destroyed; nor metaphysical norms and dogmas, which cannot be placed into an observable existential context. The positivistic answer leads definitely back to the given existential context. "The difference between reasonable and unreasonable desires and interests is precisely the difference between those which arise casually and are not reconstituted through consideration of the conditions that will actually decide the outcome and those which are formed on the basis of existing liabilities and potential resources" (p. 29). The distinction thus comes very close to what common-sense considers to be reasonable and unreasonable—a happy and successful adaptation to existing conditions, a thorough weighing of means and consequences, of liabilities and resources. The problem of the validity of the ends is replaced by the problem of the adequacy and consequences of the means. "Valuation of desire and interest, as means correlated with other means, is the sole condition for valid appraisal of objects as ends" (p. 29). If we accept this "sole condition" of appraisal, we also accept the ends that are reasonable in this sense, those that take full account of the risks involved and of the "existing liabilities and potential resources."

Now it is obvious that desires and interests may be found that are reasonable on this ground and still aim at oppression and annihilation. The desires and interests that produced the fascist order might be such. They are frightfully reasonable if regarded in the continuum of ends and means; they did not arise "casually," and they were formed on the basis of existing liabilities and potential resources. Is there any way left for positivism to deny affirmative appraisal by applying scientific standards?

The case is explicitly stated by Dewey, and he points to a standard by which even successful interests and desires can be "revaluated." "On account of the continuity of human activities, personal and associated, the import of present valuations cannot be validly stated until they are placed in the perspective of the past valuation—events with which they are continuous" (p. 59). Such a perspective would show the continuous historical efforts of mankind to enhance and release individual potentialities, to widen the range of human desires and to provide the means for their fulfillment, without discrimination and in harmony with the perpetuation of the whole. In other words, it would show continuous striving for freedom. It would furthermore show that "a particular set of current valuations have as their antecedent historical conditions" the exact opposite, namely, "the interest of a small group or special class in maintaining certain exclusive privileges and advantages, and that this maintenance has the effect of limiting both the range of the desires of others and their capacity to actualize them" (ibid.).

Should man become conscious of these antecedents, "is it not obvious that this knowledge of conditions and consequences would surely lead to revaluation of the desires and ends that had been assumed to be authoritative sources of valuation?" (ibid.). Unfortunately, it is not obvious at all. Dewey's optimism is characterized by a neglect of the existential contexts in which the authoritarian desires and interests live. The order that maintains the exclusive privileges of a "small group or special class" responds to deep-rooted human desires, desires that are spread far beyond the governing strata. The desire for strong protection, the perverse lust for cruelty, the enjoyment of power over an impotent enemy and of liberation from the burden of autonomy, and numerous other desires that shaped the individual in the prehistory of fascism have been fulfilled to such an extent that, in comparison, the desire for freedom seems to aim at some suicidal jump into nothing. The form of freedom that the run-of-the-mill individual has enjoyed in the past century must only strengthen the desire to abandon it, while the super-human courage and loyalty of those who carry on their fight for freedom in the authoritarian states is "unreasonable" according to scientific standards; all consequences and all existing liabilities and resources speak against their efforts. They cannot test and verify their values, because in order to do so they must already have won. Their existence is "good," "right," and "valuable" beyond test and verification, and if their cause loses, the world, and not their values, will have been refuted.

In the present situation of material and intellectual culture, the problem of values is, in the last analysis, identical with the problem of freedom. The conditions of matters of fact have become so unified that the one idea, freedom, covers all that is good, right and admirable in the world. And all efforts to place the value of freedom on the same scientific level with other current valuations is an affront to freedom. For science is essentially in itself freedom, and cannot verify freedom through anything other than freedom. Freedom—and this is the profound result of Kant's analysis—is the only "fact" that "is" only in its creation; it cannot be verified except by being exercised.

This conviction distinctly motivates Dewey's attempt to save the scientific validity of values from annihilation. In doing so, however, he seems to gainsay the very basis of his positivistic method, for his faith in the power of "revaluation" presupposes a definite preference prior to all test and verification, namely, that liberty and the "release of individual potentialities" is better than its opposite.

HERBERT MARCUSE (New York)

IDEALISM AND POSITIVISM*

I have chosen idealism and positivism as the *two types* of philosophical thinking *which have dominated the entire history of Western thought.* I shall try to go behind their surface and to get at their essential implications.

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* *Editors' note*:
Two versions of an untitled essay dealing with "Idealism and Positivism" were found with no title, date, or author in the Herbert Marcuse Archive in Frankfurt. An uncorrected English-language typescript of 14 pages is supplemented by an edited text of 14 pages with hand-written corrections and is listed in the Marcuse Archive as #124.01. We are publishing for the first time in English this version, which appears to be written prior to the publication of *Reason and Revolution* and is in lecture format, probably for the Institute lectures of the late 1930s and early 1940s.

In other words, I shall attempt to reconstruct the so-called "*ideal types*" of these philosophies. Due to this approach, idealism will appear in a much better light than the more recent forms of this philosophy actually deserve. Please do not take this as an expurgation of idealism from all the sins it has committed in its long history. I am fully aware of them, but I do not think that they can be attributed to the nature of idealist thinking.

I should like to begin by distinguishing *two basic philosophic attitudes* which might roughly correspond to the idealist and positivist type. I hope it is not begging the argument if I take as point of departure *Hegel's description* of these attitudes.

Hegel says in his *Philosophical Propaedeutics* that there are two main types of philosophical approach: (1) to view all things as "in and for themselves *outside* of consciousness, – as given to the latter in the shape of foreign and already existing material", or, (2) to assume that "consciousness itself *posits this world*, and produces and modifies the determinations of the same, through its own mediating activity, either wholly or in part" (Works, III, pp. 101 f.).

The latter view is that of *idealism.*

According to Hegel, idealism considers "the general determinations of things only as a definite relation of object to the subject" so that the objective determinations of things are, at the same time, essential determinations of the "*subject*" (1. c., pp. 102 f.).

The subject which, in idealism, determines the objective world is *not merely the knowing ego*, and idealism is *not* limited to the thesis that the *epistemological consciousness* shapes the world (Hegel called this Kantian form of idealism an incomplete and spurious idealism). He denotes at another place the subject as the "*free will*" which does not accept things as they are but takes the world as material that is to be altered and adapted to the free subject's interest. In other words, idealism holds that the given reality must be transformed according to the knowledge and action of the free subject, and that reality attains its true form and content only through this transformation. For example, idealism would look upon *nature* not as physical science does, that is, as a quantitative totality of objective phenomena, but as the arena of the subject's development. Idealism takes nature in relation to the unfolding potentialities of the subject, in relation to its freedom. We shall clarify this viewpoint later on.

What exactly is the subject under whose aspect idealism views reality? It is not an individual, although it is realized only in a totality of individual thoughts, actions, and relations. In other words, it is a *universal*: the idea of The *Good* in Plato, the *Transcendental Consciousness* in Kant, the *Mind* in Hegel. It is called a subject because it "exists" only in self-conscious knowledge and action, and because it *becomes actual* only in the knowledge and practice of *men.*

We cannot dwell here upon the essential characteristics of the subject which vary in the various idealist systems. Common to all of them is the assumption that there is a *distinction between essence and appearance*, that is to say, that the given form of reality does not exhaust and fulfill the potentialities of men and things, and that the latter can be realized only when true knowledge and action seizes upon the existent forms of reality and alters them in accord with some *higher standards*. In the idealist systems, these standards are usually comprised in the concept of *reason*.

Reason designates the totality of the laws and relations which constitute the true form of reality, namely, that form which corresponds to the given potentialities of men and things. The idea of reason thus includes the most diverging contents: it sets forth the principles of thought and of action, of morality and of the state, of science and of the "best life." The foundation common to all these is the idea of *freedom*: reality is viewed under the aspect of the highest development of human potentialities, and the forms of nature and society are examined as to whether they release and promote these potentialities. Freedom is, according to Kant and Hegel, the ultimate principle of reason and the *final aim of philosophy*.

Here again, we may point to the *idealist conception of nature* in order to illustrate this attitude. Idealism views the organic and even the inorganic world as a rational system in which some *pre-existent potentialities unfold themselves*, blindly and passively in the inorganic, consciously and spontaneously in the organic world, until, with the existence of man, free and perfect self-development is reached. Today, nobody could seriously defend such a *teleological construction*, which is refuted not only by the findings of science but also by the whole historical experience of mankind. It might be worthwhile, however, to understand the *motive* power *behind this construction*. It is motivated by the attempt to see the *reflex of freedom in the realm of necessity*, or, to transform the realm of necessity into a realm of freedom. This attempt draws nature into the process of human history and considers the former not as an object of exploitation and domination but as a field of developing instincts, forces and faculties which, in the last analysis, tend to realize an inherent "good." The conception terminates in the idea that a perfectly free and rational society will, at the same time, remove the sufferings and distortions of all life and establish a rational relationship between man and matter.

We may now attempt to outline some *social and individual implications* of the idealistic type of thought. It has become an established conviction that idealism is easily *compatible with any kind of social and political oppression*, nay, that it fosters and glorifies such oppression by depreciating the concrete reality and by sacrificing man's material interests for the sake of some supposedly higher values. One cites, as examples, Plato's ideal state, Hegel's metaphysical justification of the Prussian monarchy, and the more recent exaltation of force and might. There can be no doubt about the guilt of idealist philosophers in this respect. The question arises, however, whether the acquiescent position of the idealists follows from the idealistic approach, or whether it does not constitute a *betrayal of the original motives of idealism*, forced upon it by the social situation in which the idealist philosophers found themselves. I assume that the latter is the case, for a closer study of the idealist approach reveals an *element of social criticism* inherent in it that prevents any lasting reconciliation between idealism and social and political despotism. The history of Hegelian philosophy might illustrate this state of affairs: the conflict between Hegelianism and the Restoration and the transition from dialectical idealism to dialectical materialism is not an accident but an intrinsic development.

The critical element inherent in idealism *derives from the tendency* to view reality under the aspect of reason and freedom. This philosophy, precisely because it is idealism, *cannot accept the phenomena of social and individual life* in the form in which they are given, but must *subject them to the rational standards* taken from the analysis of the prevailing subjective and objective potentialities. Hegel's famous proposition that the rational is real and the real rational implies that everything that does *not* live up to the standards of reason does not deserve to be called "real." Since, in the hitherto known history of mankind, by far the largest part of reality could not be considered as rational, idealism involved a definitely *negative attitude* towards the given matters of fact. They could not be accepted as the embodiment nor even as the criterion of the truth. Idealism was thus rightly called a "negative philosophy" because it refused to accept the verdict of experience as highest tribunal and because it upheld the right of reason as against the prevailing matters of fact, thereby treating the latter as essentially imperfect and untrue. The contradiction between essence and existence belongs to the very nature of idealism.

Idealism's negative attitude towards the prevailing form of reality is expressed in the *dialectical method.* It is not an accident that the dialectic appears in the center of idealism at the origin as well as at the end of this philosophy: in Plato as well as in Kant and Hegel. Time does not permit to enter a discussion of the dialectical method; we shall limit ourselves to mention only those of its features which manifest the critical implications of idealism: (1) it *dissolves all fixed and stable relations* into a process which, in the last analysis, is constituted by the developing subject, and (2) it views the world as an *antagonistic totality* in which all forms and relations develop the negation of their own content and unfold themselves by virtue of this negation.

It is obvious that these principles, if applied to the concrete social reality, must inevitably lead to a radical criticism which transforms the idealist concepts of reason and freedom into revolutionary social demands.

At this point, we can easily make the transition from the idealist to the positivist type of thought. During the modern era, positivism developed in conscious reaction and opposition to the rule of idealist metaphysics (for example, French and British empiricism in the XVIIIth, Comte's positive philosophy in the XIXth, and logical positivism in the XXth century). We might therefore be justified in elaborating the characteristics of positivism by contrasting them with those of idealism.

Positivism directs all knowledge to "perceptible things and properties" (Victor F. Lenzen). It assumes that all propositions "of existential import have an exclusively empirical reference" (J. R. Weinberg), and it attempts to reduce all scientific statements to their empirical elements, thus founding knowledge on as few as possible propositions with an immediate empirical reference, or, in von Mises' words, on "sequences of words which represent immediate sense-perceptions." The conception underlying this whole procedure is best summarized in Wittgenstein's sweeping statement that "the world is everything that is the case," a statement which he explains by adding that the world is "the totality of facts," "determined by the facts, and by these being all the facts."

These assumptions radically *contradict the idealist point of view*. Idealism holds that the world is more and other than the totality of facts, that the latter are determined by the *subject*'s knowledge and action, and that the relation to the subject constitutes their very meaning. *It might be objected* that *positivism too*, at least its most recent form, *takes account of* the essential relation to *the subject*, particularly in the formulation of the elementary propositions which Neurath suggested. This is correct, but *the positivist subject* has nothing to do with the idealist subject. The subject of the elementary propositions is simply *one fact among others*, but in no case does it transcend or constitute the facts. It merely registers them, and in this function it can be exchanged for and perhaps even replaced by other apparatus of registration. In *idealism*, the subject is *not* yet a fact; nor is it "the case"; it exists only in the process of its realization, and it leads *beyond* "everything that is the case." To idealism, the world is more than "everything that is the case;" for what is *not* yet the case but *ought to be* the case is as real, nay, even more real than the facts. This excludes any reduction of truth to certain elementary statements on immediately observable facts; if there is any reduction in idealism, it is that to the interest of reason and freedom. This excludes furthermore any orientation of knowledge to the methods of natural science. It is here that positivism and idealism have become most distinctly opposed to each other.

Since the XIXth century, positivism has been patterned after the model of natural science, and the exact methodology of this science has been its guide ever since. In view of this development, one might *contrast positivism and idealism* by saying that positivism centers around the scientific conception of *nature*, idealism around the philosophic conception of *man*, that positivism tends towards the idea of *certainty and necessity*, idealism towards the idea of *freedom*, that positivism remains *within the totality of matters of fact*, whereas idealism *transcends beyond them*. One might be tempted to draw from this contrast the conclusion that positivism involves a tendency to confine knowledge within the realm of exact science, and to neglect all problems concerned with the state of the human subject. It has frequently been maintained that the principle of immediate empirical reference subordinates critical reason to common-sense and leads to an *acquiescent attitude* towards the established matters of fact. It has furthermore been maintained that the positivist struggle against absolute norms and values engenders a dangerous *relativism* which might all too readily surrender to any constellation of facts. And the positivist emphasis on the objective necessity of social and physical laws might easily tend to restrict the range of free human practice – a tendency which distinctly operates in Comte's positive philosophy. In other words, the positivist subordination of reason to observation might amount to an *abdication of reason* in favor of common-sense, or, to the subordination of reason to the established facts.

Every single of these statements, however, *needs rectification.* The picture of positivism which we have just outlined represents only one historical form of positivism. In its century-old history, positivism has taken various forms, and its *social function has essentially changed.* If we restrict our discussion to modern positivism, we must first note that positivism was *originally* bound up with a *decidedly critical*, nay, revolutionary movement. In the *French Enlightenment*, for example, the positivist struggle against metaphysics and its appeal to the data of experience was a spearhead of the social and political struggle *against the Ancien Régime* and its obsolete despotism. The reduction of knowledge to observable facts, the materialist sensualism of Condillac, La Mettrie, and Helvétius was intended to fight a regime that fettered all given potentialities and was in full discord with experience and reason. Consequently, this positivism was not at all dominated by the ideal of physical science but was essentially a *social philosophy.* Moreover, far from being relativistic and insisting on immediate empirical reference, *positivism then went together with* such "metaphysical" conceptions as *natural law and universal reason.* In short, we find in this form of positivism the same critical tendencies that we have attributed to idealism: the demand to found knowledge on experience is used as an instrument for *changing the given form of reality* in the interest of reason and freedom. That which is, the matters of fact, are viewed in *the light of what ought to be.*

During the subsequent period, however, a *radical change in the social and individual significance of positivism* occurred. As early as in *Hume's* philosophy, positivism's critical tendency gives way to another one: conformist acquiescence in the prevailing reality. Hume still combines both, the critical struggle against obsolete metaphysical and religious ideologies, and the ready contentment with the verdict of experience. The latter tendency gains momentum in the work of *Saint-Simon* and reaches its peak in the philosophy of *Comte.* Here again, positivism is a definite reaction against the sway of metaphysics and religion, but the positivists now found the new scientific method on the *progress of industry and technique.* The latter's rapid development seemed to justify the assumption that a free and rational society could be established within the given social and economic framework. Saint-Simon and Comte held that all human and natural resources would develop in unceasing progress as soon as the remnants of metaphysical and religious oppression were abolished and industrial society [was] left to the free play of its inherent laws. The great strides in the natural sciences during the first half of the XIXth century strengthened the conviction that the use of their methods would lead to a perfect knowledge and domination of nature, and that the knowledge and domination of nature would sufficiently guarantee social as well as individual progress.

The new positivist attitude had two *consequences* of the utmost importance:

(1) *Positivism came under the sway of natural science* and shaped all problems – even in the social field – according to the exact methods used in these sciences. Beginning with Comte, social and psychological problems were, to an ever increasing extent, treated after the pattern of exact science. Sociology was directed to search for the necessary objective laws which were supposed to rule the social and historical world. The principle of empirical reference and of verification by observation was in toto applied to social science and philosophy, and the foundations of logic were sought in the procedures of exact science.

(2) *Positivism became an integral part of the existing division of labor.* The positivist methods and concepts, patterned after a natural science which was mainly devoted to the domination and exploitation of nature, lost all transcendent character and became bound up with the reproduction and extension of the prevailing society. The interest of freedom and the impetus to change "the given" in accordance with reason's standards gave way to the interest to organize and exploit reality in accordance with the standards of technique and science. The *conflict between idea and reality slowly disappeared.* Philosophy ceased to contradict the prevailing form of reality in the name of a better one. Problems like that of the best life, the best state, and the best society were thrown out of the realm of knowledge and branded as utopian fiction. Man's fate was definitely confined within the limits of the matters of fact.

These tendencies are clearly distinguishable in Comte and continue to operate throughout the XIXth century – mostly against the personal intentions and convictions of the positivist philosophers.

We cannot follow here the further development of positivism, and we must refrain from discussing its latest form, that of *logical positivism.* There are many indications that positivism again returns to its original progressive and critical impulses. It is particularly the effort to *discard the ideal of a wertfrei science*, the attempt to a theory of valuation, and the occupation with social problems – promoted especially by *John Dewey* – which point in this direction. Positivism has recognized that decisive problems – perhaps the most decisive ones – cannot be treated in a language of signs and symbols nor founded on elementary propositions. The historical fate of mankind might depend on the truth of aims and ends which have no scientific certainty whatsoever and which cannot be verified by observation. The more positivism *transcends* beyond the realm of immediate empirical reference, the more "philosophical" it becomes, the more will it inherit the great critical function of philosophy which idealism has since long betrayed.

We may now try to *sum up the results* of our survey. If positivism and idealism have developed in two diverging and even conflicting directions, this is due not to a difference in method and subject matter but to a *difference in the basic interest and in the social function* of these philosophies. Positivism has been increasingly motivated by the problems and concepts of natural science and aimed at certainty and orientation *within* the given reality. The vital questions of human life, the critical analysis of the historical state of man has thus been relinquished to the heirs of idealist philosophy. While positivism swore to the ideals of mathematical and physical science, the problems of reason and freedom became the concern of an anti-positivist philosophical theory.

The two interdependent sides of philosophy, namely, the concrete empirical reference, and the critical transcendence beyond the empirical reality, *were thus torn apart*. This separation of the inseparable led, on the one hand, in positivism, to *abstractions and formalizations* which were unsurpassed even by the most metaphysical of all metaphysics, and, on the other hand, in idealism, to a crude and artificial revival of all kinds of *dogmatism*.

We do not think that the split is final, and that philosophy has no longer any existential import. All genuine *philosophy contains idealism as well as positivism*. As for the positivist element in idealism, we may point to the empiricist, nay, sensualist basis of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, and to the vast empirical material mastered in Hegel's philosophy. As for the idealist element in positivism, we recall the critical rationalism of XVIIIth century positivism and its progressive social implications. Much of [idealism's progressive heritage] is still retained in its more recent forms.

All this may show that *there are no different philosophical methods* which may fight and replace each other with equal right. There is only one genuine philosophical method, which preserves the same content in various historical forms. The essentials of this method may be gathered from the *historical task* which philosophy has assumed ever since its origin, namely, to safeguard the interest of reason and freedom in a predominantly unreasonable and unfree world. Any theory which fulfills this task is a *philosophical* theory in the emphatic sense of the word. The task can be fulfilled only when all propositions of existential import have a definite empirical reference, – in other words, when philosophy keeps in constant contact with the comprehended empirical material and constantly re-formulates the problems in accordance with the historical situation and the scientific requirements. However, the empirical material itself enters philosophy only as *comprehended* material, that is to say, as grasped by critical concepts which transcend the immediately given matters of fact in the direction of the free and rational subject.

This *transcendence* – not to metaphysical dogmas but to the historical potentialities of reason and freedom – belongs to the very essence of philosophy. The transcendent character of philosophic concepts is necessitated by the fact that the given reality is not yet free and rational. Philosophy, therefore, must still *contradict* the given form of reality, and such contradiction still is the token by which true philosophy may be recognized.

II

PSYCHOANALYTIC INTERVENTIONS

A REPLY TO ERICH FROMM*

In trying to refute the argument of my article "The Social Implications of Freudian 'Revisionism'" (DISSENT, Summer 1955), Erich Fromm has constructed a thesis which I did not state.[1] Although his misinterpretation may

* *Editors' note*:
"A Reply to Erich Fromm" contains Marcuse's response to Fromm's answer to Marcuse's critique of him in the Epilogue of *Eros and Civilization* (1955). Marcuse criticized Fromm as a Freudian "revisionist" who succumbed to idealism and conventional values, disregarding the more radical elements in Freud. Fromm fiercely responded in "The Human Implications of Instinctualistic 'Radicalism'" in the Social-Democratic journal *Dissent* (Fall 1955), pp. 342–349, claiming that Marcuse failed to understand Freud properly and himself was advocating an irresponsible "Instinctualistic 'Radicalism.'" In a September 25, 1955 letter to Leo Löwenthal found in the Leo Löwenthal Archiv, Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt am Main, Marcuse remarked: "I have just read Fromm's reply, which will be in the next issue of DISSENT. He is furious, but I have a disadvantage in so far as my argument is developed in the book itself, and without it, open to misunderstanding and ridicule. I shall answer Fromm in the winter issue." Marcuse's response was published with the mild title "A Reply to Erich Fromm" and was published in the Winter 1956 issue of *Dissent*, pp. 7–81 triggering in the same issue "A Counter-Rebuttal" by Erich Fromm, pp. 81–83. The fierce polemic calls attention to the painful split of Fromm from the Institute in the 1940s and the hostility of Adorno toward Fromm's work. Marcuse, however, never split completely with Fromm and tells Leo Löwenthal in an October 15, 1955 letter, found in the Leo Löwenthal Archiv, Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt am Main, of an encounter with Fromm on the podium of a panel at Columbia University in October with the theme "Must Man Hate?" Marcuse recounts: "It was divine: Fromm was very emotional and excited; but the audience (almost a mass assembly) was enthralled by the intellectual Boxing Match." Following Marcuse's critique of Fromm, we include Fromm's "A Counter-Rebuttal," which was published in the same issue of *Dissent*, pp. 81–83.

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[1] "The Human Implications of Instinctivistic 'Radicalism'" by Erich Fromm, DISSENT, Fall 1955, pp. 342–349.

be to a great extent due to the fact that my book, *Eros and Civilization*, to which the article specifically referred, had not yet been published, I feel that a few corrections are in order.

1. Fromm attributes to Freud, or to my restatement of Freudian theory, the following notions:

a) that happiness is satisfaction of the sexual instinct, "specifically of the wish for free access to all available females";
b) that love is in its "essence" or is "identical with" sexual desire; and
c) that man has an "inherent wish for unlimited sexual satisfaction," and that the "emancipation of man lies in the complete and unrestricted satisfaction of his sexual desire."

Far from identifying happiness with the "unrestricted satisfaction" of the sexual instinct, Freud held that "unrestricted sexual liberty from the beginning" results in lack of full satisfaction, and that the "value" of erotic needs "instantly sinks as satisfaction becomes readily obtainable." He considered the "strange possibility" that "something in the *nature* of the sexual instinct is unfavorable to the achievement of absolute satisfaction" (*Collected Papers,* Vol. IV, p. 213f; italics added).

Freud did not define the "essence" of love as sexual desire, but as the inhibition and sublimation of sexual desire by tenderness and affection, and he saw in this "fusion" one of the greatest achievements of civilization. Consequently, Freud could not have had the "idea" (and I did not) that "the emancipation of man lies in the complete and unrestricted satisfaction of his sexual desire" (although I do not agree with Fromm that this idea is part of the "cement which binds men together in the present phase of capitalism").

2. Freud did recognize, however, that even the highest values of civilization, in so far as they contain inhibited and aim-diverted sexuality, inevitably presuppose and perpetuate un-freedom and suppression. Fromm concludes that Freud leaves no hope for "any fundamental improvement of society" and that Freud's theory is not a "radical criticism of alienated society" because it regards "alienation" as necessary prerequisite of all civilization. Moreover, Fromm emphasizes that Freud did not offer a critique of the "socio-economic structure" of contemporary society. On this point, I agree, and I have not said it did. On the first page of my article, I stressed the degree to which psychoanalysis "was still committed to the society whose secrets it revealed." When I talked of the radical critical implications of Freudian theory, I referred to those of its aspects which elucidate the depth of the repressive controls over the "nature" of man—controls which contemporary society shares with the preceding historical forms of repressive civilization.

This might not be sufficient, but it seems to me far more critical than predicting some secondary features and "excesses" of "alienation" while preserving and even strengthening its roots. Fromm, who accuses Freud of not criticizing capitalism, writes:

> The worker's alienation from his work "can be overcome only if he is not employed by capital, if he is not the object of command, but if he becomes a responsible *subject who employs capital.* The principal point here is not *ownership of the means of production,* but *participation in management and decision making*" (*The Sane Society,* p. 323, Fromm's italics).

He thinks that the principle of co-management means a "serious restriction" of property rights. The owner or owners are entitled to a reasonable rate of interest on their capital investment, but not to the "unrestricted command over men whom this capital can hire" (ibid., p. 324). Has the entrepreneur, who employs free wage labor, ever *had* such "unrestricted command"?

Fromm sees in "workers' participation" a means for "humanizing" work, for establishing a "meaningful" relation between the worker and his labor and his fellowmen, and he quotes the case of "one of the seven largest watch factories" in France, where a sort of work community has been realized. The workers themselves elaborated a "decalogue," which, in addition to some of the Ten Commandments, includes "thou shalt earn thy bread by the sweat of thy brow." If such are the elements that "contradict" alienation, then my argument against Fromm indeed collapses at a decisive point.

3. Fromm expresses "amazement" that I should commit the error of calling a theory (Freud's theory of instincts) radical which is "entirely of the same spirit as that of nineteenth-century bourgeois materialism." What have Eros (for which Freud refers—and not incidentally—to Plato) and the Death Instinct, what have the Nirvana Principle and the "common conservative nature of the instincts" to do with nineteenth-century bourgeois materialism? It is this ultimate depth dimension of Freudian theory on which my main argument was based, and it is this depth dimension which Fromm (with Horney and Sullivan) discards. This mutilation, together with the reduction of the libido theory, necessitated the regression of revisionist psychoanalysis toward pre-Freudian consciousness psychology. Fromm protests and asks for evidence. Practically every page of every book he wrote since *Escape From Freedom* is evidence. If I should mention specific issues: take his reinterpretation of the Oedipus complex, or his analysis of neuroses in terms of a "moral problem." The revisionist reduction also necessitates the shift in emphasis from the pre-individual psyche to the "mature personality." Again Fromm protests and points to the fact that Sullivan's work is almost entirely concerned with the "development of childhood," and that in his own psychology "the character of a person is mainly determined by his childhood situation." But child development belongs to the domain of every consciousness psychology, of every human relations expert, and Sullivan's treatment of it is, in my view, not essentially different from its most ancient presentations at the surface level of "inter-personal relations." Fromm's own analysis of the early stages of character development has been increasingly purged of the explosive instinctual forces linked to the "archaic heritage" of man and to the deadly struggle against suppression. To reveal

the implications of this struggle (and thereby the real conditions for the "emancipation of man") was the great concern of Freud's depth psychology. It is not preserved by paying attention to the "conflict between unconscious and conscious strivings"—it depends on the content and dynamic of the unconscious.

4. Fromm accuses me of neglect of the "human factor" and of "callousness towards moral qualities." He states as my "thesis" that "anybody who studies the conditions for happiness and love is betraying radical thought." My thesis is, on the contrary, that Fromm (and the other revisionists) do *not* really study the conditions for "happiness and love." I say explicitly in my article (p. 233) not that these values are spurious "but the context is in which they are defined and proclaimed." They are defined by Fromm in terms of positive thinking which leaves the negative where it is—predominant over the human existence. Fromm maintains that his concept of "productive love" rejects adjustment to an "alienated society." This is precisely what I question; I think that his concepts partake of alienation. The practical suggestions for the "road to sanity" which he makes in his new book (one of them was quoted above) are, in my view, a perfect example of how proposals for a smoother functioning of the established society can be confused with the notions that transcend this society. There is nothing wrong with more and better industrial psychology and scientific management, but there is a great deal wrong with presenting them as non-conformist humanism. Fromm reminds me that "the alienated society develops in itself the elements which contradict it." It does, but I disagree with Fromm on where and what these elements are: much of what he calls alienation is to me the force which overcomes alienation, and what he calls the positive is to me still the negative. "Nihilism," as the indictment of inhuman conditions, may be a truly humanist attitude—part of the Great Refusal to play the game, to compromise with the bad "positive." In this sense, I accept Fromm's designation of my position as "human nihilism."

A Counter-Rebuttal

Erich Fromm

I would not think it necessary to impose upon the patience of the readers of DISSENT by a counter-rebuttal of Herbert Marcuse's reply to me, were it only in order to answer his argument, or his added interpretation of *The Sane Society.* As to the former, it does not add much to his original article. As to the latter, I must leave it to any reader of *The Sane Society* to judge whether it stands for "more and better industrial psychology and scientific management."

I do want to answer Marcuse, however, regarding his interpretation of Freud since the works of Freud, especially the article to which Marcuse refers, are not so easily accessible to most readers.

Marcuse says that it is erroneous to attribute to Freud the view:

a) that happiness is satisfaction of the sexual instinct,
b) that love is in its essence sexual desire, and
c) that man has an inherent wish for unlimited sexual satisfaction.

So far Marcuse. Now Freud:

ad a): "Man, having found by experience that sexual (genital) love afforded him his greatest satisfaction, so that it *became in effect a prototype of all happiness to him,* must have been thereby impelled to seek his happiness further along the path of sexual relations, *to make genital erotism the central point of his life.*" (Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents,* Hogarth Press, London, page 69, my italics.) *Cf.* also Freud's statement that primitive man "knew nothing of any restrictions on his instincts," could enjoy his happiness more than civilized man, but due to mutual aggression, not for any length of time. (*Civilization and its Discontents,* pages 91–2.)

ad b): "Love with an inhibited aim was originally full sensual love and *in men's unconscious minds is so still.*" (*Civilization and its Discontents*, page 71, my italics.)

ad c): "Suppose that personal rights to material goods are done away with, there still remain prerogatives in sexual relationships, which must arouse the strongest rancour and most violent enmity among men and women who are otherwise equal." (*Civilization and its Discontents,* page 89.)

All these quotes are taken from that work of Freud's, first published in 1930, which deals most comprehensively and directly with the problem of sex, happiness and society. Marcuse, in his answer, ignores this book completely, and quotes from Freud's paper "The Most Prevalent Form of Degradation in Erotic Love," first published in 1912. It is true that Freud writes in this article that the "importance of an instinctual desire is mentally increased by frustration of it" and "I think the possibility must be considered that something of the nature of the sexual instinct itself is unfavorable to the achievement of absolute gratification." Unfortunately Marcuse fails to mention two things: first, that in the ending paragraph of the same paper, Freud states his thesis of the basic incompatibility between the sexual instinct and the demands of culture, just as I described it in my reply to Marcuse. Freud states that because culture prevents man from obtaining fully satisfying sexual pleasure, he puts his energy to other, that is, to cultural uses. As to Freud's statement that there is something in the nature of the sexual instinct which is unfavorable to the achievement of sexual satisfaction, Marcuse omits to say what Freud meant by this, and yet Freud makes this very clear in the paper of 1912, and especially in *Civilization and its Discontents,* in a footnote on page 78. Freud's idea is that the full satisfaction of the sexual instinct is possible only if its sadistic and coprophilic components are satisfied. This is not possible in marital love, because a man who respects his wife necessarily has to frustrate these desires; but, says

Freud in *Civilization and its Discontents,* the frustration of these desires is even necessary in the very beginnings of culture "consequent upon man's adoption of the erect posture and the lowering of the sense of smell." In this view, repression of full sexual satisfaction, and hence frustration of happiness, is already necessitated by the most rudimentary beginnings of human civilization. It can be seen that this view of Freud's points in the same direction that I had indicated. Freud's thesis is that primitive man enjoys a greater amount of happiness than civilized man because he is not yet susceptible to as much sexual repression as the latter, but that even in the earliest beginning of human existence, there was already a necessity for a certain amount of sexual repression which prevented man from the attainment of full happiness. Freud's point is *not* to doubt that genital satisfaction is the source of happiness, but that man can never be quite happy because any kind of civilization forces him to frustrate the full satisfaction of his genital desires, especially the sadistic and coprophilic components.

THEORY AND THERAPY IN FREUD*

The development of psychoanalytic theory after Freud shares certain features with the general positivistic trend of our era; it eliminates philosophy. Or it might be more appropriate to say that it eliminates metaphysics, speculations that are unverified and unverifiable in accordance with accepted scientific standards. With a few notable exceptions (such as Roheim, Rank, Reik) the orthodox as well as the revisionistic schools have waged a valiant and successful struggle against the Freudian metapsychology and metabiology, against the disturbing hypotheses and "exaggerations" of *Totem and Taboo, Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Moses and Monotheism.* This scientific purification is perhaps intended to adjust the theory to the requirements of therapy and technique, but the development has had another quite different effect. The hypotheses and exaggerations which are being eliminated are precisely those which oppose the smooth incorporation of psychoanalysis into the established system of culture and its smooth functioning as a socially rewarded activity. If taken seriously, the metaphysical ideas might suggest a critique of society incompatible not only with the therapeutic objectives of psychoanalysis but with the very notion of psychoanalysis. Because the "disease" to be cured would then be diagnosed as the history of mankind itself, and psychology would turn into social and political theory.

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* *Editors' note*:
"Theory and Therapy in Freud" contains a review of two recent books on Freud published in *The Nation*, 185 (September 1957), pp. 200–202. The review demonstrates Marcuse's continued interest in Freudian theory and readiness to intervene in public debates over Freud and his legacy.

The two most disturbing of Freud's hypotheses are those of the Primal Crime and the Death Instinct. Theodor Reik's *Myth and Guilt* deals with the first. The subtitle, "The Crime and Punishment of Mankind," shows the extent of Reik's transgression beyond the framework of psychology as discipline and technique. Following Freud's idea that beneath all individual guilt feeling lies a common guilt of mankind and that this is derived from the prehistorical killing of the father-chief of the horde, Reik interprets the biblical story of the Fall and the crucifixion of Christ as mythological evidence of the Primal Crime. The "tree of knowledge," from which Adam eats the forbidden fruit, is identified with the "tree of life," and the tree is taken as the totem symbol of the god. Eating from the tree is thus eating the god. This interpretation requires the elimination of Eve and the serpent as belonging to a different mythological tradition. The tree-symbol then provides the link between the story of the Fall and the Passion of Christ. According to ancient stories, a beam from the "tree of life" was used for the cross on which Jesus was crucified. "One single story" unfolds in the Fall and in the Passion; the second Adam takes upon himself the crime of the first and the punishment for it. The crucifixion thus appears as the re-enactment and atonement for the crime.

Reik's reinterpretation contains numerous other new elements. We mention only the idea that the linking of Adam's crime with sexuality is a "side-tracking" and concealment of the real nature of the crime. Its "primal meaning [the killing of God-Father] was such that it would necessarily have endangered and even annihilated the foundation of Jewish and Christian belief." The result of this "side-tracking" was an alleviation of unbearable guilt feeling. Mankind avoided admitting the "full gravity of the original deed" and salvation could be obtained.

Reik is concerned, not with history, but with mythical figures and events. If we accept his position, there remain two principal criteria for judging the validity of the interpretation: (1) is it compatible with the attained level and results of comparative mythology and (2) does it shed new light on historical facts and trends? This reviewer is not competent to discuss the first question but would like to offer some suggestions as to the second.

The hypothesis of the primal crime may elucidate the problem of the origin and persistence of the domination of man by man, or in Hegel's terms, the dialectic of Master and Servant. These implications are not elaborated in Reik's book, but they are clearly indicated. Reik says:

> The first sinners—we include Christ also in this group because He himself, though sinless, took the original sin on his shoulders—have thus a double function within the myth and the following legend tradition. They are rebels against the highest gods, the fathers, whom they defy and whom they want to replace and they free mankind in teaching them all that is worth knowing or achieving.

In this double function, the biblical figures are linked to the great culture heroes of the pagan world, such as Prometheus, whose deed and punishment have a similar character. Liberation is a crime because it destroys the sanctified powers whose domination led man to the point where liberation becomes possible. It is a necessary and beneficial crime because without it progress in knowledge would be impossible. The "double function" continues to manifest itself in the ambivalent attitude towards domination—the killing of the Primal Father is followed by guilt feeling, atonement, and by his deification. It is not difficult to see traces of this subjective and objective ambivalence in the historical attempts at liberation, in their apparently unsurpassable limits, their defeats and in the restoration of domination at a "higher level."

But the application of his notions to history takes us beyond the scope of Reik's discussion. It remains within the framework of psychoanalytic mythology. Reik's book deserves high praise as one of the ever-rarer attempts to keep alive the great philosophical insights of Freudian theory and to counteract the decline of psychoanalytic theory into the anxiously guarded domain of technical specialists. It is at some places marred by the author's efforts to write in a humorous and collegiate vein, and to present his analysis in the style of a detective story, quoting Sherlock Holmes and others.

Perhaps in no other field has psychoanalytic theory made so little progress as in the field of aesthetics. Here, the interrelation of the subjective and objective factor, the individual artist and the work of art, presents a most complex problem. It was only natural that psychoanalysis, like psychology, should have focused from the beginning on the subjective factor; only natural, therefore, that art was interpreted in terms of the artist. Whether this approach can adequately determine the specific presence of the "universal in the particular," which is the central problem of aesthetics, cannot be discussed here. In any case, it is a fact that the psychoanalytic exploration of art has not really benefited (again with such notable exceptions as the early work of Otto Rank and Marie Bonaparte) from the great achievement of Freudian theory—the establishment of the unity of individual and group psychology. Freud's work revealed the extent to which the particular fate of the individual *is* the universal fate of mankind. In the realm of art, the relation between the universal and the particular fate manifests itself in a unique and yet representative form. Moreover, the history of art offers numerous examples which corroborate and clarify Freud's theory of the dynamic of the primary drives, Eros and Death Instinct, as socio-biological forces. It can hardly be said that the psychoanalysis of art has made a serious effort to elaborate these ideas.

In the anthology, *Art and Psychoanalysis*, William Phillips has collected twenty-seven representative articles: one ("Dostoevsky and Parricide") by Freud himself; the bulk by psychoanalysts of the orthodox as well as revisionist camp (Franz Alexander, Marie Bonaparte, Erich Fromm, Ernest Jones, Ernst Kris, Otto Rank, Theodore Reik, Géza Roheim, Fritz Wittels and others); and some contributions by non-psychoanalysts, notably

Thomas Mann's essay, "Freud and the Future." Of the three sections—studies on single works of art and artists, theoretical essays and literary pieces—the theoretical section is the smallest. In point of fact it is difficult to decide which contributions are the theoretical ones. The section on single works of art and artists includes some technically excellent papers; others, of laborious irrelevance, are little more than a catalogue of the unconscious or subconsious affects, wishes, attitudes, etc. expressed (or implied) in the work of art.

It is no real wonder that the article which really raises the problem of "psychoanalysis and art" is the one contributed by the artist—Thomas Mann's essay. The problem is succinctly stated in William Phillips' introduction; "how a view of the world that has been warped, if only partially, by neurosis can be said to be truthful, objective or morally stimulating." However, in his brief discussion of the problem, the "objective" element of art, its truth value, is immediately associated with the "pressure, from many different sources, to enlist the arts in the service of some higher aim or some larger truth." This phrasing evades whether such "pressure" is not that of art itself, its inner life and development; whether the artistic "neurosis" or "messianic madness" is not a specific historical mode of reason. That the notions of art as neurosis and art as truth are not simply (as Phillips states) two "myths" would have become clear if the volume had included more "literary pieces." This reviewer is thinking mainly of the manifestos of surrealism, the writings of Walter Benjamin, Gaston Bachelard, Georges Bataille, Henri Michaux, Paul Valéry. What about a second volume collecting the testimony of the artists?

OBSOLESCENCE OF PSYCHOANALYSIS*

The title refers to the fate of some of the basic assumptions of Freudian theory and of their orthodox as well as revisionist development. I propose that they have become obsolescent to the degree to which their object, namely, the "individual" as the embodiment of Id, Ego, and Superego has become obsolescent in the social reality. The evolution of contemporary society has replaced the Freudian model by a social atom whose mental structure no longer exhibits the qualities attributed by Freud to the psychoanalytic object. Psychoanalysis, in its various schools, has continued and spread over large sectors of society; but with the change in its object, the gap between theory and therapy has been widened, and therapy is faced with a situation in which it seems to help the Establishment rather than the individual. The truth of psychoanalysis is thereby not invalidated; on the contrary, the obsolescence of its object reveals the extent to which progress in the reality has been regression. Psychoanalysis thus sheds new light on the politics of advanced industrial society.

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* *Editors' note*:
"Obsolescence of Psychoanalysis" is a paper Marcuse delivered at the 1963 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association in New York City. This essay is particularly important as it shows Marcuse once again reinterpreting Freud and his classical psychoanalytic theory while making the case that it still remains an important tool in developing a multidimensional critical theory of society. It is also important to note that this essay appeared on the eve of *One-Dimensional Man*. As such, Marcuse's argument stresses how Freud's patriarchal model of authority is one that has been replaced by the growing power and influence of new technologies of management in one-dimensional society. This essay is a strong example of Marcuse's ability to deftly sublimate Freud into his evolving critical theory of society.

This paper will discuss the contribution of psychoanalysis to political thought by trying to show the social and political content in the basic psychoanalytic concepts themselves. The psychoanalytic categories do not have to be "related" to social and political conditions—they are themselves social and political categories. Psychoanalysis could become an effective social and political instrument, positive as well as negative, in an administrative as well as critical function, because Freud had discovered the mechanisms of social and political control in the depth dimension of instinctual drives and satisfactions.

It has often been said that Freud's theory depended, for much of its validity, on the existence of the Vienna middle-class society in the decades preceding the Fascist era—from the turn of the century to the inter-war period. There is a kernel of truth in this facile correlation, but its geographical and historical limits are false. Already at the time of its maturity, Freud's theory comprehended the past rather than the present—a vanishing rather than a prevalent image of man, a disappearing form of human existence. Freud describes a dynamic mental structure: the life-and-death struggle between antagonistic forces—Id and Ego, Ego and Superego, Pleasure Principle and Reality Principle, Eros and Thanatos. This struggle is fought out entirely in and by the individual, in and by his body and mind; the analyst acts as the spokesman (silent spokesman!) of *Reason*—in the last analysis the individual's *own* Reason. He only activates, articulates what is *in* the patient, his mental faculties and capabilities. "The Id shall become Ego:" here is the rationalist, rational program of psychoanalysis—conquest of the unconscious and its "impossible" drives and objectives. It is by virtue and power of his own Reason that the individual abandons the uncompromising claims of the Pleasure Principle and submits to the dictate of the Reality Principle, that he learns to maintain the precarious balance between Eros and Thanatos—that he learns to eke out a living in a society (Freud says: "civilization") which is increasingly incapable of making him happy, that is to say, of satisfying his instinctual drives.

I wish to emphasize two elements in this conception which indicate the historical denominator, the social and political conditions which are no longer real:

(1) Freud presupposes throughout an irreconcilable conflict between the individual and his society;

(2) he presupposes individual awareness of this conflict and, in the case of the patient, the vital need for a settlement—both expressed by the inability to function normally in the given society.

The conflict has its roots, not merely in the private case history of the patient, but also (and primarily!) in the general, universal fate of the individual under the established Reality Principle: the ontogenetic case history repeats, in particular forms, the phylogenetic history of mankind. The dynamic of the Oedipus situation is the hidden model not only of every father–son relationship but also the secret of the enduring domination of man by man—of the conquests and failures of civilization. In the Oedipus situation are the individual, instinctual roots of the Reality Principle which governs Society. To a considerable extent, therapy depends on recognition of the internal link between individual and general unhappiness. The successfully analyzed individual remains unhappy, with an unhappy consciousness—but he is cured, "liberated" to the degree to which he recognizes the guilt and the love of the father, the crime and the right of the authorities, his successors, who continue and extend the father's work. Libidinal ties thus continue to insure the individual's submission to his society; he achieves (relative) autonomy within a world of heteronomy.

Where is the historical denominator which makes this conception obsolete? According to Freud, the fatal conflict between the individual and society is first and foremost experienced and fought out in the confrontation with the father: here, the universal struggle between Eros and Thanatos erupts and determines the development of the individual. And it is the father who enforces the subordination of the Pleasure Principle to the Reality Principle; rebellion and the attainment of maturity are stages in the contest with the father. Thus, the primary "socialization" of the individual is the work of the family, and whatever autonomy the child may achieve—his entire Ego develops in a circle and refuge of privacy: becoming oneself with but also *against* the other. The "individual" himself is the living process of *mediation* in which all repression and all liberty are "internalized," made the individual's own doing and undoing.

Now this situation, in which the Ego and Superego were formed in the struggle with the father as the paradigmatic representative of the Reality Principle—this situation is historical: it came to an end with the changes in industrial society which took shape in the inter-war period. I enumerate some of the familiar features: transition from free to organized competition, concentration of power in the hands of an omnipresent technical, cultural and political administration, self-propelling mass production and consumption, subjection of previously private, asocial dimensions of existence to methodical indoctrination, manipulation, control. In order to elucidate the extent to which these changes have undermined the basis of Freudian theory, I wish to emphasize only two interrelated tendencies which affect the social as well as the mental structure;

(1) The classical psychoanalytic model, in which the father and the father-

dominated family was the agent of mental socialization, is being invalidated by society's direct management of the nascent Ego through the mass media, school and sport teams, gangs, etc.

(2) This decline in the role of the father follows the decline of the role of private and family enterprise: the son is increasingly less dependent on the father and the family tradition in selecting and finding a job and in earning a living. The socially necessary repressions and the socially necessary behavior are no longer learned—and internalized—in the long struggle with the father[1]—the Ego Ideal is rather brought to bear on the Ego directly and "from outside," *before* the Ego is actually formed as the personal and (relatively) autonomous subject of mediation between him-*self* and the others.

These changes reduce the "living space" and the autonomy of the Ego and prepare the grounds for the formation of *masses*. The mediation between the Self and the Other gives way to immediate identification. In the social structure, the individual becomes the conscious and unconscious object of administration and obtains his freedom and satisfaction in his role *as* such object; in the mental structure, the Ego shrinks to such an extent that it seems no longer capable of sustaining itself, as a self, in distinction from Id and Superego. The multidimensional dynamic by which the individual attained and maintained his own balance between autonomy and heteronomy, freedom and repression, pleasure and pain, has *given way to* a one-dimensional static identification of the individual with his others and with the administered Reality Principle. In this one-dimensional structure, the space no longer exists in which the mental processes described by Freud can develop; consequently, the object of psychoanalytic therapy is no longer the same, and the social function of psychoanalysis is changed by virtue of the changes in the mental structure—themselves produced and reproduced by the society.

But according to Freud, the basic mental processes and conflicts are not "historical," confined to a specific period and social structure—they are universal, "eternal," and fatal. Then, these processes cannot have disappeared, and these conflicts cannot have been resolved—they must continue to prevail in different forms corresponding to and expressive of the different contents. They do so in the conditions which characterize the new society: in the behavior of the masses and in their relation to their new masters who impose the Reality Principle, namely, their leaders. The term "leader" here is meant to designate not only the rulers in authoritarian states but also those in totalitarian democracies, and "totalitarian" here is redefined to mean not only terroristic but also pluralistic absorption of all effective opposition by the established society.

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[1] To be sure, the father continues to enforce the primary diversion of sexuality from the mother, but his authority is no longer fortified and perpetuated by his subsequent educational and economic power.

Now Freud himself has applied psychoanalysis to conditions where his classical model of Ego formation seemed invalid without essential modifications. In his *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, psychoanalysis makes the necessary step from individual to collective psychology, to the analysis of the individual as member of the masses, the individual mind as collective mind—a necessary step because from the beginning Freudian theory had encountered the universal in the particular, the general in the individual unhappiness. The analysis of the Ego turns into *political* analysis where individuals combine in masses, and where the Ego Ideal, conscience, and responsibility have been "extrojected," removed from the realm of the individual psyche and embodied in an external agent. This agent, which is thus assuming some of the most important functions of the Ego (and Superego), is the *Leader*. As their collective Ego Ideal he unifies the individuals by the double tie of identification with him, and among the individuals themselves. The complex mental processes involved in the formation of masses must remain outside the scope of this paper; only the points will be emphasized which may show whether the obsolescence of the analysis of the Ego also extends to Freud's group psychology. According to Freud's group psychology,

(1) The ties which bind the individuals into masses are libidinal relationships;
(2) they are in their entirety "zielgehemmte" impulses—inhibited in their objective;
(3) they pertain to a weakened and impoverished Ego and thus signify a regression to primitive stages of the development—in the last analysis to the Primal Horde.

Freud derives these features from the analysis of two large "artificial" masses which he takes as examples: the Church and the Army. The question is whether at least some results of his analysis can be applied to the formation of even larger masses in advanced industrial society. I shall offer a few suggestions in this respect.

The most general and at the same time fundamental element in the formation of masses in developed civilization is, according to Freud, the specific "regression to a primitive mental activity" which relates an advanced civilization back to the pre-historic beginnings—to the Primal Horde. There all members of the Horde were equally reduced to the passive status of sons of the all-powerful despotic Father, equally persecuted by him and equally in fear of him; the members of the group could not develop their own Ego and Ego Ideal. (I note, for further discussion, that this equality and this dependence came about as a consequence of the sexual abstinence enforced by the Father. The identification of each member of the group with the other, and their common identification with the Father—in other words: the libidinal ties which made the group into an obedient and cohesive mass, ruled from above—these ties were formed by *repression*. By virtue of their origin in "*inhibited*" erotic energy, "diverted from its objective," massification generates destructive energy which seeks and finds its objective *outside* the group.)

Freud enumerates the following features as characteristic of the regression in the formation of masses: "dwindling of the conscious individual personality, the focusing of thoughts and feelings into a common direction, the predominance of emotions and of the unconscious mental life, the tendency to the immediate carrying out of intentions as they emerge." These regressive features indicate that the individual has given up his Ego Ideal and substituted for it the group ideal as embodied in the leader.[2] Now it seems that the regressive traits noted by Freud are indeed observable in the advanced areas of industrial society. The shrinking of the Ego, its reduced resistance to the Others appears in the ways in which the Ego holds itself constantly open to the messages imposed from the outside. The antenna on every house, the transistor on every beach, the juke box in every bar or restaurant are as many cries of desperation—not to be left alone, for himself, not to be separated from the Big Ones, not to be condemned to the emptiness or the hatred or the dreams of oneself. And these cries engulf the others, and even those who still have and want an Ego of their own are condemned—a huge captive audience, in which the vast majority enjoys the captor.

But the regression of the Ego shows forth in even more fateful forms, above all in the weakening of the "critical" mental faculties: consciousness and conscience. (They are interrelated: no conscience without developed knowledge, without recognition of Good and Evil.) Conscience and personal responsibility decline "objectively" under conditions of total bureaucratization, where it is most difficult to attribute and to allocate autonomy, and where the functioning of the apparatus determines—and overrides—personal autonomy. However, this familiar notion contains a strong ideological element: the term "bureaucracy" covers (as does the term "administration") very different and even conflicting realities: the bureaucracy of domination and exploitation is quite another than that of the "administration of things," planfully directed toward the development and satisfaction of vital individual needs. In the advanced industrial societies, the administration of things still proceeds under the bureaucracy of domination: here, the perfectly rational and progressive transfer of individual functions to the apparatus is accompanied by the *irrational* transfer of conscience and by the repression of consciousness.

The insights of psychoanalysis go a long way to explaining the frightful ease with which the people submit to the exigencies of total administration, which include total preparation for the fatal end. Freed from the authority of the weak father, released from the child-centered family, well equipped with the ideas and facts of life as transmitted by the mass media, the son (and to a still lesser degree, the daughter) enter a ready-made world in which they have to find their way. Paradoxically, the freedom which they had enjoyed in the progressive, child-centered family turns out to be a liability rather than a blessing: the Ego that has grown without much struggle appears as a pretty weak entity, ill equipped to become a Self with and against the others, to offer effective resistance to the powers that now enforce the Reality Principle, and which are so very different from father (and mother)—but also so very different from the images purveyed by the mass media. (In the context of Freudian theory, the paradox disappears: in a repressive civilization, the weakening of the father's role and his replacement by external authorities must weaken the libidinal energy in the Ego and thus weaken its life instincts.)

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[2] Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (New York: Liveright, 1949), pp. 91 and 103. All subsequent quotations refer to the same work and edition.

The more the autonomous Ego becomes superfluous, even retarding and disturbing in the functioning of the administered, technified world, the more does the development of the Ego depend on its "power of negation," that is to say, on its ability to build and protect a personal, private realm with his own, individual needs and faculties. Now precisely this ability is impaired on two grounds:

(1) the immediate, external socialization of the Ego;
(2) the control and management of free time—the massification of privacy.

Deprived of its power of negation, the Ego, striving to "find identity" in the heteronomous world, either spends itself in the numerous mental and emotional diseases which come to psychological treatment, or the Ego submits quickly to the required modes of thought and behavior, assimilating its Self to the Others. But the Others, in the role of competitors or superiors, evoke instinctual hostility: identification with their Ego Ideal guides the spending of this energy: it does not drive the conscience as the moral judge of the Ego, but rather directs aggression toward the external enemies of the Ego Ideal. The individuals are thus mentally and instinctually predisposed to accept and to make their own the political and social necessities which demand the permanent mobilization with and against atomic destruction, the organized familiarity with man-made death and disfiguration.

The member of this society apprehends and evaluates all this, not by himself, in terms of his Ego and his own Ego Ideal (his father and the father's images) but through all others and in terms of their common, externalized Ego Ideal: the National or Supranational Purpose and its constituted spokesmen. The Reality Principle speaks *en masse*: not only through the daily and nightly media which coordinate one privacy with that of all the others, but also through the kids, the peer groups, the colleagues, the corporation. The Ego conscience is theirs; the rest is deviation, or identity crisis, or personal trouble. But the external Ego Ideal is not imposed by brute force: there is deep-going harmony between, outside and inside, for coordination begins long before the conscious stage: the individuals get from outside what they would want by themselves; identification with the collective Ego Ideal takes place in the child, although the family is no longer the primary agent of socialization. The conditioning in the family rather is a *negative* one: the child learns that *not* the father but the playmates, the neighbors, the leader of the gang, the sport, the screen are the authorities on appropriate mental and physical behavior. It has been pointed out how this decisive change is connected with the changes in the economic structure: the decline of the individual and family enterprise, of the importance of traditional "inherited" skills and occupations, the need for general education, the increasingly vital and comprehensive function of professional business, and labor organizations—all this undermined the role of the father—and the psychoanalytic theory of the Superego as the heir of the father. In the most advanced sectors of modern society, the citizen is no longer seriously haunted by Father Images.

These changes seem to invalidate the Freudian interpretation of modern mass society. Freud's conception demands a Leader as the unifying agent, and demands transference of the Ego Ideal to the Leader as Father Image. Moreover, the libidinal ties which bind the members of the masses to the leaders and to each other are supposed to be an "idealistic remodelling of the state of affairs in the primal horde, where all of the sons knew that they were equally persecuted by the primal father, and feared him equally" (p. 95). But the fascist leaders were no "fathers," and the post-fascist and post-Stalinist top leaders do not display the traits of the heirs of the primal father—not by any stretch of "idealizing" imagination. Nor are their citizens all equally persecuted or equally loved: this sort of equality prevails neither in the democratic nor in the authoritarian states. To be sure, Freud envisaged the possibility that "an idea, an abstraction may . . . be substituted for the leader," or that a "common tendency" may serve as substitute, embodied in the figure of a "secondary leader" (p. 53). The National Purpose or Capitalism or Communism or simply Freedom may be such "abstractions"; but they hardly seem to lend themselves to libidinal identification. And we shall certainly be reluctant, in spite of the state of permanent mobilization, to compare contemporary society with an army for which the commander-in-chief would function as the unifying leader. There are, to be sure, enough leaders, and there are top leaders in every state, but none of them seems to fit the image required for Freud's hypothesis. At least in this respect, the attempt at a psychoanalytic theory of the masses appears untenable—with a reality which was envisaged only at the margin of psychoanalysis—the *vaterlose Gesellschaft* (society without fathers). In such a society, a tremendous release of destructive energy would occur: freed from the instinctual bonds with the father as authority and conscience, aggressiveness would be rampant and lead to the collapse of the group. Evidently, this is not (or not yet) our historical situation; we may have a society in which the individuals are no longer tamed and guided by the father images, but other and apparently no less effective agents of the Reality Principle have taken their place. Who are they?

They are no longer identifiable within the conceptual framework of Freud: society has surpassed the stage where psychoanalytic theory could elucidate the ingression of society into the mental structure of the individuals and thus reveal the mechanisms of social control *in* the individuals. The cornerstone of psychoanalysis is the concept that social controls emerge in the struggle between instinctual and social needs, which is a struggle within the Ego and against personal authority. Consequently, even the most complex, the most objective, impersonal social and political control must be "embodied" in a *person*—"embodied" not in the sense of a mere analogy or symbol but in a very literal sense: instinctual ties must bind the Master to the Slave, the Chief to the Subordinate, the Leader to the Led, the Sovereign to the People.

Now nobody would deny that such tics still exist: the election campaigns provide sufficient evidence, and the hucksters know only too well how to play on these instinctual processes. But it is not the image of the father that is here invoked; the stars and starlets of politics, television, and sports are highly fungible (in fact, the question may be raised whether their costly promotion is not already wasteful even in terms of the Establishment—wasteful to the extent to which the choice is narrowed down to one between equivalents in the same class of goods). Their fungibility indicates that we cannot possibly attribute to them as *persons* or "*personalities*" the vital role which the embodiments of the Ego Ideal are supposed to play in establishing social cohesion. These star-leaders, together with the innumerable subleaders, are in turn functionaires of a higher authority which is no longer embodied in a person: the authority of the prevailing productive apparatus which, once set in motion and moving efficiently in the set direction, engulfs the leaders and the led—without, however, eliminating the radical differences between them, that is, between the Masters and the Servants. This apparatus includes the whole of the physical plant of production and distribution, the technics, technology, and science applied in this process, and the social division of labor sustaining and propelling the process. Naturally, this apparatus is directed and organized by men, but their ends and the means to attain them are determined by the requirements of maintaining, enlarging, and protecting the apparatus—a loss of autonomy which seems qualitatively different from the dependence on the available "productive forces" characteristic of preceding historical stages. In the corporate system with its vast bureaucracies, individual responsibility is as diffuse and as intertwined with others as is the particular enterprise in the national and international economy. In this diffusion, the Ego Ideal takes shape which unites the individuals into citizens of the mass-society: over-riding the various competing power elites, leaders, chiefs, it becomes "embodied" in the very tangible laws which move the apparatus and determine the behavior of the material as well as the human object; the technical code, the moral code, and that of profitable productivity are merged into one-effective Whole.

But while Freud's theory of leadership as heir of the father-Superego seems to collapse in the face of a society of total reification, his thesis still stands according to which all lasting civilized association, if it is not sustained by brute terror, must be held together by some sort of libidinal relationships—mutual identification. Now while an "abstraction" cannot really become the object of libidinal cathexis, a concrete apparatus can become such an object: the example of the automobile may serve as an illustration. But if the automobile (or another machine) is libidinally cathected over and above its use value as vehicle or place for unsublimated sexual satisfaction, it clearly provides substitute gratification—and a rather poor substitute to boot. Consequently, in Freudian terms, we must assume that the direct, objective enforcement of the Reality Principle, and its imposition on the weakened Ego involve weakening of the Life Instincts (Eros) and growth of instinctual aggression, of destructive energy. And under the social and political conditions prevailing in the coexisting technological societies today, the aggressive energy thus activated finds its very concrete and *personified* object in the common *Enemy* outside the group.

Communism and Imperialism provide the powerful negation of the Ego Ideal, of the established Reality Principle itself, and thus provide the powerful impulse of identification and massification in defense of the established Reality Principle. The ascendancy of aggressive over libidinal energy appears as an essential factor in this form of social and political cohesion. And in this form, the *personal* cathexis is possible which the reified hierarchy of technological society denies to the individuals—it is the Enemy as personified target which becomes the object of instinctual cathexis—the "negative" aggressive cathexis. For in the daily intake of information and propaganda, the images of the Enemy are made concrete, immediate—human or rather inhuman: it is not so much Communism, a highly complex and "abstract" social system, as the Reds, the Commies, the Comrades, Castro, Stalin, the Chinese, who are threatening—a very personalized power against which the masses form and unite. The Enemy is thus not only more concrete than the abstraction which is his reality—he is also more flexible and fungible and can assimilate many familiar hated impersonations, such as Pinks, Intellectuals, Beards, Foreigners, Jews, in accordance with the level and interest of the respective social group.

This recourse to psychoanalytic concepts for the interpretation of political conditions in no way invalidates or even minimizes the obvious *rational* explanation. Obviously, the very existence and growth of Communism presents a clear and present danger to the Western systems; obviously, this system must mobilize all available resources, mental as well as physical, in its defense; obviously, in the era of atomic and automation technology, such mobilization destroys the more primitive and personal forms of "socialization" characteristic of the preceding stages. No depth psychology is necessary in order to understand these developments. It does seem necessary, however, in view of the massive spread and absorption of the image of the Enemy, and in view of the impact on the mental structure of the people. In other words, psychoanalysis may elucidate, not the political facts but what they do to those who suffer these facts.

The danger in mass formation which is perhaps least susceptible to control is the quantum of destructive energy activated by this formation. I see no possibility of denying or even minimizing the prevalence of this danger in advanced industrial society. The arms race with weapons of total annihilation and the consent of a large part of the people are only the most conspicuous signs of this mobilization of destructive energy. To be sure, it is mobilized for the preservation and protection of life—but precisely here, the most provocative propositions of Freud reveal their force: All additional release of destructive energy upsets the precarious balance between Eros and Thanatos and reduces the energy of the Life Instincts in favor of that of the Death Instinct. The same thesis applies to the use of destructive energy in the struggle with nature. Technical progress is life-protecting and life-enlarging to the degree to which the destructive energy here at work is "contained" and guided by libidinal energy. This ascendancy of Eros in technical progress would become manifest in the progressive alleviation and pacification of the struggle for existence, in the growth of refined erotic needs and satisfaction. In other words, technical progress would be accompanied by a lasting *desublimation* which, far from reverting mankind to anarchic and primitive stages, would bring about a less repressive yet higher stage of civilization.

Now there is, in the advanced technological societies of the West, *indeed a large desublimation* (compared with the preceding stages) in sexual mores and behavior, in the better living, in the accessibility of culture (mass culture is desublimated higher culture). Sexual morality has been greatly liberalized; moreover, sexuality is operative as commercial stimulus, business asset, status symbol. But does this mode of desublimation signify the ascendancy of the life-preserving and life-enhancing Eros over its fatal adversary? Freud's concept of sexuality may provide a cue for the answer.

Central in this concept is the conflict between sexuality (as the force of the Pleasure Principle) and society (the institution of the Reality Principle) as necessarily repressive of the uncompromised claims of the primary Life Instincts. By its innermost force, Eros becomes "demonstration against the herd instinct," "rejection of the group's influence" (p. 81).[3] In the technological desublimation today, the all but opposite tendency seems to prevail. The conflict between Pleasure and Reality Principle is managed by a controlled liberalization which increases satisfaction with the offerings of society. But in this form of release, libidinal energy changes its social function: to the degree to which sexuality is sanctioned and even encouraged by society (not "officially" of course, but by the mores and behavior considered as "regular"), it loses the quality which, according to Freud, is its essentially erotic quality, that of protest and rejection. In this sphere was the surreptitious freedom, the dangerous autonomy of the individual under the Pleasure Principle; its authoritarian restriction by the society bore witness to the depth of the conflict between individual and society, that is, to the extent of the repression of freedom. Now, with the integration of this sphere into the realm of business and entertainment, the repression itself is repressed: society has enlarged, not Individual freedom, but its control over the individual. And this growth of social control is achieved, not by terror but by the more or less beneficial productivity and efficiency of the apparatus.

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[3] To be sure, according to Freud, Eros strives to unite living cells into ever larger units, but this unification would mean, for the human being, the strengthening and transcendence of the Ego rather than its reduction.

We have here a highly advanced stage of civilization where society subordinates the individuals to its requirements by extending liberty and equality—or, where the Reality Principle operates through enlarged but controlled desublimation. In this new historical form of the Reality Principle, progress may operate as a vehicle of repression. The better and bigger satisfaction is very real, and yet, in Freudian terms, it is *repressive* in as much as it diminishes in the individual psyche the sources of the Pleasure Principle *and* of freedom: the instinctual—and intellectual—resistance against the Reality Principle. The intellectual resistance too is weakened at its roots: administered satisfaction extends to the realm of higher culture, of the sublimated needs and objectives. One of the essential mechanisms of advanced industrial society is the mass diffusion of art, literature, music, philosophy; they become part of the technical equipment of the daily household and of the daily work world. In this process, they undergo a decisive transformation; they are losing the qualitative difference, namely, the essential dissociation from the established Reality Principle is greatly extended. These tendencies alone would corroborate Freud's hypothesis that repression increases as industrial society advances and extends its material and cultural benefits to a larger part of the underlying population. The beneficiaries are inextricably tied to the multiplying agencies which produce and distribute the benefits while constantly enlarging the giant apparatus required for the defense of these agencies within and outside the national frontiers; the people turns into the object of administration. As long as peace is maintained, it is a benevolent administration indeed. But the enlarged satisfaction includes and increases the satisfaction of aggressive impulses, and the concentrated mobilization of aggressive energy affects the political process, domestic as well as foreign.

The danger signs are there. The relationship between government and the governed, between the Administration and its Subjects is changing significantly—without a visible change in the well functioning democratic institutions. The response of the government to the expressed wants and wishes of the people—essential to any functioning democracy—frequently becomes a response to popular extremism: to demands for more militant, more uncompromising, more risky policies, sometimes blatantly irrational and endangering the very existence of civilization. Thus the preservation of democracy, and of civilization itself, seems increasingly to depend on the willingness and ability of the government to *withstand* and to curb aggressive impulses "from below."

I shall now summarize the political implications of Freudian theory as conclusion from the preceding discussion.

(1) The sweeping changes in advanced industrial society are accompanied by equally basic changes in the primary mental structure. In the society at large, technical progress and the global co-existence of the opposed social systems lead to an obsolescence of the role and autonomy of the economic and political Subject. The result is Ego formation in and by masses, which depend on the objective, reified leadership of the technical and political administration. In the mental structure, this process is supported by the decline of the father image, the separation of the Ego Ideal from the Ego and its transference to a collective Ideal, and a mode of desublimation which intensifies social control of libidinal energy.

(2) Shrinkage of the Ego, and collectivization of the Ego Ideal signify a regression to primitive stages of the development, where the accumulated aggression had to be "compensated" by periodic *transgression*. At the present stage, such socially sanctioned transgression seems to be replaced by the normalized social and political use of aggressive energy in the state of permanent preparedness.

(3) In spite of its perfectly rational justification in terms of technology and international politics, the activation of surplus aggressive energy releases instinctual forces which threaten to undermine the established political institutions. The sanctioning of aggressive energy demanded in the prevailing situation makes for a growth of popular extremism in the masses—rise of irrational forces which confront the leadership with their claims for satisfaction.

(4) By virtue of this constellation, the masses determine continuously the policy of the leadership on which they depend, while the leadership sustains and increases its power in response and reaction to the dependent masses. The formation and mobilization of masses engenders authoritarian rule in democratic form. This is the familiar plebiscitarian trend—Freud has uncovered its instinctual roots in the advance of civilization.

(5) These are regressive tendencies. The masses are not identical with the "people" on whose sovereign rationality the free society was to be established. Today, the chance of freedom depends to a great extent on the power and willingness to oppose mass opinion, to assert unpopular policies, to alter the direction of progress. Psychoanalysis cannot offer political alternatives, but it can contribute to the restoration of private

> autonomy and rationality. The politics of mass society begin at home, with the shrinking of the Ego and its subjection to the collective Ideal. Counteracting this trend may also begin at home: psychoanalysis may help the patient to live with a conscience of his own and with his own Ego Ideal which may well mean—to live in refusal and opposition to the Establishment.

Thus, psychoanalysis draws its strength from its obsolescence: from its insistence on individual needs and individual potentialities which have become outdated in the social and political development. That which is obsolete is not, by this token, false. If the advancing industrial society and its politics have invalidated the Freudian model of the individual and his relation to society, if they have undermined the power of the Ego to dissociate itself from the Others, to become and remain Self, then the Freudian concepts invoke not only a past left behind but also a future to be recaptured. In his uncompromising denunciation of what a repressive society does to man, in his prediction that, with the progress of civilization, the guilt will grow and death and destruction will ever more effectively threaten the Life Instincts, Freud has pronounced an indictment which has since been corroborated: by the gas chambers and labor camps, by the torture methods practiced in colonial wars and "police actions," by man's skill and readiness to prepare for a "life" underground. It is not the fault of psychoanalysis if it is without power to stem this development. Nor can it buttress its strength by taking in such fads as Zen Buddhism, Existentialism, etc. The truth of psychoanalysis lies in its loyalty to its most provocative hypotheses.

THE IDEOLOGY OF DEATH*

Der Mensch stirbt auch aus Gewohnheit

Hegel

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* *Editors' note*:
"The Ideology of Death" was published in American Psychologist Herman Feifel's 1959 edited book *The Meaning of Death* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1959). The collection of essays that comprised this book contained contributions from Walter Kaufmann, Paul Tillich, and Carl Jung among others. This fascinating and original work by Marcuse is a genealogical analysis of the concept of death in the thought of Western thinkers such as Plato, Hegel, Heidegger, and Freud. Tracing the ways in which the concept of death in society has been linked to forms of domination, Marcuse argues that the state, nature, and religion have historically been the dominant sources of ideologies of death that have helped to establish order and constrain freedom. Anticipating more recent theorists of biopower such as Foucault and later Giorgio Agamben, Marcuse's analysis of the ideology of death refers to the ways in which power over life emerges as a historical device in which to increase control and conformity within society. Revolt against systems of domination by oppressed groups in society thus becomes the site in which such an ideology of death should be refused and transcended.

> *Il regardait la soufirance et la mort comme les effets heureux de sa toute-puissance et de sa souveraine bonté.*
>
> Anatole France

In the history of Western thought, the interpretation of death has run the whole gamut from the notion of a mere natural fact, pertaining to man as organic matter, to the idea of death as the *telos* of life, the distinguishing feature of human existence. From these two opposite poles, two contrasting ethics may be derived: On the one hand, the attitude toward death is the stoic or skeptic acceptance of the inevitable, or even the repression of the thought of death by life; on the other hand the idealistic glorification of death is that which gives "meaning" to life, or is the precondition for that which gives "meaning" to life, or is the precondition for the "true" life of man. If death is considered as an *essentially* external though *biologically* internal event in human existence, the affirmation of life tends to be final and, as it were, unconditional: life is not and cannot be redeemed by anything other than life. But if death appears as an essential as well as biological fact, ontological as well as empirical, life is transcended even though the transcendence may not assume any religious form. Man's empirical existence, his material and contingent life, is then defined in terms of and redeemed by something other than itself: he is said to live in two fundamentally different and even conflicting dimensions, and his "true" existence involves a series of sacrifices in his empirical existence which culminate in the supreme sacrifice—death. It is this idea of death to which the following notes refer.

It is remarkable to what extent the notion of death as not only biological but ontological necessity has permeated Western philosophy—remarkable because the overcoming and mastery of mere natural necessity has otherwise been regarded as the distinction of human existence and endeavor. Such an elevation of a biological fact to the dignity of an ontological essence seems to run counter to a philosophy which sees one of its foremost tasks in the distinction and discrimination between natural and essential facts and in teaching man to transcend the former. To be sure, the death which is presented as an ontological category is not simply the natural end of organic life—it is rather the comprehended, "appropriated" end that has become an integral part of man's own existence. However, this process of comprehension and appropriation neither changes nor transcends the natural fact of death but remains in a brute sense hopeless submission to it.

Now all philosophical thinking presupposes acceptance of facts—but then, the intellectual effort consists in dissolving their immediate facticity, by placing them into the context of relationships in which they become comprehensible. Thus they emerge as the product of factors, as something that has become what it is or has been made what it is, as elements in a process. Time is constitutive of facts. In this sense, all facts are historical. Once comprehended in their historical dynamic, they become transparent as nodal points of possible changes—changes which are defined and determined by the place and function of each respective fact in the respective totality within which it has coagulated. There is no necessity—there are only degrees of necessity. Necessity indicates lack of power: inability to change what is—the term is meaningful only as coterminus of freedom: the limit of freedom. Freedom implies knowledge, cognition. Insight into necessity is the first step toward the dissolution of necessity, but comprehended necessity is not yet freedom. The latter requires progress from theory to practice: actual conquest of those necessities which prevent or restrain the satisfaction of needs. In this process, freedom tends to be universal, for the servitude of those who are unfree restrains the freedom of those who depend on their servitude (as the master depends on the labor of his slave). Such universal freedom may be undesired or undesirable or impracticable—but then freedom is not yet real—there is still a realm of incomprehensible and unconquerable necessity.

What are the criteria for determining whether the limits of human freedom are empirical (i.e., ultimately historical) or ontological (i.e., essential and unsurpassable)? The attempt to answer this question has been one of the major efforts of philosophy. However, it has often been characterized by a tendency to present the empirical as ontological necessity. This "ontological inversion" also operates in the philosophical interpretation of death. It manifests itself in the tendency to accept death not only as fact but as necessity, and as necessity which is to be conquered not by dissolving but by accepting it. In other words, philosophy assumed that death pertained to the essence of human life, to its existential fulfillment. Moreover, the comprehended acceptance of death was considered as the prerogative of man, the very token of his freedom. Death, and only death brought the human existence into its own. Its final negation was considered as the affirmation of man's faculties and ends. In a remote sense the proposition may be true—man is free only if he has conquered his death; if he is able to determine his dying as the self-chosen end of his living; if his death is internally and externally linked with his life in the medium of freedom. As long as this is not the case, death remains mere nature, an unconquered limit to all life which is more than mere organic life, mere animal life. The poet may pray: *O Herr, gib jedem seinen eignen Tod.* The prayer is meaningless as long as man's life is not his own but a chain of preestablished and socially required performances at work and at leisure. Under these circumstances, the exhortation to make death "one's own" is hardly more than a premature reconciliation with unmastered natural forces. A brute biological fact, permeated with pain, horror, and despair, is transformed into an existential privilege. From the beginning to the end, philosophy has exhibited this strange masochism—and sadism, for the exaltation of one's own death involved the exaltation of the death of others.

The Platonic Socrates hails death as the beginning of true life—at least for the philosopher. But virtue which is knowledge makes the philosopher who heroically submits to death akin to the soldier on the battlefield, to the good citizen who obeys law and order, to every man worthy of his name; at various levels, they all share the idealistic attitude toward death. And if the authority who sentences the philosopher to death, far from annihilating him, opens to him the gates of the true life, then the executioners are absolved from the full guilt of the capital crime. The destruction of the body does not kill the "soul," the essence of life. Or have we here a terrifying ambiguity: how far does the Socratic irony go? In accepting his death, Socrates puts his judges in the wrong, but his philosophy of death acknowledges their right—the right of the polis over the individual. Does he, in accepting the verdict, even provoking it and rejecting escape, refute his philosophy? Does he suggest, in a horribly subtle and sophisticated way, that this philosophy serves to support the very forces which he fought throughout his life? Does he want to point to a deep secret—to the insoluble connection between death and unfreedom, death and domination? In any case, Plato buries the secret: the true life demands liberation from the untrue life of our common existence. The transvaluation is complete; our world is a world of shadows. We are prisoners in the captivity of the body, chained by our appetites, cheated by our senses. "The truth" is beyond. To be sure, this beyond is not yet heaven. It is not yet certain whether the true life presupposes physical death, but there can be no doubt about the direction in which the intellectual (and not only the intellectual!) effort is guided. With the devaluation of the body, the life of the body is no longer the real life, and the negation of this life is the beginning rather than the end. Moreover, the mind is essentially opposed to the body. The life of the former is domination, if not negation, of the latter. The progress of truth is the struggle against sensuousness, desire, and pleasure. This struggle not only aims at liberating man from the tyranny of brute natural needs, it is also the separation of the life of the body from the life of the mind—alienation of freedom from pleasure. The truth which liberates is the truth which repels pleasure. Happiness is redefined a priori (i.e., without empirical foundation on the factual reasons) in terms of self-denial and renunciation. The glorifying acceptance of death, which carries with it the acceptance of the political order, also marks the birth of philosophical morality.

Through all refinements and attenuations, the ontological affirmation of death continues to play its prominent role in the mainstream of philosophy. It centers on the idea of death which Hegel described as pertaining to the romanticist concept of *Weltanschauung*. According to Hegel[1]: death has the significance of the "negation of the negative," i.e., of an affirmation—as the "resurrection of the spirit from the bare husk of nature and the finiteness which it has outgrown." Pain and death are thus perverted into the return of the subject to itself, satisfaction (*Befriedigung*), bliss, and into that reconciled and affirmative existence which the spirit can attain only through the mortification of its negative existence, where it is separated from its true reality and life (*Lebendigkeit*).

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[1] G. W. F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of Fine Art*, vol. II, translated by F. P. B. Osmaston (London: G. Bell & Sons, Ltd 1920).

This tradition comes to a close in Heidegger's interpretation of human existence in terms of the anticipation of death—the latest and the most appropriate ideological exhortation to death, at the very time when the political ground was prepared for the corresponding reality of death—the gas chambers and concentration camps of Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Dachau, and Bergen-Belsen.

In contrast one might construct some kind of "normal" attitude toward death—normal in terms of the plain observable facts, although commonly repressed under the impact of the prevailing ideology and the institutions supported by it. This hypothetical normal attitude might be circumscribed as follows: death seems to be inevitable, but it is, in the vast majority of cases, a painful, horrible, violent, and unwelcome event. When it is welcome, life must have been even more painful than death. But the defiance of death is sadly ineffective. The scientific and technical efforts of mature civilization, which prolong life and alleviate its pains, seem to be frustrated, even counteracted on the part of society as well as of individuals. The "struggle for existence" within the nation and among nations still is a struggle for life and death, which demands the periodic shortening of life. Moreover, the fight for prolongation of life depends for its effectiveness on the response in the mind and in the instinctual structure of individuals. A positive response presupposes that their life is really "the good life"—that they have the possibility to develop and satisfy humane needs and faculties, that their life is an end-in-itself rather than a means for sustaining themselves. Should conditions obtain under which this possibility may become reality, quantity may turn into quality: the gradually increasing duration of life may change the substance and character not only of life but also of death. The latter would lose its ontological and moral sanctions; men would experience death primarily as a technical limit of human freedom whose surpassing would become the recognized goal of the individual and social endeavor. To an increasing extent, death would partake of freedom, and individuals would be empowered to determine their own deaths. As in the case of incurable suffering, the means for painless death would be made available. Are there other than irrational arguments against such reasoning? Only one. A life with this attitude toward death would be incompatible with the established institutions and values of civilization. It would either lead to mass suicide (since for a great part of mankind life still is such a burden that the terror of death is probably an important factor in keeping it going) or to the dissolution of all law and order (since the fearful acceptance of death has become an integral element of public and private morality). The argument might be unshakable, but then the traditional notion of death is a sociopolitical concept which transforms nasty empirical facts into an ideology.

The connection between the ideology of death and the historical conditions under which it developed is indicated in Plato's interpretation of the death of Socrates: obedience to the law of the state without which there can be no orderly human society; the inadequacy of an existence which is imprisonment rather than freedom, falsehood rather than truth; knowledge of the possibility of a free and truthful life together with the conviction that this possibility cannot be realized without negating the established order of life. Death is the necessary entrance into real life because man's factual life is essentially unreal, i.e., incapable of existing in truth. But this argument is open to the question: Cannot perhaps the established order of existence be changed so that it becomes a "true" polis? In his *Republic*, Plato answers in the affirmative. The ideal state deprives death of its transcendental function, at least for the ruling philosophers; since they live in truth, they don't have to be liberated by death. As for the other citizens, those who are unfree do not have to be "reconciled" with death. It can occur and be made to occur as a natural event. The ideology of death is not yet an indispensable instrument of domination. It came to assume this function when the Christian doctrine of the freedom and equality of man as man had merged with the continuing institutions of unfreedom and injustice. The contradiction between the humanistic gospel and the inhumane reality required an effective solution. The death and resurrection of the god-hero, once the symbol of the periodic renewal of natural life and of a rational sacrifice, now directs all hope to the transnatural life hereafter. The supreme penalty must be suffered so that man may find supreme fulfillment after his natural life has ended. How can one protest against death, fight for its delay and conquest, when Christ died willingly on the cross so that mankind might be redeemed from sin? The death of the son of God bestows final sanction on the death of the son of man.

But the unreasonable insist upon reason. They continue to fear death as the supreme horror and the final end, the collapse of "being" into "nothing." "Anxiety" appears as existential category, but in view of the fact that death is not only inevitable but also incalculable, ubiquitous, and the tabooed limit of human freedom, all anxiety is fear, fear of a real, omnipresent danger, the most rational attitude and feeling. The rational force of anxiety has perhaps been one of the strongest factors of progress in the struggle with nature, in the protection and enrichment of human life. Conversely, the premature cure from anxiety without eliminating its ultimate source and resource may be the opposite: a factor of regression and repression. To live without anxiety is indeed the only uncompromising definition of freedom because it includes the full content of hope: material as well as spiritual happiness. But there can be (or rather there should be) no life without anxiety as long as death has not been conquered—not in the sense of a conscious anticipation and acceptance when it comes anyway, but in the sense of depriving it of its horror and incalculable power as well as of its transcendental sanctity. This means that the concerted and systematic struggle against death in all its forms would be carried beyond the socially tabooed limits. The fight against disease is not identical with the fight against death. There seems to be a point at which the former ceases to continue into the latter. Some deep-rooted mental barrier seems to arrest the will before the technical barrier is reached. Man seems to bow before the inevitable without really being convinced that it is inevitable. The barrier is defended by all the socially perpetuated values that attach to the redeeming and even creative features of death: its natural as well as essential necessity ("without death life would not be life"). The short and incalculable duration of life enforces constant renunciation and toil, heroic effort, and sacrifice for the future. The ideology of death operates in all forms of "innerworldly asceticism." Destruction of the ideology of death would involve an explosive transvaluation of social concepts: the good conscience to be a coward, deheroization and desublimation; it would involve a new "reality principle" which would liberate rather than suppress the "pleasure principle."

The mere formulation of these goals indicates why they have been so rigidly tabooed. Their realization would be tantamount to the collapse of the established civilization. Freud has shown the consequences of a (hypothetical) disintegration or even essential relaxation of the prevailing "reality principle"—the dynamic relationship between Eros and Death Instinct is such that a reduction of the latter below the level at which it functions in a socially useful way would liberate the former beyond the "tolerable" level. This would involve a degree of desublimation which would undo the most precious achievements of civilization. Freud's insight was penetrating enough to invoke against his own conception the taboo which it violated. Psychoanalysis has all but purged itself from these "unscientific" speculations. This is not the place to discuss the question whether the affirmation of death is expressive of a deep-lying "wish to die," of a primary "death instinct" in all organic life, or whether this "instinct" has not become "second nature" under the historical impact of civilization.[2] Society's use of death and its attitude toward death seem to strengthen the hypothesis concerning the historical character of the death instinct.

Both fear of death and its repression in the acceptance of death as sanctioned necessity enter as cohesive factors into the organization of society. The natural fact of death becomes a social institution. No domination is complete without the threat of death and the recognized right to dispense death—death by legal verdict, in war, by starvation. And no domination is complete unless death, thus institutionalized, is recognized as more than natural necessity and brute fact, namely, as *justified* and as *justification.* This justification seems in the last analysis and beyond all particulars, individual guilt feeling derived from the universal guilt which is life itself, the life of the body. The early Christian notion, according to which all secular government is punishment for sin, has survived—even though it has been officially discarded. If life itself is sinful, then all rational standards for earthly justice, happiness, and freedom are merely conditional, secondary, and rightly superseded by (in terms of earthly life) irrational but higher standards. What is decisive is not whether this is still "really believed," but whether the attitude once motivated by this belief is perpetuated and reinforced by the conditions and institutions of society.

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[2] I have tried to discuss the problem in my book *Eros and Civilization* (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1955).

When the idea of death as justification has taken firm root in the existence of the individual, the struggle for the conquest of death is arrested in and by individuals themselves. They experience death not only as the biological limit of organic life, as the scientific-technical limit of knowledge, but also as a metaphysical limit. To struggle, to protest against the metaphysical limit of human existence is not only foolish, it is essentially impossible. What religion achieves through the notion of sin, philosophy affirms by its notion of the metaphysical finiteness of human existence. In itself, finiteness is a plain biological fact—that the organic life of individuals does not go on forever, that it ages and dissolves. But this biological condition of man does not have to be the inexhaustible source of anxiety. It may well be (and it was for many philosophical schools) the opposite, namely, the stimulus for incessant efforts to extend the limits of life, to strive for a guiltless existence, and to determine its end—to subject it to human autonomy, if not in terms of time, at least in terms of its quality, by eliminating decrepitude and suffering. Finiteness as a metaphysical structure appears in a quite different light. In it, the relationship between life and the end of life is, as it were, reversed. With death as the existential category, life becomes earning a living rather than living, a means which is an end in itself. The liberty and dignity of man is seen in the affirmation of his hopeless inadequacy, his eternal limitation. The metaphysics of finiteness thus falls in line with the taboo on unmitigated hope.

Death assumes the force of an institution which, because of its vital utility, should not be changed, even if it could perhaps be changed. The species perpetuates itself through the death of individuals; this is a natural fact. Society perpetuates itself through the death of individuals; this is no longer a natural but an historical fact. The two facts are not equivalent. In the first proposition, death is a biological event: disintegration of organic into inorganic matter. In the second proposition, death is an institution and a value: the cohesion of the social order depends to a considerable extent on the effectiveness with which individuals comply with death as more than a natural necessity; on their willingness, even urge, to die many deaths which are not natural; on their agreement to sacrifice themselves and not to fight death "too much." Life is not to be valued too highly, at least not as the supreme good. The social order demands compliance with toil and resignation, heroism, and punishment for sin. The established civilization does not function without a considerable degree of unfreedom; and death, the ultimate cause of all anxiety, sustains unfreedom. Man is not free as long as death has not become really "his own," that is, as long as it has not been brought under his autonomy. The realization of such autonomy is conceivable only if death no longer appears as the "negation of the negation," as redemption from life.

There is another sinister aspect of the exalted acceptance of death as more than a natural fact, an aspect which becomes manifest in the ancient stories of mothers who delighted in the sacrifice of their sons on the battlefields; in the more recent letters of mothers who assured the killers of their sons of their forgiveness; in the stoic indifference with which they live near atomic testing grounds and take war for granted. To be sure, explanations are ready at hand: defense of the nation is the prerequisite for the existence of all its citizens, final judgment of the murderer is God's and not man's, etc. Or, on more material grounds, the individual has long since become powerless "to do anything about it," and this powerlessness is rationalized as moral duty, virtue, or honor. However, all these explanations seem to fail at one central point, the undisguised, almost exhibitionist character of affirmation, of instinctual consent. It seems hard indeed to reject Freud's hypothesis of an insufficiently repressed death wish. But again, the biological drive which operates in the death wish may not be so biological. It may have been "fed" by historical forces, the need for sacrificing the life of the individual so that the life of the "whole" may go on. The "whole" here is not the natural species, mankind; it is rather the totality of the institutions and relationships which men have established in their history. Without the instinctual affirmation of its undisputable priority, this totality might be in danger of disintegration. When Hegel said that history is the slaughter bench on which the happiness of individuals is sacrificed to the progress of Reason, he did not speak of a natural process. He identified an historical fact. The death on the slaughter bench of history, the death which society exacts from individuals is not mere nature—it is also Reason (with a capital R). Through death on the field of honor, in the mines and on the highways, from unconquered disease and poverty, by the state and its organs, civilization advances. Is progress under such conditions throughout the centuries conceivable without the effective agreement of individuals, an instinctual if not conscious agreement which supplements and props up enforced submission by "voluntary" compliance? And if such "voluntary" agreement prevails, what are its roots and reasons?

The questions lead back to the beginning. Compliance with death is compliance with the master over death: the polis, the state, nature, or the god. Not the individual, but a higher power is the judge; the power over death is also the power over life. But this is only half the story. The other is the willingness, the wish to quit a life of untruth—a life which betrays not only the dreams of childhood but also the mature hopes and promises of man. They are referred to the beyond, the beyond of heaven or of the spirit—or of nothingness. Decisive is the element of protest—protest on the part of the powerless. Because they are powerless, they not only comply, they forgive those who mete out death. Such forgiveness may ingratiate and ensure the love of the supreme power, but it also makes a blessing out of weakness. Nietzsche's notion of the genealogy of morals also applies to the moral attitude toward death. The slaves revolt—and win—not by liberating themselves but by proclaiming their weakness as the crown of humanity. The impotence of the protest perpetuates the feared and hated power.

III

FROM ONTOLOGY TO TECHNOLOGY

FROM ONTOLOGY TO TECHNOLOGY: FUNDAMENTAL TENDENCIES OF INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY*

The following pages contain ideas developed during a course held in 1958–1959 at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes. They are part of a soon-to-be-published book, dedicated to the study of some basic tendencies in the most advanced industrial societies, particularly the United States.[1] These tendencies appear to engender a system of thought and behavior which represses any values, aspirations, or ideas not in conformity with the dominant rationality. An entire dimension of human reality is therefore suppressed: the dimension which permits individuals and classes to develop a theory and technique of transcendence by which they might envisage the "determinate negation" of their society. The radical critique and effective opposition (intellectual as well as political) are now integrated into the status quo; human existence seems to become "one-dimensional." Such an integration cannot be explained by the emergence of *mass culture*, the *organization*

* *Editors' note*:
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[1] See also *Hegel's Ontology und die Grundlegung einer Theorie der Geschichlichtkeit* (Frankfurt: V. Klosterman, 1932); *Reason and Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1941); *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955); *Soviet-Marxism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958).

man, the *hidden persuaders*, etc. These notions belong to a purely ideological interpretation that neglects the analysis of the most fundamental processes which undermine the base upon which a radical opposition might have developed.

Are this same atrophy of historical transcendence and this neutralization of the negating forces, which appear as the supreme achievement of industrial society, rooted within the same structure of technical civilization, or are they only the work of its repressive institutions? Did these technics so deeply transform capitalism and socialism as to invalidate Marxist and anti-Marxist notions? Is the atrophy of transcendence furthering the absorption of negating forces, announcing the control of its inherent contradiction by both the technological domination of the world and the universal administration of society? Or is this process rather inaugurating the phase in which quantitative change is becoming qualitative?

Those are the questions which have guided our analysis. Starting with the political economic transformation of modern technical society, this analysis will examine the different ways that the process of transcendence atrophied in normal behavior, language, traditional culture, as well as in neopositivist and analytical philosophy.

While the new scientific method destroyed the idea that the universe was ordered in relation to a goal, to a teleological structure, it also invalidated a hierarchical social system in which occupations and individual aspirations were predetermined by final causes. The new science, in its neutral form, abstracted itself from an organization of life which deprived the immense majority of human beings of their liberty. In its effort to establish the physical mathematical structure of the universe, this new science also abstracted itself from the concrete individual and its "sensuous body." Such an abstraction was fully validated by its result: a logical system of propositions which guided the use and the methodological transformation of nature and which tended to produce a universe controlled by the power of man.

The reality being reduced (or reducible) to its physical mathematical structure entailed that "truth" became defined by what could be measured or calculated, or by propositions which fulfilled these conditions. This formal reality realizes itself according to its own laws (even though these laws are purely "statistical" in character). Man can understand them, act upon and use them without making them part of his own individual or social existence. For these laws govern human beings insofar as they are purely physical and biological matter. In all other aspects, humans are *eliminated* from nature; or rather the reality aimed at and acknowledged by the scientific method becomes a reality independent of individual and social facticity.

One can justifiably speak of the "metaphysical foundations" of modern science. In this respect, Alexander Koyré recently strongly emphasized the nonempirical and the ontological aspects of Galilean science. The Pythagorean, the Platonic, and the Aristotelian traditions remained, at least up to Newton, powerful enough to provide the scientific method with a "philosophy." One might say that the very notion of physical universal laws, susceptible to unification, from the start preserves a certain version of finality. Soon, however, this idea of finality will become ever more empty—a finality of calculable order, evaluated purely for its ability to predict events. It will become divorced from a *telos* and from a structure tending towards a *telos*. This predictive calculable rationality will define all actions in its terms, relative to what will constitute an "order" based on calculability and predictability (even if only a statistical order).

The density and the opacity of "objects," and of objectivity as well, seem to evaporate. Nature and human reality are no longer considered as a substantial *cosmos*. According to advanced scientific method, thinking is purified of the objects which it opposes: these latter remain only as "convenient intermediaries," as "models" and "invariables" or "obsolete cultural postulates."[2] Or, quoting again another operative formula: Physical matter can no longer provide an objective for "the external and the material world, those are only the results obtained by the achievement of such operations."[3] The totality of objects of thought and practice is now "projected" as *organization:* beyond any perceivable certitude, truth becomes a matter of convention, efficiency, and "internal coherence." The most fundamental experience is no longer concrete experience, overall social practice, but rather the administrative practice organized by technology.

This development reflects the transformation of the natural world into a technical world. It is more than a pun if I say that *technology has replaced ontology*. The new mode of thought annuls the ontological tradition. Hegel summarized the idea which lies at the core of this tradition: Logos, Reason, is the common denominator of the subject and the object and it is perceived as the synthesis of opposites; this synthesis develops and realizes itself in the theoretical and practical struggle to transform the given world into the free and rational world. This is the work of *history*. With that idea, the idealist ontology comprehends the *tension* between subject and object, and the opposition between them. The reality of reason is the tension between different modes of being. Thus, the most resolutely monist system maintained the idea of a substance which deploys itself into subject and object, that is to say, the idea of a dual and antagonistic reality.

The modern transformation from natural to technical reality undermines the very foundation of this dualism. It is true that scientific, modern philosophy begins with the Cartesian notion of two substances: *res cogitans* and *res extensa*. However, since the "matter" of which the latter is constituted is more and more comprehended by mathematical formulas (whose application, in turn, "remolds" this matter), the *res extensa* loses concrete character.

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[2] V. Quine, *From a Logical Point of View* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1953), p. 44.

[3] H. Dingle, "Philosophy of Physics: 1850–1950," *Nature*, 168 (1951), p. 630.

While the *res extensa* becomes the world of mathematical structure in itself, the Ego, as the *res cogitans*, even more surely becomes the subject of observation and quantitative computation. A new monism appears, but a monism devoid of substance. The tension between subject and object, the dualist and antagonistic character of reality, tend to disappear and with them the "two-dimensionality" of human existence, the capacity to envisage another mode of human existence within reality, and the ability to transcend facticity towards its real possibilities.

The ability to live in two dimensions was one of the constitutive characteristics of man in pretechnological civilization. The capacity to transcend facticity from the perspective of a *qualitative* change of reality *within* reality was quite different from the belief in religious transcendence which transcended the same reality, and even more so from scientific transcendence, which only transforms the factual in quantitative terms. The ability to comprehend and live historical transcendence is seriously atrophied in the technological world. Man can no longer exist in two dimensions; he has become a one-dimensional man. There is now one dimension of reality which is, in the strict sense of the word, a reality without substance, or rather, a reality in which substance is represented by its technical form which becomes its content, its essence. Every signification, every proposition is validated only within the framework of the behavior of men and things—a one-dimensional context of efficient, theoretical, and practical operations.

At first, it was possible to believe that the "denaturation" of reality is masked by the terrible force through which the technical world resists the will and the thinking of the individual; that the pure and simple power of the matter which man should transform and which transforms him was never so overwhelming. But this power is the very power of man. It is through this same human practice that the technical world has congealed into a "second nature," or a false immediacy, *schlechte Unmittelbarkeit* [bad immediacy], more hostile and destructive than this *original* pretechnical nature. The technical reality does not have any substance other than the subject. But the subject—who would make out of this technical reality the world of his liberty—exists only potentially "in itself" and not "for itself." Consequently, technical reality is deprived of its logos, or, more precisely, that logos appears as deprived of reality, as a logical form without substance. Contemporary positivism, semantics, symbolic logic, and linguistic analysis define and filter the universe of discourse for the use of technicians, specialists, and experts who calculate, adjust, and match without ever asking *for whom* and *for what*. The occupation of these specialists is to *make things work*, but not to give an end to this process. Neither science nor technics have values in themselves; they are "neutral" with respect to values or ends that might have been attributed to them from outside. This neutrality is nonetheless positive: reality is value, and it is *evaluated* precisely as if it were conceived in its pure form (or as pure matter: in this context these two terms, although opposite, converge) and lent itself to all ends. Being assumes the ontological character of *instrumentality*; by its very structure this rationality is susceptible to any use and to any modification.

Are those notions inherent in science? Don't they too easily correspond to the social conditions of experience in which scientific method developed? Demonstrating the link which exists between mathematical and operative science on one hand, and ascending capitalism on the other, does not exhaust the question. This link deserves to be re-examined.

The link existing between science and society is well known. As science was liberating itself, liberating nature from its "external" forces and constituting objectivity as a means in itself, a pure and universal means, an analogous liberation was produced in social relations: man found himself liberated from any individual and "external" dependence. Man entered into the social process as an abstract and universal element, quantifiable in terms of labor power. In the course of this process, the concrete aspect of having different intellectual faculties and individual needs (the secondary qualities!) became reduced to a common denominator, a quantifiable, objective base of exchange, of money, and of means in a universal milieu.

The parallel between social development and scientific development discloses a common principle: efficiency. The scientific method sees in this principle the most certain warranty of its correctness. But there isn't, there couldn't be, efficiency *per se*! In the social process, the end [of efficiency] is the production of consumer goods, which purports to satisfy needs and an exchange value which integrates subjects and objects according to a universal, quantifiable standard. It seems, however, that science wasn't originally indebted to such ends; this is a great illusion. Conceptually speaking, science tended towards a different end. First, science made ends abstract—as processes which appeared themselves incompatible not with "reality," but with the ascending industrial reality in which ends become means in a system of "technicity."[4] In this way, science constructed the universe of intellectual and physical instrumentality, a system truly "hypothetical." Nevertheless, a system of instrumentality depends, as such, on *another* system: on a universe of *ends*. What appears as external, foreign to the terminology of science, is actually part of its structure, its method, and its concepts: of its objectivity.

One should therefore reject the notion of technical neutrality, which offers a perspective on techniques beyond good and evil and which appears as objectivity itself, suspectible to social usage in all its forms. Indeed, a machine, a technical instrument, can be considered as neutral, as pure matter. But the machine, the instrument, does not exist outside an ensemble, a technological totality; it exists only as an element of technicity. This form of technicity is a "state of the world," a way of existing between man and nature. Heidegger stressed that the "project" of an instrumental world precedes (and should precede) the creation of those technologies which serve as the instrument of this ensemble. People should therefore conceive of reality as a technical ensemble (technicity) before attempting to act upon it as a technician. In fact, such "transcendental" knowledge possesses a material base in the needs of society and in the incapacity of society to either satisfy or develop them. I would like to insist on the fact that the abolition of anxiety, the pacification of life, and enjoyment are the essential needs. From the beginning, the technical project contains the requirements of these needs: these requirements are part of the notion of world harmony, of physical laws, and of the mathematician God (the highest idea of universal equality throughout all inequality!). These requirements are intrinsic to the very notion of modern science, which demands the free play of intellectual faculties against repressive powers. If one considers the existential character of technicity, one can speak of a *final technological cause* and the repression of this cause through the social development of technology.

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[4] Translator's Note: In contrast to the French *technique*, which refers to a particular activity, a particular sociohistorical construct, *technicité* refers to an entire system of technology, including its technical apparatus and scientific knowledge. The word technicity will be used in the text.

The question is whether neutrality, in relation to values, is a scientific notion, that is to say, a requirement inherent in the structure of modern science. In my opinion, the neutrality of technology (which is a mere manifestation of the neutrality of science) is a political concept. Industrial society clearly developed a notion of technology which undercuts its inherent character. Indeed, as a historical project, technicity has an internal sense of its own: technicity projects instrumentality as a way to release man from labor and anxiety, as a way to pacify the struggle for existence. This is the ultimate purpose for that methodical transformation of the world implied in technicity. Developed as "pure" instrumentality, technology has rendered this concrete purpose into an abstraction. It has ceased to be the goal of technological development. Consequently, pure instrumentality deprived of its ultimate purpose has become a universal means for *domination*.

Indeed, technicity requires domination: the control of nature as a hostile, destructive, and violent force; the control of man as part of that nature; the exploitation of natural resources for the satisfaction of needs. In these ways, industrial society appropriately exercises its technological domination; but insofar as society has made an abstraction of technology's ultimate purpose, technology itself perpetuates misery, violence, and destruction.

The interdependence of productive and destructive forces, which characterizes technicity as domination, tends to suppress any difference between the "normal" and the abnormal "use" of technology. The difference between the use of "technology" and science by the Nazis and by democracy is dubious. A missile remains a missile whether it destroys London or Moscow, and Mr. von Braun remains Mr. von Braun whether he works for the Brown House or the White House. The absence of an ultimate purpose in technology manifests itself equally in politics, where it becomes open to suspicion and contestation.

If the creation of the technical world did not abolish the domination of man over man, it was because a particular development of technicity—which is more profound and more ancient than technique itself—continues to make out of life merely a means of living. Up to the present, technical progress remains the progress of an alienated labor, of a repressive productivity. Technicity became the most efficient method, the most fruitful way, to subjugate man to his instrument of labor.

Through technicity, society ensures the primitive repression of man by man: enjoyment is sacrificed to the "reality principle." This repression must be exercised most efficiently and intensively, since it is more than ever threatened by technical progress itself. It seems, indeed, that the realization of industrial civilization diminishes the need for repression confronted with the real possibility for the abolition of labor, however, industrial civilization appears even more irrational. I would like to show here the immense political impact of Freud's work, as an analysis of the fatal dialectic of progress.

Civilization is man's subjugation to work. In this process, the human organism ceases to exist as an instrument of satisfaction and instead becomes an instrument of work and renunciation: satisfaction is postponed, enjoyment sacrificed. The primary instincts of man naturally turn to immediate satiation and to rest, to tranquility through this appeasement; they oppose themselves to the necessity of work and labor and to the indispensable conditions of satisfaction in a world ruled by starvation and the insufficiency of goods. Society therefore must turn the instincts away from their immediate goal and subjugate them to the "reality principle" which is the very principle of repression.

The human being therefore becomes an instrument of labor; he is productive. But this productivity is always accompanied by suffering and by destruction, which are the marks of the violence done to humans and their biological constitution. The progress of civilization rests therefore upon this essential modification of the "nature" of human beings. Henceforth, individuals make repression their own project and their own enterprise (superego, guilt feelings, etc.). Their instincts themselves become repressive; they are the biological and mental bases which sustain and perpetuate political and social repression. To the extent to which the social reorganization of instincts represses spontaneity, eroticism, etc., the instincts of destruction and death become more powerful. Transformed by turn into aggressiveness, which is more or less controlled and useful these instincts become an inherent force of the progress of civilization. Thus, the progress of civilization is a double process which dialectically intervenes as much in the biological and mental domain as in the domain of political economy; each supports and fortifies the other.

All progress, all growth of productivity, is accompanied by a progressive repression and a productive destruction. The social division of labor engenders this fatal dialectic through which, one could say, all progress of reason contains its own irrationality, every gain of liberty contains a new form of servitude, and all production contains restrictions that are equally efficacious. Now, this dialectic becomes explosive in advanced industrial civilization. To the degree that society masters nature and increases the material and intellectual resources which individuals can put to use, the double repression becomes less necessary as the condition of progress. The realization of technology and the productivity of labor could reduce considerably the gap that exists between needs and their satisfaction. A world truly pacified might emerge, where life would no longer be merely a means for living, but instead become a life in and for itself. Repression continues, however, and so it should continue, since without alienated work it would become impossible to increase that repressive productivity which has become the driving force of society.

A few conclusions, whose speculative character should not be hidden, remain to be suggested.

I admitted that the repressive tendencies in advanced industrial society have resulted from the development of technicity seen as a political project, as a project of domination. That domination implied by technicity is twofold:

- Control of nature: rational exploitation of natural resources, etc.
- Control of man: rational exploitation of natural resources, etc.

According to its own internal logic, the technological project should have been accomplished while annulling itself: the necessity for domination was supposed to disappear. The triumph over misery and the insufficiency of goods should have made it possible to "abolish labor," to put productivity to the service of consumption, and to abandon the struggle of existence in order to enjoy existence. Considerable forces conflict with such a future of technicity: within overall progress and the enhancement of conditions of life, domination and destruction continue. Furthermore, domination and destruction themselves become the conditions of progress. I have stressed that the social organization of instincts plays a major role in this process through which individuals perpetuate their own domination. All social repression rests on a "biological" repression. Consequently, all liberation presupposes a revolution, an upheaval in the order of instincts and needs: a new reality principle. This total transvaluation of values would affect the being of nature as well as the being of man.

Man and nature will always remain the two terms of a dialectical relation, the factors of a dialectical totality. Social organization influences nature as well as man. There can be no liberation, no pacification of human existence, without the liberation and pacification of nature. There is a control over man which is repressive, and there is a control over man which is liberating. There is a control over nature which brings deliverance to nature, as far as its own misery is concerned, and which suppresses violence and destruction. Civilization realized the idea of such a control over nature, in its gardens, parks, and its "protected reserves"; outside the portions limited to the natural environment, it has treated nature as man was treated: as an instrument of repressive reproductivity. "This conquering aggression is characterized by the rape of nature."[5] Yet this sentence is too often perceived as a catch-phrase, as an old image of romanticism and utopia. As a matter of fact, it expresses the essential relation between the destruction of man and the destruction of nature. Man remains master and slave, subject and object of this domination, although domination is transferred to machines and directed against nature. "The machine is now a means; the end is the conquest of nature, the domestication of the natural forces through subjugation: the machine becomes a slave which produces other slaves. Such an inspiration can meet man's desire for liberty. But it is difficult to liberate oneself while transferring servitude to other beings, men, animals, or machines; to rule over an empire of machines which subjugate the entire world is still to rule, and any system of rule presupposes the acceptance of a schema of subjugation."[6]

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[5] Gilbert Simondon, *Du mode d'existence des objets techniques* (Paris: Aubier, 1958), p. 127.

[6] Ibid.

IV

PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTIONS ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

WORLD WITHOUT LOGOS*

When the new scientific method destroyed the idea of a universe arranged in relation to an ultimate end, it invalidated at the same time a hierarchical social system in which the pursuits and aspirations of the individual were predetermined by final causes. The new science, "neutral" as it was, ignored an organization of life which deprived the large majority of mankind of its freedom. In the course of its effort to establish the physical and mathematical structure of the universe, it had also to disclaim any concern for the concrete individual, the perceptible "body." Such a process of abstraction was fully validated by its result—a logical system of propositions governing the methodical utilization and transformation of nature, with the aim of turning it into a universe controlled by human power.

Reality being reduced—or virtually reduced—to physical-mathematical structures, "truth" is determined solely in relation to what can be measured and calculated, and to propositions expressing such conditions. Such a reality defines itself according to laws of its own (even if these laws be only statistical laws). Man may understand them, act upon them, and be concerned by them, even though they appear to have nothing in common with the laws of his individual or social existence; they involve him only insofar as he himself is pure physical-biological matter. In all his other aspects, man finds himself eliminated from nature, or rather, the reality acknowledged and encompassed of any individual and social existence.

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* *Editors' note*:
"World without Logos" was published in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (January 1964) pp. 25–26. It documents Marcuse's attempt as a public intellectual to engage scientists in discussion of contemporary science and technology. As we note in the introduction, it is clear that part of Marcuse's political project was to engage scientists and engineering and science students in a direct manner. Thus this short essay is perhaps best understood when situated within Marcuse's larger attempt to challenge the scientific establishment to refuse the corporate and military value framework that shaped much of scientific knowledge being produced in elite universities and think tanks across the United States.

One may possibly be justified in talking about the "metaphysical foundations" of modern science. Thus, Alexandre Koyré has recently put strong emphasis upon the ontological, nonempirical aspects of Galilean science. The Pythagorean, Platonic, and Aristotelian tradition remained powerful enough, at least until Newton, to provide scientific method with a "philosophy." It can be said that the very notion of universal physical laws, susceptible of being unified, still retains at the outset, the idea of finality: a finality, however, which tends to become increasingly empty, a finality belonging to the realm of pure calculability and predictability, which carries no telos in itself, nor any structure tending to a telos. The density, the substantial opacity of "objects," all objectivity, seem to evaporate. There is no nature or human reality left to represent a substantial cosmos. In the advanced scientific method, thought itself seems to be purified of the objects that stand in its way: they, in turn, find admittance only in the form of "convenient agents," of "patterns" and "invariants," of "obsolete cultural assumptions." All objects of thought and practice are now conceived and "projected" in terms of organization: beyond any palpable certainty, truth is a question of convention, of efficacy, of "internal coherence"; and basic experience is no longer concrete experience, or social practice taken as a whole, but administrative practice organized by technology.

Such an evolution reflects the transformation of the natural world into a technical world. Technology, strictly speaking, has taken the place of ontology. The new mode of thought has cancelled the ontological tradition.

It might appear, at first glance, that the "denaturing" of reality is masked by the terrible energy the technical world displays in resisting the will and thought of the individual; that the sheer material weight man finds himself called to act upon, and which acts upon him, has never been so overwhelming. But that weight is the weight of man himself. It is through man's own practice that the technical world has crystallized into a "second nature," *schlechte Unmittelbarkeit* (pernicious immediacy), more hostile perhaps and more destructive than initial nature, pretechnical nature. Technical reality has no substance other than that of the subject. Hence it appears to be deprived of its logos, or rather its logos appears to be deprived of all reality, a logical form without any substance. Contemporary positivism, semantics, symbolic logic, linguistic analysis, define and refine the universe of speech, for the use of technicians, specialists, and experts who calculate, adjust, and assemble without ever having to ask themselves either for whom, or for what; their only concern being to make things work, not to assign a goal to that process. Science and technology, in themselves, have no values. They are "neutral" with regard to all values and goals that, from the outside, may be assigned to them. Such a neutrality is invested, however, with a positive meaning; reality in itself is a value, evaluated precisely insofar as it is conceived as pure form (or pure matter: in this context, both terms, opposed elsewhere, converge) that lends itself to all purposes. Being then assumes the ontological character of instrumentality: its very structure makes it amenable to all uses and all alterations.

But the question may be raised as to whether neutrality toward all values is truly a scientific notion, that is, a requirement inherent in the very structure of modern science. I am inclined to think that the neutrality of technique (which is but one manifestation of the neutrality of science) is in itself a political concept, and that industrial society has developed technique in a sense that is contrary to its true meaning. Technics, considered as a historical process, is endowed with an internal meaning, a meaning of its own: it projects instrumentality as a means of freeing man from toil and anxiety, of turning his struggle for life into a more peaceful process. Therein lies the final cause of the methodical transformation of the world involved in technics. But technique, in the process of being developed as "pure" instrumentality, has disregarded this final cause, which no longer stands as the aim of technological development. Hence, pure instrumentality, without finality, has become a universal means of domination. Technics does indeed involve domination: mastery of nature insofar as it is a hostile, violent, and destructive force; mastery of man to the extent that he is a part of that nature. Industrial society exercises, and rightfully so, this technological domination; but insofar as society tends to disregard the final cause of technology, technique in itself perpetuates misery, violence, and destruction.

THE MALCONTENT IN THE AFFLUENT SOCIETY*

The malcontent who cannot repress his observation that the affluent society is as miserable as it is prosperous, as destructive as it is productive, as inefficient as it is efficient is tempted to put blame on the "technological society", that is to say, on the dehumanizing power of mechanization, of the computer, media, etc. He is quickly reminded that machines are neutral: things, no matter how complex and automated, are not autonomous: they are controlled by men; the evil effects of technology are due to its specific application and realization. The malcontent is only too ready to accept the reminder that he succumbs to mystification and reification, and he looks for the men behind the media, for the relations among people behind the relation behind things; he is looking for human responsibility. But the men who devise the machines, who talk over the media, who program the computers are employees of someone or something, and the employers are Boards or Agencies or Organizations in which the Chairman or President himself is just an official, who has to obey and satisfy the requirements of the apparatus over which he presides. And this apparatus appears as a whole which is—at least in its vital parts—centered on the national capital (discomforting ambiguity!) where the foreign and domestic policy of the nation emerges—the large framework within which all happenings are held and held together. And this determining policy itself seems to be without an autonomous human subject of decision, individual or groups. True, there is a "power elite", a ruling stratum, not all too complex or anonymous, which decides over our lives and deaths, which prejudicates our chances or alternatives. But are these rulers (and we should call them by this old-fashioned name) autonomous? Their decisions (result of interminable compromises) are in turn dependent on a machine (political, military, or otherwise), dependent on technological ensembles of which they are the less the masters the more they are ignorant of their technical-scientific intricacy. The fact that the people themselves become an essential part of this machine and these ensembles–the people as consumers, voters, soldiers–does not vitiate or alleviate the objective think-like character and power of the apparatus, for in all their activity, movement, choice, the people conform to the framework set by the preestablished apparatus, and they fortify and perpetuate it through their activity and choice.

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* *Editors' note*:
We transcribed a two-page handwritten text with no title and no date that we have given the title "The Malcontent in the Affluent Society" found in Marcuse's personal collection. This appears to be written around the time of the preparation of *One-Dimensional Man* and describes in different language than his published texts the dilemma of the individual in a technological society.

So we are back at the apparatus itself for which nobody seems to be responsible: things moving by themselves once they have been set on the wrong track, so that all intellectual mastery generates its own servitude, paying tribute to the dialectic of Master and Slave–token of all unfree and irrational societies, no matter how refined and how liberal they may be.

If the malcontent who blames (against all common and scientific sense) the apparatus, succumbs to reification, his critic succumbs to illusory personalization: he underrates the scope of reification, which preserves the traditional difference between ruling and ruled classes by incorporating it in the apparatus itself, in its technological rationality.

We have to live with the consciousness that technology has become an instrument of domination: the most rational domination because it delivers the goods and makes life more comfortable for those who are accepted and accept, the most irrational because it is accepted by its victims, who are no longer in need of liberation.

ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES OF A TECHNOLOGICAL EPOCH*

The idea of the human being, as this was developed and made into an engine of progress during the bourgeois era, has been superseded by the outcomes of the technological society. Human freedom can no longer be grounded in the necessity of work, nor can life be conceived any longer in terms of pay for services performed, or repression seen as the consequence of scarcity. Simultaneously, however, technical progress has developed patterns of domination which reproduce and intensify the dependency of human beings upon the ubiquitous apparatus of production and consumption: the needs of humanity are manipulated and satisfied in such a manner as to turn unfreedom and aggression into the engines of advancement. The systematic management of needs turns the depth-psychological constitution of humanity *against* its liberation. Under these conditions, the emergence of a new, free type of human being cannot be seen as the consequence of transformed institutions: rather it is the very possibility of transformation that is up for grabs. This presupposes human beings having a different depth-psychological structure: for whom transformation is a vital, *biological* necessity. The emergence of such an essentially different "system of needs" is likewise possible only on a technological basis and as the goal of an essentially different administration of the apparatus of production and consumption—it cannot come about spontaneously. One can therefore speak in a precise sense about a technique and a technology of liberation (humanization!).

ON SCIENCE AND PHENOMENOLOGY**

The Crisis of European Science and Transcendental Phenomenology is Husserl's last work. Written in the thirties, the first part was published in 1936, the second part only after Husserl's death.

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* *Editors' note*:
"Anthropological Perspectives on Technology" provides a translation by Charles Reitz of a two-page typewritten text "Anthropologische Persepcktiven der technologischen Epoche," Inhaltsangabe, with the date 1966 written on the top right corner, indicating that at the time of the publication and aftermath of *One-Dimensional Man*, Marcuse was conceiving of the present era as inscribed by technology and creating a new type of technological human being and society.

** *Editors' note*:
"On Science and Phenomenology" appeared as a chapter in volume two of the Boston Studies in Philosophy and Science publication (1965), edited by Robert S. Cohen and Marx W. Wartofsky. In this essay, Marcuse returns to a phenomenological mode of analysis in his examination of Edmund Husserl's last work, *The Crisis of European Science and Transcendental Phenomenology*. Here Marcuse suggests that Husserl

I would like to indicate first where I see the general historical locus of this work. It seems to me that we have to place it into the context of the radical re-examination of the Western concept of Reason, of Western rationality that begins in the last decades of the nineteenth century and to which so essentially different thinkers as Bergson, Dilthey, Max Weber, Spengler, Piaget, and Bachelard belong. All of them have in common this questioning of the very idea which has guided Western thought since its Greek origins, i.e., the rationality typical of the occident. It seems to me that Husserl is the last in this group, and in a certain sense (which may strike you as strange), the most radical of these re-examiners. In Husserl, it is modern science itself, this most sacrosanct child of Western rationality, that is questioned. In this re-examination, modern science appears as the end of a fateful development which begins with Greek thought, that is, with the origins of Western thought itself—as the "end" of this development in the twofold sense of termination and of fulfilling the *telos,* the purpose, the objective of this thought.

According to Husserl, science,—modern science, Galilean as well as post-Galilean,—originates in the Greek idea of knowledge and truth and comes to rest in a scientific rationality in which truth and validity contain in themselves illusion and repression. Before I try to present Husserl's radical thesis, I have to stress that it is not the result of a sociological analysis or of a sociology of knowledge. It is precisely the fascinating aspect of Husserl's work that it is a *philosophical* analysis within the academic framework of intellectual history, even within the academic division of labor. Husserl emphasizes philosophy as *Beruf*; as calling, and that philosophy is done in the *Berufszeit*, that is to say, in the time reserved, in the academic division, for such investigations. Husserl adds (and this is important: I come back to it at the end) that the calling of the philosopher is a unique calling because (and I quote him):

> this calling is linked with the "possibility of a radical transformation of humanity," and not only a radical transformation of humanity but also a "liberation," and this possibility makes the calling of the philosopher unique within the division of labor.[1]

In the course of such a philosophical undertaking (philosophical also in the sense of a discipline!), in the course of its own inner development

recognized the fact that science operated within a life-world and did not exist as an independent body of pure knowledge, a dominant theme in Western philosophy. It is interesting to note that this is one of the only works where Marcuse explicitly returns to phenomenology to interrogate a philosophical problem, something he had not done since the beginning of his academic career where, under Heidegger, he attempted to blend Marxism with phenomenology.

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[1] Husserl, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. VI, edited by W. Biemel (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1954) p. 154.

Husserl's analysis transcends itself, or rather it descends from the pure theoretical to the impure pretheoretical, practical dimension. Better—the pure theoretical analysis discovers its own internal impurity, but only to return from this impure sphere to the still pure theoretical dimension of transcendental phenomenology as constituent of the practical, pretheoretical dimension, the *Lebenswelt.* (I use the German term *Lebenswelt.* The literal translation "life-world" is too large and too vague in this context; what Husserl means is our own empirical day-to-day world as it is given in immediate experience, practical and other—the world of life and death, in our empirical reality. So I will use either '*Lebenswelt*' or 'empirical reality').

I will now devote some time to presenting Husserl's own thesis (the work is not fully translated; we only have Gurwitsch's excellent abstract of it), but I shall focus it in such a way that the critical problems stand out. Husserl begins with a very brief description of what he considers the Greek concept of Reason, namely the idea of human being as self-determination and determination of its world by virtue of man's intellectual faculties, the concept of Reason, according to which man's intellectual faculties are at the same time capable of determining his own life and of determining, defining, and changing the universe. This conception presupposes that the universe itself which is thus rationally comprehended is in its very structure a rational system and therefore accessible to knowledge and change on the grounds of man's own rational knowledge. In other words, Reason for the Greeks is objective and subjective at one and the same time, and on this basis, Reason is the subjective as well as objective instrument for changing the world in accord with man's rational faculties and ends. But in this process, Reason itself, as *theoria*, is and remains the basis of the transformation of the world. Philosophy is thus established as *science,* and as first, most excellent and general science, which must give direction and the end to all other sciences.

What are the implications of this original concept of Reason? First, it implies a supra-factual, supra-temporal validity of Reason, so that the really real as discovered and defined by Reason is rational as *against* the immediately given fact. Reason establishes an authority and reality which is in this way antagonistic to the immediately given facts. Secondly, true being is ideational being (a conclusion from the first implication), not being as we experience it immediately in the flux of our empirical, practical world. Thus "Platonism" is the basis of all scientific knowledge. Thirdly, objectivity is necessarily correlated with subjectivity, again the subjective as well as objective structure of Reason. Husserl here gives a formulation which, in an entirely different context, recaptures the very question and thesis with Western philosophy began, namely, the final identity of Being and Reason. He says:

> Can Being and Reason be separated if cognitive Reason determines (the essence of being?)[2]

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[2] Ibid., pp. 9, 12.

So we find at the very beginning and at the late stage of Western philosophy this almost literal identity in the formulation of the basic problem, the mysterious union and even identity of Reason and Being, Knowing and Being. Now this concept of Reason, which is theoretical and practical Reason in one, is understood by Husserl as a *project.* I use the term here as it was elaborated in the philosophy of Sartre: "project" in the sense that this idea of rationality and its application is a specific way of experiencing, interpreting, organizing and changing the world, a specific historical project among other possible ones, not the only, necessary project. This project, according to Husserl, came to fulfillment with the foundation of modern science, namely, in Galilei's mathematization of nature. Galilei's mathematization of nature established that purely rational, ideational system which was the dream of all Platonism; Galilei established the ideational world mathematically as the true reality, substituting this scientific universe for the only given reality, namely, our empirical *Lebsenswelt.* But the very fulfillment of this project was also its collapse, according to Husserl. For this scientific rationality, this idea of Reason and its application proved successful only in the positive sciences and in the technological conquest of Nature, while the original foundation of this entire science, that which originally was supposed to constitute the very structure, content and end of science, namely, philosophy, remained an impotent, abstract, meaningless metaphysical sphere of knowledge and continued in this impotent form a hopeless academic existence which, in addition, was more and more dissolved into psychology. Thus separated from the basic philosophy which, according to the original ideas of Reason, was supposed to give the ends, the objectives, the meaning of science, separated from this basic philosophy which was supposed to provide the truly universal concepts, Reason was at the same time divorced—and this is decisive for Husserl—from that rational *humanitas* envisaged in the original philosophical project. Scientific, technological rationality became reason *kath' exochen.* Divorced from the validating "ends" set by philosophy, the rationale set by science and the rationale of its development and progress became that of the *Lebenswelt* itself, in which and for which this science developed.[3] Instead of rationally transcending the *Lebenswelt*, science comprehended, expressed, and extended the specific rationale of the *Lebenswelt*, namely, the ever more effective mastery of the environment (*Herrschaft über die praktische Umwelt*), including the ever more effective mastery of man.[4] But that was not the inherent *telos* of science, which was first and foremost, and not only in a chronological sense, the *telos* defined by the empirical reality in which science developed. Thus theoretical Reason, pure Reason, without losing its scientific character as theory, becomes practical Reason. Theory, by virtue of its internal dynamic rather than on external grounds, becomes a specific, historical practice. But (and this is decisive for Husserl and the justification of his own subsequent phenomenological reduction) this entire development, this entire transformation of Reason, this essential, structural, internal commitment of pure Reason, pure theory and pure science to the empirical reality in which they originated, this entire transformation *remains hidden to science itself*, hidden and unquestioned. The new science does not elucidate the conditions and the limits of its evidence, validity, and method; it does not elucidate its inherent historical denominator. It remains unaware of its own foundation, and it is therefore unable to recognize its servitude; unable to free itself from the ends set and given to science by the pregiven empirical reality.—I should like to stress again, because these formulations can be easily misunderstood, that it is not a sociological relation which is here established between an empirical reality and the pure science which develops in this empirical reality. Husserl's concept goes much farther. He maintains that the empirical reality is the framework, and dimension in which the pure scientific concepts develop. In other words, the empirical reality constitutes, in a specific sense, the very concepts which science believes are pure theoretical concepts.

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[3] Ibid., pp. 49 f.

[4] Ibid., p. 67.

Before I go on with Husserl's interpretation of this development, I would like to reformulate and to extend his thesis in a way which may bring out its provocative implications. What happens in the developing relation between science and the empirical reality is the abrogation of the transcendence of Reason. Reason loses its philosophical power and its scientific right to define and project ideas and modes of Being beyond and against those established by the prevailing reality. I say: "beyond" the empirical reality, not in any metaphysical but in a historical sense, namely, in the sense of projecting essentially different, historical alternatives.

Now back to Husserl's interpretation.

The new science (by which he understands mainly Galilean science) establishes a rational "infinite" universe of Being (I follow his words here literally), systematically organized and defined by science itself. Within this universe, every object becomes accessible to knowledge, not incidentally, in its contingent, particular occurrence, but necessarily and in its very essence.[5] Thus, it becomes object of scientific knowledge, not as this individual object but as exemplification of general objectivity (the falling feather as *res extensa* in motion).[6] That is to say, the concrete and particular object, the Aristotelian totality is no longer the *Wesen*, the essence; Platonism supersedes Aristotelianism, not only in physics, but in the very concept of scientific rationality. And concomitant with this de-individualization, which is the prerequisite for the quantification of the scientific universe, is the familiar reduction of secondary to primary qualities; devaluation of the inexorably individual sense experience as nonrational.[7]

As a result of this twofold process, reality is now idealized into a "mathematical manifold": everything which is mathematically demonstrated with the evidence of universal validity as a pure form (*reine Gestalt*) now belongs to the true reality of nature.[8] But (and here is the great gap which separates the new science from its classical original) in contrast to the ideational forms of Plato, the ideational forms of mathematical physics are freed from any substantive connection with other mathematical ends. The ideational realm of Galilean science no longer includes the moral, aesthetic, political Forms, the *Ideas* of Plato. And separated from this realm, science develops now as an "absolute" in the literal sense no matter how relative within its own realm it may be, absolved from its own, pre-scientific and nonscientific conditions and foundations. According to Husserl, the absolute evidence of mathematics (which as we shall see we question), was for Galilei so self-evident that he never asked for the actual foundation of its validity, for the validating ground of this evidence, and of its extension to the whole of nature. Thus, the validation of the new science remained in the dark; its own basis never became the theme of scientific inquiry; science contained an unmastered, unscientific foundation. This is of the utmost importance for *the validity of science* itself, because the relation between science and the pre-scientific empirical reality is for Husserl not an external one but one which affects the very structure and meaning of the scientific concepts themselves.

Now according to Husserl, where is this pre-scientific validating ground of mathematical science? It is originally in geometry as the art of measuring (*Messkunst*) with its specific means and possibilities.[9] This art of measuring in the empirical reality promised and indeed achieved the progressive calculability of nature, subjecting nature to the ever more exact "foresight" in mastering and using nature. (Foresight—*Voraussicht*, perhaps better translated as projection and valid, rational anticipation.) Foresight and anticipation, rational anticipation can then guide the practical orientation in and the transformation of the empirical *Lebenswelt*, without however (and this is decisive) setting or defining or changing the goals and ends of this transformation. Geometry can and does furnish (and the same holds true for the extension of geometry, mathematics) the methods and ever more exact, ever more calculable approaches for the transformation and extension of the established *Lebenswelt*, but remains forever incapable of defining, anticipating, or changing, by its own concepts, the ends and objectives of this transformation. In its method and concepts, the new science is essentially non-transcendent. This is what I consider as Husserl's key sentence: Science "leaves the *Lebenswelt* in its essential structure in its own concrete causality unchanged."[10]

As to the interpretation of this paradoxical and provocative thesis (so obviously paradoxical since we are used to seeing in science one of the most dynamic forces in the world): In my view, what is at stake is not the more or less external relation between science and society, but the internal conceptual structure of science itself, its pure theory and method which Husserl now reveals in their essential historicity (*Geschichtlichkeit*), in their commitment to the specific historical project in which they originated.[11] Pure science retains, *aufgehoben* (to use Hegel's term now) the practice out of which it arose, and it contains the ends and values established by this practice. The empirical reality thus performs the *sinngebende Leistung* (constituent act): It is constitutive of scientific truth and validity. Science is *Aufhebung der Lebenswelt*

(1) inasmuch as science cancels the data and truth of immediate experience,
(2) inasmuch as science preserves the data and truth of experience, but
(3) preserves them in a higher form, namely in the ideational, idealized form of universal validity.

And this threefold process takes place in the scientific abstraction. The quantified ideational forms are abstracted from the concrete qualities of the empirical reality, but the latter remains operative in the very concepts and in the direction in which the scientific abstraction moves.

In this way, the pre-scientific, pregiven empirical reality enters the scientific enterprise itself and makes it a specific project within the preestablished general project of the empirical reality. However, the abstract, ideational, mathematical form into which science transforms the empirical conceals this historical relation:

The *Ideenkleid* (the ideational veil) of mathematics and mathematical physics represents and [at the same time] disguises the empirical reality and leads us to take for True Being that which is only a method.[12]

This is perhaps the most effective and lasting mystification in the history of Western thought! What is actually only one method appears as the true reality, but a reality with a *telos* of its own. The mathematical ideation, with all its exactness, calculability, foresight, leaves a void (*Leerstelle*) because the objectives and ends of this calculability and anticipation are not scientifically determined. This void can thus be filled by whatever specific end the empirical reality provides, the only condition being that it is within the range of scientific method. This is the famous neutrality of pure science which here reveals itself as an illusion, because the neutrality disguises, in the mathematical-ideational form, the essential relation to the pregiven empirical reality.

In Husserl's terms: The objective a priori of science itself stands under a hidden empirical a priori, the so-called *lebensweltliche* a priori.[13] Moreover, as long as this empirical a priori remains hidden and unexamined, scientific rationality itself contains its inner and own irrational core which it cannot master. According to Husserl, modern science thus operates like a machine which everyone can learn to handle without necessarily understanding the inner necessity and possibility of its operation.[14] In other words, pure science has an inherently instrumental character prior to all specific application; the Logos of pure science is technology and is thus essentially dependent on external ends. This introduces the irrational into science, and science cannot overcome its irrationality as long as it remains hidden from science. In Husserl's words: Reason is Reason only as manifest Reason (*offenbare Vernunft*), and Reason "knows itself as Reason only if it has become manifest."[15] In as much as Reason remains non-manifest in science, scientific rationality is not yet the full rationality of science. How can Reason become conscious of itself?

Husserl proposes to break the mystification inherent in modern science by a phenomenological analysis which is in a literal sense a *therapeutic* method. Therapeutic in the sense that it is to get behind the mystifying concepts and methods of science and to uncover the constitutive *lebensweltliche* a priori under which all scientific a priori stands. This is to Husserl first a methodological problem. The pregiven empirical reality as a whole must become the object of the philosophical analysis, otherwise the a priori prior to the scientific a priori could never come to light. But obviously philosophy itself is part of this empirical reality and philosophy itself stands under the a priori of the empirical reality. The circle is to be broken by a dual phenomenological reduction (suspension, *epoche*): first the suspension of the objective a priori; the suspension of scientific truth and validity; secondly the suspension of the *lebensweltliche* a priori, of the *doxa* and its validity.

Now what do we retain, what remains as the residuum of this twofold suspension? In the first *epoche*, "we put in brackets" (that is to say, we do not deny but simply suspend judgment on) scientific truth and scientific validity. What remains as the residuum is (a) the entire general structure of the empirical reality,[16] the infinite manifold of things in time and space, the onta, and (b) the world itself in which all these things necessarily appear—the world as the universal, unsurpassable horizon of all particular objects.

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[13] Ibid., pp. 49, 143 f.

[14] Ibid., p. 52.

[15] Ibid., p. 53.

[16] Ibid., pp. 143 f.

But this first *epoche* is not sufficient: it cannot do what it is supposed to do, namely, break through the mystification and uncover the ultimate foundation of scientific truth. It cannot do this because with this first "bracketing" we are still on the basis (*auf dem Boden*) of the empirical reality, within the "natural position" of our day-to-day experience. A second *epoche* is necessary which "at one stroke" leads to a total alteration of the "natural position" of experience, to the suspension of the natural validation of everything that we naturally accept as valid in our immediate experience.[17] Once we have suspended these judgments too, we reflect no longer on the pregiven world and the particular objects appearing in it, but on *how* these objects appear, on the *modes* in which this entire world is given to us. The residuum of this *epoche* is thus the world as correlate of a totality of *modes of consciousness,* as a "synthetic totality." What we have now as residuum is the *transcendental* subjectivity,[18] and to this transcendental subjectivity the world is now given as phenomenon of and for an absolute subjectivity.[19] This transcendental subjectivity is no longer any particular or individual or group subjectivity. It is "absolute" because whatever object or object-relation may appear, now appears as necessarily constituted in specific acts of synthesis which inseparably link objectivity and subjectivity. In other words, we have now what we might call the absolute original experience: the experience which is at the origin of and is constitutive of any possible objectivity that can ever become the object of scientific and of any other thought. The phenomenological reduction has now opened the dimension in which the original and most general structure of all objectivity is constituted.

I shall add only a few critical remarks. The breakthrough to the transcendental subjectivity is supposed to be the road to uncover the foundation on which all scientific validity rests. I ask the question: can the reductive phenomenological analysis ever attain its goal, namely, to go behind scientific, and pre-scientific, validity and mystification? I shall offer three suggestions.

First: The phenomenological analysis is confronted with the fact of reification (Husserl does not use this term). Reification is a form which is usually not examined. Scientific as well as pre-scientific experience are false, incomplete inasmuch as they experience as *objective* (material or ideational) what in reality is subject–object, objectivation of subjectivity. In founding the analysis on the constitutive subject–object correlation, Husserl's dual *epoche* does go behind the reification—but so does all transcendental idealism. Thus far we are, in my view, in no way beyond Kant. I know Husserl's own interpretation of the difference between phenomenology and Kant; I think that in the context of my criticism this difference is not very relevant. My point is that the phenomenological breakthrough stops short of the *actual* constituent subjectivity. Husserl transcends the objective a priori of science in the first *epoche* and the empirical a priori in the second *epoche.* He thus creates a conceptual metalanguage for the critical analysis of the empirical reality. But my question is: does this conceptual metalanguage really come to grips with the constituent subjectivity? I think not.

Second: The phenomenological reduction arrives at a subjectivity which constitutes only the most general forms of objectivity, for example, the general form of appearing as object, changing as object, being related to other objects. But does this subjectivity give us "manifest Reason" behind the disguising Reason, the validation of scientific truth? Can this transcendental subjectivity ever explain—and solve—the crisis of European science? Husserl's transcendental subjectivity is again a pure cognitive subjectivity. One does not have to be a Marxist in order to insist that the empirical reality is constituted by the subject of thought *and* of *action*, theory and practice. Husserl recognizes the historical subject in its *sinngebende Leistung*; but then, by suspending, bracketing it, the phenomenological analysis creates its own a priori, its own ideation, and its own ideological veil. Pure philosophy now replaces pure science, as the ultimate cognitive lawgiver, establishing objectivity. This is the *hubris* inherent in all critical transcendentalism which in turn must be cancelled. Husserl himself seems to have been aware of this *hubris.* He speaks of the philosopher as "*urquellend fungierende Subjektivität*": the philosopher functions as the primordial source of what can rationally be claimed as objective reality.

I come to the conclusion and leave it as a question. Husserl recognizes the fetishism of scientific universality and rationality by uncovering the specific historical-practical foundations of pure science. He sees that pure science is in its very structure technological—at least potentially applied science. The scientific method itself remains dependent on a specific *Lebenswelt.* This is the hidden irrational element in scientific rationality. Husserl finds the reason for this dependence in the loss of the philosophical dimension, which was originally the basic dimension of science. Classical philosophy defined the method and function of science in terms of an idea of Reason which claimed higher truth and validity than those embodied in, and established by, the given empirical reality. This validating idea of Reason was that of the *telos* of man as man, the realization of *humanitas.* According to Husserl, the humanistic structure of Reason collapses with the release of science from this philosophical foundation. This would imply that humanism becomes an ideology at the very time when modern humanism is born. In other words, the birth hour of humanism itself would be the degradation of humanism to a mere ideology. Apparently there must be something wrong with this formulation. The fact remains that humanism is still today an ideology, a higher value which little affects the inhuman character of reality. The question with which I would like to conclude is this: Is philosophy entirely innocent of this development, or does it perhaps share the *hubris* of science? Does it share the reluctance to examine its own real foundation and function and is it therefore equally guilty of failing in the task of *Theoria*, of Reason—to promote the realization of *humanitas*?

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THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SCIENCE*[1]

The proposition I want to put forth is the following: science (i.e., the scientist) is responsible for the use society makes of science; the scientist is responsible for the social consequences of science. I will argue that this proposition does not depend for its validity on any moral norms outside and beyond science, or on any religious or humanitarian point of view. Rather, I suggest that this proposition is dictated by the internal structure and *telos* of science, and by the place and function of science in the social reality. These are not two different grounds, one germane to science and the other external to it (sociological or political). They are essentially interrelated and, in this interrelation, shape the direction of scientific progress (and regression!). Science today is in a position of power that almost immediately translates pure scientific achievements into political and military weapons of global use and effectiveness. The fact that the organization and control of whole populations, in peace as well as in war, have become, in a strict sense, a *scientific* control and organization (from the most ordinary technical household gadgets to the highly sophisticated methods in public-opinion formation, publicity, and propaganda) inexorably unites scientific research and experiment with the powers and plans of the economic, political, and military establishment. Consequently, there are not two worlds: the world of science and the world of politics (and its ethics), the realm of pure theory and the realm of impure practice—there is only one world in which science and politics and ethics, theory and practice are inherently linked.

At first glance it seems as if history contradicts this proposition, for the development of the modern world has seen the bifurcation of the realms that

* *Editors' note*:
"The Responsibility of Science" provides a revised text of a lecture delivered at the Lake Arrowhead Center of the University of California, Los Angles in July 1966. It was published in a *Festschrift* for Hans Holborn, *The Responsibility of Power*, pp. 439–44. Following themes he took up in "World without Logos," this short essay demonstrates Marcuse's continued engagement and critique of the scientific establishment and its embrace of the dubious values of advanced industrial society. Yet, Marcuse also shows here that he never relinquished the view that science is an emancipatory force to be used to better the human condition as opposed to one that endangered and dominated human life in late capitalist society.

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[1] Revised text of a lecture delivered at the Lake Arrowhead Center of the University of California, Los Angeles (July 1966).

were united throughout most of the Middle Ages. Moreover, this separation was a precondition for the liberation of science from superimposed norms and values, a precondition for technical advance, and for that continual conquest of nature and man we call scientific progress. However, this historical fact has been outdated and the separation that was once liberative and progressive is now destructive and repressive. Or, to put it in another way, whereas the idea of pure theory once had a progressive function, it now serves, against the intention of the scientist, the repressive powers that dominate society. How has this come about?

Science proceeds by its own method of discovery, experimentation, and verification, and according to the logic of its own conceptual development, regardless of the social use and consequences of its discoveries. The scientist's intention is pure; he is motivated by "pure" curiosity; he seeks knowledge for the sake of knowledge. But, his work, once published, enters the market, becomes merchandise to be evaluated by prospective buyers and sellers, and by virtue of this *social* quality, his work satisfies *social* needs. Further, through its relation to prevalent social needs, the work of the scientist acquires a *social value*; his work takes on the characteristics of the predominant social trends, and becomes progressive or regressive, constructive or destructive, liberating or repressive in terms of the protection and amelioration of human life. But, it is said, the scientist at work in his study or laboratory cannot foresee the social consequences of his work; he cannot know whether what he is doing will turn out to be a constructive or destructive factor in history. Moreover, since the application of his discoveries is left to the engineer or the technician, and the final decision is left to the politician (the government), the problem of the social consequences of his work is a matter outside his domain, and consequently he cannot be held morally responsible.

Even if we grant this argument, does it justify the moral neutrality and indifference of science? I suggest that it does not. The scientist remains responsible as a scientist because the social development and application of science determine, to a considerable extent, the further internal conceptual development of science. The theoretical development of science is thus bent in a specific political direction, and the notion of theoretical purity and moral neutrality is thereby invalidated. Two examples may help to illustrate this point. Commenting on the fact that federal outlays for science in colleges and universities now exceed $1.3 billion and constitute two-thirds of the total research expenditures of these institutions, Harrison Brown, Professor of Geochemistry at the California Institute of Technology, says,

> Since most of these grants are from government agencies that are "mission oriented," the research programs inevitably will be tailored to the needs of the agency rather than the scientific conception of what is important from a purely scientific point of view.[2]

Senator Fulbright makes the same point in more general terms:

> I suspect that when a university becomes very closely oriented to the current needs of government, it takes on some of the atmosphere of a place of business while losing that of a place of learning. The sciences, I suspect, are emphasized at the expense of the humanities and, within the humanities, the behavioral school of social science at the expense of the more traditional—and to my mind more humane—approaches. Generally, I would expect an interest in salable information pertaining to current problems to be emphasized at the expense of general ideas pertaining to the human condition.[3]

In other words, the alleged neutrality of science, its vaunted indifference to values, actually promotes the power of external forces over the internal scientific development.

Defenders of scientific neutrality often point to the fact that science has a built-in mechanism for detecting error. Thus C. P. Snow writes:

> Science is a self-correcting system. That is, no fraud (or honest mistake) is going to stay undetected for long. There is no need for an extrinsic scientific criticism, because criticism is inherent in the process itself. So that all that a fraud can do is waste the time of the scientists who have to clear it up.[4]

The trouble is that it is not "fraud" that enters into the scientific process, but perfectly legitimate "scientific" tasks and goals. The scientist is given problems that are within his competence and interest *as a scientist:* scientific problems; it just so happens that they are also problems of destruction of life, of chemical and bacteriological warfare. But if the self-correcting mechanism of science does not deal with these problems, the emphasis on the self-critical nature of science loses much of its validity.

Its own "value-indifference" blinds science to what happens to human existence. Or, to formulate it differently, and a little less kindly, value-free science blindly promotes certain social political values and, without abandoning pure theory, science sanctions an established practice. The puritanism of science turns into impurity. And this dialectic has now led to a situation in which science (and not only applied science) collaborates in the construction of the most effective machinery of annihilation in history.

How is it that the separation of knowledge and values, which was at first progressive, is now regressive? What is the relationship between progress and destruction? In a sense, destruction itself is progressive and liberating, and modern science in its beginnings was destructive in this progressive sense. It was destructive of the medieval dogmatism and superstition, it was destructive of the holy alliance between philosophy and irrational authority, it was destructive of the theological justification of inequality and exploitation. Modern science developed in conflict with the powers that opposed freedom of thought; today science finds itself in alliance with the powers that threaten human autonomy and frustrate the attempt to achieve a free and rational existence.

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[3] Senator Fulbright at the Santa Barbara Center's Conference "The University in America" (May 1966).

[4] "The Moral Un-Neutrality of Science," *Science*, January 27, 1961, p. 257.

What are the possibilities of reversing this trend? One thing must be clear at the outset: there is no possibility of a reversal of scientific progress, no possibility of a return to the golden age of "qualitative" science. It is true, of course, that a change would be imaginable only as an event in the development of science itself, *but* such scientific development can be expected only as the result of a comprehensive social change. What is required is nothing less than a complete transvaluation of goals and needs, the transformation of repressive and aggressive policies and institutions. The transformation of science is imaginable only in a transformed environment; a new science would require a new climate wherein new experiments and projects would be suggested to the intellect by new social needs. In its most general sense this transformation would entail the withering away of the social needs for wasteful parasitarian production and products, for aggressive defense, for competition in status and conformity, and would require the corresponding liberation of the individual needs for peace, joy, and tranquility. Instead of the further conquest of nature, the restoration of nature; instead of the moon, the earth; instead of the occupation of outer space, the creation of inner space; instead of the not-so-peaceful co-existence of affluence and poverty, the abolition of affluence until poverty has disappeared; instead of guns and butter in the overdeveloped nations, sufficient margarine for all nations. Evidently this would be the most radical global change one could imagine. What can the scientist do about it? Apparently nothing.

But here too we are confronted with an illusion, for the scientist is no longer the dissociated withdrawn researcher but has become the pillar of the established institutions and policies. To the degree to which the economy becomes a technological system, to that degree science becomes a decisive factor in the economic processes of society. Even physical labor becomes increasingly dependent on scientific (technological) foundations. At the same time, the gap between pure and applied science is narrowed; the most abstract and formal achievements in logic and mathematics are translatable into very concrete and material values (for instance, computers). Science literally feeds the economy. Inasmuch as science is part of the basis of society it becomes a material power, an economic and political force, and every individual scientist is an aliquot part of this power. To the degree to which the scientist depends on government and industry for the support of his research, to that degree also government and industry depend on the scientist. The individual scientist may indeed be powerless to stem the tide of "scientific" destruction, but he can refuse to lend his hand and his brain to the perfection of destruction, and he can speak out. To be sure, his refusal and his protest are only individual expressions, and they may result in the loss of the necessary support for a particular project. There is always this risk. But his refusal may set government and industry thinking, and it may encourage others to follow. If we are inclined to disparage this effort as "merely negative," we should recall that very often before the negative has been the first positive step.

Today there is no conflict between science and society (the established society); they propel each other in the established direction of progress, a direction that appears increasingly dangerous to humanity. But there is a conflict between modern science as it is practiced and the inner *telos* of science. Science itself is threatened by its own progress, threatened by its advance as an instrument of value-free power rather than as an instrument of knowledge and truth. Science like all critical thinking originated in the effort to protect and improve human life in its struggle with nature; the inner *telos* of science is nothing other than the protection and amelioration of human existence. This has been the rationale of science, and its abandonment is tantamount to the rupture between science and reason. Science may indeed continue to grow, in a technical sense, and as a technique, but it will have lost its *raison d'être.*

Science as a human effort remains the strongest weapon and the most effective instrument in the struggle for a free and rational existence. This effort extends beyond the study, beyond the laboratory, beyond the classroom, and aims for the creation of an environment social as well as natural, wherein existence can be freed from its union with death and destruction. Such liberation would not be an external goal or by-product of science, but rather the realization of science itself.

V

PHILOSOPHY IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

ON THE POSITION OF THINKING TODAY*

The assertion that writing poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric is already obsolete. "Barbaric" no longer gets to what is going in. When even that poetry that is equal to the event and gives in neither to cynicism nor to the beatniks is absorbed by established culture and marketed; when even an uncompromising negativity—assuming it is ever heard—becomes affirmative and serves to demonstrate to the existing culture that there is still "freedom of speech and thought," then not only the intellectual dimension but even the physical dimension of contradiction has become a dimension of the established world. It is impossible to push ahead and squeeze negation out of the fully reified language: refusal and accusation do not fall on deaf ears but rather on understanding ones, which hear the message and translate it into sociology, psychology or aesthetics. The rest is politics and propaganda, which pretend to be self-criticism. Marxist doctrine is an academic topic in "government-sponsored" seminars and private universities, where it is presented as objectively as possible ("one has to know the strengths and weaknesses of the enemy one wants to defeat"). Samuel Beckett is a great box office hit on Broadway. In an elegant, expensive and exquisite New York "magazine" in which the fully senseless luxury of the "affluent society" overwhelms the text with a flood of glossy full-page ads (status symbols make you sensual), a long article appears, written by a Negro and filled with hate and conviction, describing the horrors of black existence in an artificially sensationalist style, and announces to the whites the approaching catastrophe: the article is gobbled up with enthusiasm and scholarly interest. Things are more serious in the field of action. The pitifully helpless, tiny peace groups are either suspected of subversion and pulled in front of investigation committees or they compete with each other to keep the subversives out of their ranks (while the truth then comes out that for this society peace is the real subversion). The dockworkers strike, but their own union declares that "military cargo" will continue to be handled. Less seriously: it is an old story that liberal intellectuals quickly cling to the ruling powers and as soon as they get close to the democratic throne, they promote and justify its deeds in good writing. What is new are the misdeeds of a so-called avant-garde, which unloads its impotence in a hatred of the intellect, turning a true social criticism into an object of humor (thereby turning Ionesco on his head: while he showed normal language to be nonsense, this avant-garde treat contradiction and mourning as "fun").

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* *Editors' note*:
"On the Position of Thinking Today" is an homage by Marcuse to T. W. Adorno on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday and was published in German as "Zur Stellung des Denkens heute" in *Zeugnisse. Theodor W. Adorno zum 60. Geburtstag*, edited by Max Horkheimer (Frankfurt am Main: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1963) pp. 45–49. The translation is by Russell Berman and appears here in English for the first time. Written in the style of Adorno, it articulates their shared philosophical perspectives and valorizes the fragile and besieged role of thought and philosophy in the contemporary era.

Ernst Bloch's dictum, "For that which is cannot be true," is from 1918. The world has changed since then: the existing world speaks the truth about itself; it publishes the truth and its own deeds. Everyone can read and see them. Everything is in the newspapers, radio and magazines. There are objective accounts of torture, not only practiced in the "free world" but taught there as well—as a component of "basic training" for special units who fight against Communism or nationalism in "underdeveloped countries." There are big colored pictures to show how to treat prisoners. There are the faces and mouths, which only have to open to bring terror into every house. There are the controlled (and humanized) experiments to test human resistance in "abnormal" situations, and there are the reports about what goes on in asylums, police stations and jails. All that is part of the freedom that we have: that all this is not simply concealed but discussed and even criticized—and it continues. The power of the *status quo* is evident in the unreality of the lamentation against it, and the dismissive treatment of its critics is in the right, for these are all shadow sides—and perhaps necessities—of a society which, for all its nonsense, makes such good sense: it preserves and improves the lives of its members, conquers ever more space, and even promises that part of humanity will survive atomic war. It is as if Hegel's cunning of reason were playing its largest and most terrible game: that terror is ultimately preserved in progress, and the whole matter begins again, "bigger and better," on a higher rung of the ladder.

In this condition of the world, philosophy is even more questionable than poetry. It is not the condition of total negativity: instead the negative and the positive are indistinguishably entwined in a productive unity. It is totalitarian and therefore cannot be grasped by an isolated discipline. To understand it would be a matter of philosophy, but philosophy—in contrast to poetry—is discursive thinking obliged to the logic that has determined the history of thinking. It is the logic of domination that has ruled the subjective and objective world as the theoretical and practical reason of organization. Anything that surpassed its concepts was always suspected of metaphysics, or it was tolerated as poetry; in any case it had little to do with scientific knowledge, even if the transcendence was not directed at an eternal beyond but at a historical tomorrow. Ultimately philosophy disavowed itself in a double sense: as existential ontology and as "analytic philosophy." The former, in that it bothered itself with the ever growing threat of the terrible question of being, so that for Beings neither fear nor discomfort could remain; for the latter, in that it limited itself with arrogant modesty to the clarification of certain unclarities of thought and speech, all the while turning with particular vengeance against the wise men of thought and speech, who had been able to grasp what is really happening: in concepts that are not "behavioral" and do not want to be.

Philosophy does not invent its concepts: they are given to it in the history of theoretical and practical reason. It uses them to interpret the world, and this interpretation sometimes helps to change the world. The philosophical concepts abstract from given reality in order to point out the not-yet-given but nonetheless possible reality, which should become the true reality. Thus they have a concrete direction of abstraction: not abstraction into emptiness but rather into the continuum of history as the continuum of real possibilities. Among these possibilities are those that offer the chance of peace in the struggle for existence: to live without fear. Authentic philosophy, like all authentic thinking, is obligated to this "value." Without this obligation, spirit and body would be nothing more than instruments of domination. There are historical situations in which the possibility of emancipation is so real, that one can speak of the overcoming of philosophy: situations in which theory finds the social subject of its realization: changing the world. The contemporary condition of the world sublates philosophy in its own way, by turning its truths into a lie, a truly productive life-lie, which pursues the progressive subjugation of nature along with the subjugation of humanity, achieving the unity of subject and object, by turning the subject into an object, and the object into a subject.

In the technically most advanced regions of this administered world, human administrative objects can feel themselves free, as long as they do not belong to the mass of the underprivileged, who are the true victims of the system: they can satisfy their administered needs in administered manners, as long as they only keep working, and their needs and satisfactions remain socially necessary. They live in a condition of permanent mobilization against (and for) the eventuality of nuclear death, from which they protect themselves by preparing for it; since this mobilization represses the horror, it also reproduces it as the constant atmosphere of "peaceful co-existence"—reproduction of the growing apparatus of domination, of social wealth and technological politics. Where reason in this form has become total—as the ubiquitous power of the positive, which even rationalizes nonsense—negation becomes unreasonable. Conceptual thinking, which negates the existing condition, cannot overcome it, because it cannot overcome the historical continuum in which the possibilities of being-other appear. History is also the history of leaps: the possible being-other may be the catastrophe of existing reality; however to the extent that the realization of being-other is *liberation*, it remains the work of humans *within* existing conditions, who are prepared and compelled to liberation—compelled by the intolerable and by the inability to live any longer this way. This compulsion is the seal of spontaneity. To the extent that it is stifled by existing conditions, it refrains from overcoming them through historical negation. When the police power of domination turns into atomic terror, while productivity allows for a growing portion of the terrorized population to participate in the administered social wealth and even its high culture, the conflict between individual and social needs is suspended. Alienation turns into a private neurosis, treated by the psychologists of the system within the framework of the system. Peace, happiness, living without fear—this historical possibility of being different, more real than ever before, is precisely therefore the main target of a "containment policy," which is more successful in the domestic policies of states than in foreign policy.

But success does not yet determine truth. It may relegate it to the past, as betrayed or suppressed truth, and as past it can be repeated. At the end of the *Phenomenology of the Spirit* is the claim regarding memory, which is "indeed the higher form of substance." Faced with existing conditions which, as that which is, cannot be true and which closes itself and humanity off from the possibility of emancipation, critical thinking becomes the recollection of concepts which once articulated and predicted the truth about existence. Here is the intellectual room for an uncompromising analysis of existing conditions, which must still be operative in the "purest" philosophy, to the extent that all philosophizing entails a critical thinking. In the contemporary world condition, only abstract concepts can adequately grasp the concrete. Yet it remains abstract and omnipotent in relation to praxis. The idea of "pure thought" takes on a new meaning: "pure" not as untouched by the dirt of reality but rather as able to continue thinking in the dirt—to bring the dirt into and onto its concepts in order to understand the historical process underway. This does not change existing conditions. The relationship of theory and praxis, which was never immediate, is today unrecognizably concealed: theory is incapable of identifying the historical subject of change, although the mere existence and suffering of whole peoples make the existing order intolerable. *In itself*, the existence of everyone is perhaps in its bad negativity the potential subject of change: but how can it turn into a *for itself*, when even suffering is made adaptable: under the daily pressure of psychology, affluence and brute violence? And yet existence contains the power that can transform it. The opposition between that which is and that which could be is so total, and the idea of peace and the liberation of existence so realistic that nothing is more utopian than the aspiration to prevent their realization. For precisely this reason, people are kept in permanent mobilization in defense of this prevention—against the domestic and the foreign enemy. In both camps, maintenance of domination depends on the continued presence of the enemy. Peace increasingly appears as the catastrophe of domination, which has to be measured and calculated against the catastrophe of war. Whole areas of the natural sciences and humanities are put to the service of this calculation, and through this service these formerly very different types of thinking and methods undertake a convergence; concepts are to become positive and "behavioral," in order to grasp that which is. Yet precisely in this way they cannot grasp it: they lack the Archimedean point, from which they could make the world comprehensible and mobile. Reason and science thus become pillars of the total mobilization. Critical thinking must be able to resist its omnipotence: by disclosing the mechanisms, which enable society to control its members, by exploring and disseminating knowledge about current processes, by liberating consciousness, by probing into the fissures in the order—these are the (no longer only theoretical!) duties for the preparation of a possible future.

OVERCOMING DOMINATION*

To Max Horkheimer on his 70th Birthday

Max Horkheimer would have to admit, on this his seventieth birthday, that he became (entirely unexpectedly) the founder of a "school of thought." The circle of colleagues connected with the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, which Horkheimer led from 1932 until its cessation during the Second World War, is regarded today as the "Frankfurt School." For many in the younger generation on both sides of the Iron Curtin this school demonstrated that it was possible to apply the critical theory of society, as this developed since the 19th century, to the current stage of the industrial order, i.e. assessing this theory against the realities of the period of totalitarianism. As he confronted positivist metaphysical tendencies, Max Horkheimer himself worked out the idea of critical theory. Thought to be merely a cover for Marxism, today, it is clear that critical theory also registered a critique of Marxian philosophy.

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* *Editors' note*:
"Overcoming Domination," translated here by Charles Reitz and published in English for the first time, constitutes a short piece that Marcuse wrote in honor of Max Horkheimer on his seventieth birthday. First published in German as "Aufhebung der Gewalt" in the *Südwestdeutsche Zeitung* on February 13, 1965, this short piece provides an overview of the Institute for Social Research's position on philosophy and social theory and what can be seen as shared positions between Horkheimer and Marcuse.

The idea of social research, as this was developed in the "Foreword" to the first volume of the *Zeitschrift*, highlights the challenge of gaining a glimpse of the contemporary social order as a whole. This was needed because the relatively autonomous dimensions of the previous material and intellectual culture had combined together into a totally administered order that attempted to subjugate or destroy progressive forces and thereby prepare the way for a new epoch of barbarism. In reality the entirety of the human condition had become the subject–object of repression. If theory was to comprehend the full extent of this historical transformation, it would have to be philosophical theory, yet its concepts would need to absorb and preserve the findings of the specialized sciences. Under Horkheimer's leadership during those years, an internal interconnectedness was disclosed among philosophy, sociology, economics, and psychology. This made possible an anticipation of the concepts and tendencies which would define anew the collective developments.

The roots of the transformation lay in the past. In Horkheimer's work philosophy thus assimilates history, which means real history, not an ideological sense of the past. His important essays on "Egoism and Emancipatory Movements" and "Montaigne and the Function of Skepticism" disclosed the repressive essence of the social order in terms of the concepts and movements that appeared the least outmoded: the fatal interplay of freedom and oppression, knowledge and deception, loyalty and betrayal. Here traditional perspectives and valuations lose their traction and slide, freeing up new insights: insights into the depths to which history is written by and for the victors. Horkheimer's work, as research into truth, is also an attempt at rescue: remembering the slandered, forgotten, damned, and devastated—the victims, who very often carried forward movements for emancipation.

Horkheimer never had any illusions about the efficacy of his rescue efforts: his work went on permanently "despite it all." Hope was never permitted an overt presence in his writing, nor as the core element of his style; it appears in marginal statements, in adjectives and attributes. His accusations fully recede in the analysis of what was and is, and yet they comprise the whole substance of his writing. Philosophy as critical intelligence and indictment—as intellect that can not, and will not give up, no matter how painful things are (or more painful they become). It draws all its power and truth from its insights into what is happening, what people must endure daily given the normal functioning of society. The inhumanity of this society is something Horkheimer perceives even in its most sublime accomplishments: not in the externalities of progress which are more or less contingent and convoluted, but rather in the insubstantiality of its substance, the irrationality of its reason. Dialectical logic is demonstrated as the logos of the real world. Only as a concept does inhumanity enter into theory; in the light of its determinate negation it is only conceptually overcome. Horkheimer's thought is devoid of sentimentality and evangelism: it does not permit positivity as a consolation. Insight into the power of what exists prohibits illusions, even where these might be useful. The theory that can stand up against the contemporary established reality, without falling into ideology, must move through a negativity that renders visible the foundations of this reality's coercive force. Only then can the prospect of overcoming domination be recognized once more. This is the prospect to which Horkheimer's philosophy remains true.

PEACE AS UTOPIA*

One of the inscriptions written by the students in Paris on the walls of the Sorbonne reads: "Be realistic, demand the impossible!" We should think about this. The realist, in the current meaning of the term, is always right. His thought stands upon a foundation of facts. If the foundation of facts, itself, is called into question however, things look different: the realist is confronted with that which we call Utopia. *The realist confuses the established reality with reality itself.*

At least since Heraclitus Western civilization has not given up on the bad metaphysics that war is the father of all things. And during this selfsame extended period, *Realpolitik*[1] has proclaimed that those who want peace must prepare for war—only as a last resort—but very quickly war was routine.

Things have gotten still worse since the honorable old ministers of war re-named themselves ministers of defense.

* *Editors' note*:
"Peace as Utopia" provides the first English translation of an article "Friede als Utopie" published in *Neues Forum,* November/December 1968, pp. 705–708. Translated here by Charles Reitz, the text was originally presented at "Salzburger Humanismusgespräch," held September 10–13, 1968 in Salzburg Austria. These "conversations over humanism," to which Marcuse contributed, were initiated by Dr. Oskar Schatz and broadcast over Austrian radio. The theme of the discussion was "Theorie und Strategie des Friedens" (Theory and Strategy of Peace) and included presentations by Marcuse, the famous German political theorist associated with the doctrine of "realism," Hans Morgenthau, and F. M. Schmidt from the Vienna Thomas-Akademie. Marcuse's discussion of peace took up the complexity of his discourse on violence that criticized violence coming from the system and supported some forms of revolutionary violence against the system. His focus is on violence from the system and war, and what genuine peace and "peace as a form of social life" would look like and what obstacles must be overcome.

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[1] Translator's note: German term for a politics of realism, i.e. undisguised power politics.

The bad metaphysics, which sees war as a positive necessity in all life, rests upon a doubly mistaken apprehension: first of all, the stresses and repulsions found amidst elements of nature are projected, without mediation, onto the *historical* world; then, the conditions established by a societal system of organized domination are misinterpreted as *eternal* conditions of human existence and progress.

These ostensibly eternal conditions then appear as a noble rivalry or a *competition* in the struggle for existence characteristic of individual relationships within humankind. Individualized conditions, that are themselves defined by the whole, are then transformed into the whole and normalized. This means that abnormalities, like the restrained violence in the dealings of a chieftain, a feudal lord, a businessman, are transformed into the overt violence of history, the open aggression of competition, into the massive destruction of life and things.

War is not to be derived mechanically from economics. With *organizations of domination* as a foundation, and with these hardly imaginable apart from the privileges of property ownership, there arises a system of felt needs within every dimension of human existence. *Aggressiveness* is built into this system and it itself becomes a felt need; it is simultaneously sublimated and made socially useful, such that it can be mobilized for war as the occasion warrants.

As a result of war there is a new *balance of power that is called peace* which will be disturbed in the foreseeable future since each decision and each change here occurs within a continuum of domination, and within this continuum one dominator organization is replaced by another without breaking through this continuum.

Domination, in contrast to legitimate authority, implies the oppression and exploitation of human beings. As long as so many dominator organizations—tribes, dynasties, nation states—oppose one another, war will remain as the exception that has become the rule, intervening regularly in internal and external power grabs, defense, oppression.

Inasmuch as *domination* becomes rational, which means it enhances technical progress and the standard of living, *war* will also appear rational. It guarantees the defense and the expansion of this functioning whole. But even given the most productive and rational form, domination (as bearable as it might be) becomes *repression*, organized opposition to potential liberation.

Technical progress is in the potential for human freedom. This means: technical progress is the reduction and abolition of alienated labor, the elimination of poverty and inequality, the creation of a life of gratification. Precisely for these reasons, whenever and wherever this progress is incompatible with established social institutions, *technical progress becomes a means of domination.*

A freedom that is not compromised by domination is also a freedom no longer compromised by the possibility of war. This means: a life world in which the system of needs does not ultimately eventuate in a need for war; nor are war-supporting institutions bearable any longer.

A peace no longer compromised by domination would be a life world that does not contain or reproduce either the societal or the individual conditions of the possibility for war, and *here peace is no longer the time span between wars, but the whole time.* Only this would be peace that is no longer a contradiction to war, no longer a portion of the whole, but the form of life of the whole itself and its parts.

Is this idea of peace without internal limitations a historical possibility? It is claimed that it is as often as it is not. If only peoples and their rulers came to their senses, if only they would abjure violence, if they would only unite and build a global government, and so on. The answer was really always the same: the conditions just will not allow it.

Often enough one adds: the idealists, who believe in an idea of peace such as this, only create havoc. As if the havoc, that the idealists *might* possibly bring about, could somehow be more significant than that which the realists already *have* caused.

Still, we must admit from the very beginning that this idea of peace, which no longer carries within it the possibility of war, *peace as the form of social life*, accordingly requires the end of history as we have hitherto known it. But let us not make the mistake of mixing up the end of history, *as we have hitherto known it*, with the end *of* history, and then simply dismiss it as eschatology.

Peace as the form of social life, we have said, would also entail the end of history as we have hitherto known it. This presupposes the *determinate negation of the established systems in the West as well as the East.* This would have to occur in different ways: in the West as the negation of the performance principle in morality, the principles of market exchange and private property in the means of production; in the East as the negation of bureaucratic-authoritarian rule, capitalist incentives and goals within socialism, "socialist" competition, and power politics.

The factual impossibility of peace (factual within the framework of the established reality) being socially rooted, it follows that there is no new kind of politics that can sever these roots. Peace as a form of social life is a possibility only *beyond* the whole sphere of politics, beyond authoritarian *or* democratic governments.

This is because politics, in the way we have exclusively known it up to now, is a manifestation of established dominator societies and permits their systemic foundations to persist undisturbed. A different politics, a different administration, can lengthen the span of peace between wars. This is, God knows, extremely valuable and a necessary goal. But there is no way different politics can overcome the possibility of war *as such.*

A *revolution* cannot do this, even if it succeeds in altering the social basis of institutions, only to perpetuate from this new foundation the historically antiquated system of felt needs, further expanding and securing these through "progress." To the degree that the advanced industrial society integrates its administered population into the struggle for a heightened standard of living, and isolates the opposition, to that degree it *binds* its people to the given whole and makes the population into the human foundation that voluntarily reproduces it. The felt needs, promoted and satisfied by the system and infused with aggressiveness, competitiveness, frustration, oppression, are methodically activated, sublimated, and periodically de-sublimated via the police, the Special Forces, destructive technologies, and ultimately through war.

Peace as a form of life presupposes a *radical transformation* of the system of felt needs that has become a decisive factor in the stabilization, cohesion, and reproduction of the aggressive society.

This then really means a radical transformation *of human nature.* Of course this does not mean a change in human nature overall, but instead only a change in humanity's *second nature*,[2] that which is the social expression of humanity's first nature: changing the instinctual drives of human beings, one's sensibilities, one's sensuality; changing the fundamental way in which human beings experience themselves and the environment, the way one sees, hears, feels, and smells things, including oneself and others. And how one treats oneself, others, and things on the basis of this new primordial experience—as materials for domination having exchange value, or as a subjects, part and parcel of a pacified world.

This kind of foundational experience, which would most deeply constitute the *revolutionary subject of history*, can only be attained through a break with the established institutions in their totality; a break not only with politics, not only with the economy, but rather with the *totality of traditional culture*, including its "higher culture," whose desublimation would be an essential aspect of this break.

Such a new subject, such a transformed system of needs, is only imaginable through a genuine *revaluation of values.* This includes the values of the superman, the hero, the fighter, the conqueror.

And this is only imaginable as a *rebellion of the instincts* themselves against cruelty, barbarism, against the performance principle that facilitates competition.

We do not need to wait for these changes in human nature any longer; this is taking place right before our eyes. Exactly this sort of rebellion of the instincts is happening today in the *global revolt of youth,* especially the students. Today this is the single authentic movement for peace, and in turn this is the genuine hazard for all that exists: the non-violent power of negation.

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[2] Translators' note: Aristotle classically defined the habits formed through moral training and character building as our second nature as did the neo-Marxist theorist Georg Lukács. This view that society produces a second nature was also later emphasized in the educational theory of John Dewey.

I do not mean non-violent in the sense of pacifism and not in the sense of those who today preach non-violence. Peace as the substance of life can not be attained through peaceableness. It will require a fight and perhaps war.

But there are very different kinds of war. Different not only in their social function, but also especially with regard to the instinctual forces that activate people toward war. This is the truth behind the venerable doctrine of the *just war.* There is a war against Vietnam and there is a war against the Nazis. There are the wars of the dynasties, and there are wars of liberation. There are wars of conquest as with Caesar and Pompey, and there are uprisings of slaves. There are wars of domination and wars against domination.

Even these latter ones utilize violent means. Even they do not break the bonds of violence. Is this an eternal circumstance or may we here sharpen dialectical speculation to the point that reality even today suggests? Today institutionalized violence has attained such a scale that it implies total annihilation. The opposition against this violence can not confront it with anything like itself: there is no greater force than that of total annihilation. But perhaps this total violence generates its most extreme opposite: there are powers of destruction internal to its own arena, powers that can erode and undermine this violence.

Given a background of intensifying economic and political disturbances and conflicts, signs of decay arise: extreme barbarism in politics directed against enemies within and without, overt attempts to discredit democratic processes, overt attempts to discredit anything that today is called socialism, the bloody tragedy which has played itself out in Czechoslovakia, the transformation of the theory of liberalism, as well as that of socialism into *ideology,* and the transformation of ideology into *lies.*

In the population we can perceive something: a disintegration of "moral fibre," which is indispensable to the social functioning, a disintegration of morality in everyday life—psychopathology is considered normal.

And within these loosening limits there is an *increasing opposition:* in the centers of empire as well as in the global *Lebensraum* that is the Third World. This opposition abjures the same sort of technical weaponry and the institutions of domination. And precisely because of this it is an opposition not infected by the whole, directed against it from the *outside;* a resistance of the mind and the body, thought and sensuality, a moral and political resistance in theory and in action.

What is announcing itself here is beyond all politics. This opposition considers the whole sphere of politics as nothing but a playing field for the teams of the rulers, for manipulation, for oppression. The goal is the philosophical concept of a pacified world: the pacified inner and outer realms of human existence.

Is such a realm in any way describable? We are dealing here with a mere *possibility*, which can be easily annihilated by the counterpoised possibility of total repression. However, we are also dealing here with a *historical* possibility for which the material and intellectual preconditions are present as oppressed and repressed powers.

A world in which peace prevailed without the possibility of war would be a world without poverty, alienated labor, and competitive struggle for existence; the sources of destructive aggression exhausted; the energies of primary aggressiveness serving instead to protect and enhance life instincts, such that human beings after the experience of centuries of desolation, may construct in solidarity a social environment in which the achievements of science and technology are actualized.

This kind of world would be one in which neither the elites, nor those controlled by the elites, determine what *freedom* is and how it is to be utilized. Rather one in which emancipated human beings *themselves* live their lives as ends and not as means any longer.

In such a hideous world of peace, where not even the *possibility* of war exists, they say human beings would have no motivation to do anything, to work at anything, to pursue any goals; in this kind of a world would there be no progress? Yet if we mean by progress a life that is eased, lengthened, and enhanced—then the motivating factors for this progress in history up to now certainly have been hunger, anxiety, and confusion. And progress must be understood in these terms.

Perhaps the most repressive of all repressive ideologies, the one that has best served the interests of domination, is the ideology that only fear of poverty and humiliation motivates human nature to work, that human beings only strive for improvement when they are dissatisfied and unhappy. Whenever humanity lingers over a momentary beauty, it is possessed by the devil.[3]

Nietzsche's proposition: All joy wants eternity,[4] pierces through this ideology. *Life requires no special inducement in order to be better and*

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[3] Translator's note: this is a reference to an oft-quoted line from Goethe's *Faust*. Dr. Faust is a despondent professor overcome by a profound bitterness with life and about to end his own. The Lord sees Faust as his servant through thick and thin. Mephistopheles tells The Lord that Faust seems in such a sorry state that even he, the Devil, does not want to see him suffer further. Mephistopheles nonetheless bets The Lord that he can turn Faust from The Lord. Faust in turn pledges his soul to Mephistopheles if he should ever experience one moment in life that would be so beautiful that he would want it to endure. Goethe's sardonic life-affirming humor pervades the tale.

[4] Translator's note: this is a line from a poem from Nietzsche's valoration of joy in two central places in *Zarathustra*: "Woe is deep, but joy is deeper than any agony. Woe implores 'Go!' But all joy wants eternity." See *Zarathustra*, Part 3, "The Other Dancing Song" and Part 4, "The Drunken Song."

happier. The forces impelling life according to Freud are of an erotic nature. And culture is their sublimation. To the degree that humanity liberates itself from repression, to that extent also will it reduce the sublimation that constricts and contorts life's forces.

Unification, the wholeness of all life, peace—we desire these ends. Reaching them does in fact presuppose a transformation of humanity's second nature, but the achievements of the repressed civilization itself have brought the historical transformation of our second nature to reality's very threshold.

THE RELEVANCE OF REALITY*

Ever since Thales designated the substance, origin, and principle of things as water; ever since Parmenides declared all motion and time as illusion, ever since Plato rejected the objects of sense perception and common sense as mere appearance, ever since Aristotle proposed the "bios theoreticos" as the highest mode of life—the relationship between philosophy and reality was, to say the least, ambivalent. From the analysis of reality, philosophy derived its devaluation: whatever the *given* reality may be, it is not the real thing; whatever knowledge may be attained *in* it, is not knowledge *of* it, is not "science," "the truth." Philosophy, as science, demanded abstraction from the colorful, and painful, world of everyday experience, better still, closing one's eyes on many of its features in order to remain "pure" in thought. Truth and purity became interrelated: life was dirty—thought must be pure: pure science. Socrates' terrible statement that, for the philosopher, death is the beginning of life, was, at least in a figurative sense, to become a signpost in the history of philosophy (though by no means of all philosophy). And Socrates' own death was the voluntary, methodical, philosophically argued surrender to the order of the state whose blatant irrationality he had so effectively demonstrated throughout his life. —Was this great model of the philosopher perhaps also the model of the liberal whose radical criticism terminates in civil obedience when the confrontation with the Establishment finally occurs? We are told (and it makes good sense) that Socrates was searching for the *concept:* which would define what things really *are* in contrast to what they are held to be by the common man, the citizen, and his representatives in the state the government. No "elitism" was necessarily involved in this philosophy, for the common man himself was thought capable of arriving at the truth—provided only he would start thinking by himself instead of just accepting what was being said and done. But the teacher himself, did he pursue his search for the "concept" to the very end, or did he break it off at the point where the *polis* itself would be subject to question?

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* *Editors' note*:
"The Relevance of Reality" provides a slightly extended version of Marcuse's presidential address to the Forty-third Annual Meeting of the Pacific Division of the American Philosophical Association (APA) in Portland, Oregon, March 28, 1969. It was printed in *Proceedings and Address of The American Philosophical Association*, vol. XLII, 69 (1968) pp. 39–50, and we are publishing this version found in Marcuse's personal collection of papers. In an age of positivism and a highly technical analytic philosophy, Marcuse defends a more traditional conception of philosophy that valorizes metaphysics and speculative concepts like "reality."

For Socrates, the search indeed stops where the concept of "law and order" itself, and not only some positive and posited "case" becomes the object (and terminus) of thought: then, the particular, and not the universal—the given things and conditions, and not their Form, their Idea have the last word. The judges question Socrates whether he did not intend to destroy the city state. Here is his answer (in CRITO):

> "Yes, I do intend to destroy the laws, because the State wronged me by passing a faulty judgment at my trial."

And "the Laws" reply:

> "Was there provision for this in the agreement between you and us, Socrates? Or did you undertake to abide by whatever judgments the State pronounced?"

And the Laws remind Socrates that

> "any Athenian, on attaining manhood and seeing for himself the political organization of the State and us, its laws, is permitted, if he is not satisfied with us, to take his property and go wherever he likes."
>
> (CRITO 50–51)

This argumentation, which Socrates puts in the mouths of his judges, is not less flimsy than today's popular and familiar "if you don't like it here, why don't you go somewhere else?"

A geographical definition of reason and freedom not worthy of a philosopher! By virtue of this definition, the particular triumphs over the universal, established *fact* over the *concept* which is supposed to define and "judge" the fact (the philosophical proposition as judgment, sentence). The search for the universal, as the *arche*, principle, (true) Form of the particular things, is frustrated: it comes to a halt before the power of the *polis.* It is the political power which establishes, and enforces (if necessary, by imposing the death penalty) the meaning of words and the corresponding moral behavior.

Or was Socrates right? Did his surrender, his free decision, testify to the inherent limits of philosophy, its impotence before a reality which offers stubborn resistance to any transcending conceptual analysis, that is to say, an analysis which is directed toward a universality (validity) *higher* than that of the established facts, and of the modifications, extensions, prolongations of them? In the Socratic example, this defining and confining reality was the City State; its political authority turned into philosophical authority forbidding the philosopher to draw certain conclusions from his analysis, to apply the philosophical Logos, Reason to the logic and rationality of the state. For the demand for civil obedience, which Socrates so eloquently defends and so courageously justifies by the sacrifice of his life, goes far beyond the jurisdiction of the court, the tribunal which judges Socrates' crime. Not the judgment of the Court, but Socrates' own unconditional acceptance of it extends the State's authority over the realm of critical thought.

Thus, thinking (in the emphatic sense) becomes a political offense: the crime of civil disobedience begins with the radical questioning, with the destruction of the prevailing *concepts* of piety, courage, justice, etc. *They* are the concepts which guide the citizen's behavior, their common values; therefore, they are the cement that joins them together: the "concrete." And Socrates cannot argue that his *own* (contradicting) concepts are true in theory but inapplicable in practice; he cannot invoke the freedom of thought and the servitude of action. For his concepts are *normative*, the truth is *normative* and calls for a corresponding mode of behavior in opposition to that required by the city state. To argue for the separation of theory from practice would establish the essential harmlessness of philosophical thought, its essential non-commitment—non-commitment made into a Principle of Non-intervention, according to which the philosopher is to continue to *think* about the Beautiful, the Good, and the True while refraining from *doing* something about them in reality, outside his academy. Socrates was thus horribly consistent when he said that philosophy is really not of this life, that it comes into its own only with death. Reality becomes irrelevant.

We know that the picture changes with *Plato*: at least since the *Republic*, philosophy and politics are internally linked: the concepts elaborated by philosophy *imply* subversion of the existing political reality. What does it mean: "imply?" Philosophical thought is critical thought: its concepts are *normative*; its definitions are veiled *imperatives*. Already for Heraclitus, the *Logos is Law*; and Plato develops the theory of Ideas as the Forms, not of a given reality but of one *to be attained*. To be attained first in thought: what men and things really are, their "concept" must be determined by a complex interplay of "abstract" analysis and synthesis: abstract in as much as the way of thought leads *away* from the immediately given, to that which is "announced," "in-formed" *in* the given, as the blocked, distorted *potential* of the given, as the *essence*. In this sense, philosophy *is* theory of information, communication: it takes the given, ordinary words, propositions, gestures as signs, symbols of a meaning, a message not exhausted, not adequately expressed by the established vocabulary of words, meanings, "values." To the degree to which philosophy elaborates the universal concepts as against the particular appearance of things, it communicates not only knowledge but also the *imperatif* of *acting* accordingly. The universality of the concept contains the message of concretization: the "ought" is implied in the "is."

Now the normative concept stipulates a twofold universality: the (subjective) universality of Reason, of the rational faculties of man, and the (objective) universality of the human condition. The *Subject* who defines the concept (let's say, the philosopher) must be more and other than a contingent individual; Socrates must be able to show credentials for his claim that the prevailing concepts are false, and that his abstraction from the values of the particular State and its citizens is capable of arriving at an *overriding*, universal validity. And the human condition, without losing its particular concreteness, must be supra-individual, common to such an extent that the validity of the concept can become a practical one—translatable into a reality which is throughout *social* reality. Unless this dual condition prevails, philosophy lacks the denominator, the field of convergence of thought and action, concept and reality: philosophy's relevance to reality would be as slight, as uncommitted as the relevance of reality to philosophy.

The universal validity of the concept, and its twofold, subjective and objective foundation are never given facts, they are projections and evaluations. For the philosophical concepts never govern propositions describing established conditions. The concepts of Reason, Freedom, Knowledge, Good and Evil, etc. circumscribe a range of *possibilities* derived from the analysis of the *actual manifestations* of Reason, Freedom, etc., of given "cases," particular realizations of the universal. And these possibilities terminate in the concept of "that which (the universal) really is"—according to the mind and intelligence of the respective philosopher. And his intelligence is a *historical* condition, and as such a *particular* condition. All philosophy, no matter how abstract and speculative, constructs its conceptual universe with the material provided by a particular *historical* universe, which remains operative even in the purest abstractions and speculations—not as sociological conditioning "from outside," but as the very stuff of which concepts are made. By virtue of this situation, the philosophical concepts remain inextricably *ideological*: their universality remains a particular one, confined by the historical situation. Here are the limits, internal limits of the validity of the "concept." And I believe that this tension between philosophy and history lies behind the contradiction between Socrates' critical enterprise and his abdication to the powers that be.

Philosophical thought confronts the material force of existential conditions which thought can neither master nor change. And the numerous intermediary links which may lead to the translation of thought into action also lead *away* from the established conditions—into the past and into the future. (For example, in the case of Socrates, to the roots of the "false" reality which remain hidden to the philosopher, namely, the separation of intellectual from manual work, the origin of slavery, the disintegrating imperialist base of the city state.) Philosophy is obstructed by a reality which it can transcend only in thought: reality is left to its own devices, and autonomous philosophical thought terminates in civil obedience.

Let us make the jump from the beginning to the end of philosophy. Precisely at the point where the claim of Hegel's absolute idealism seems to become mere phantasy, philosophy comes to grips with reality. "The Rational is real": man has finally set out to organize his world "in accordance with Reason," "to recognize nothing in a constitution as valid that is not right according to Reason." This is Hegel's judgment of the French Revolution: the existential conditions have attained the level of Reason; Reason comes into its own as historical practice, and history is the development of the Logos. Consciousness, in its inherent "logical" development, becoming ever more fully aware of what its object really *is*, in the historical context in which it has emerged and in which it changes—consciousness turns into Reason: *true* consciousness, capable of constructing a rational and free universe. The *Phenomenology of the Spirit* is the grandiose attempt to read the logic of liberation into the history of servitude. Chronologically, the revolution is at the *origins* of Hegel's philosophy; structurally, at its *end.* The Real is rational: in the *process* of *being made* rational, and for Hegel, this is the realization of freedom. Philosophy comes to a close when man makes himself free to act in conformity with Reason: translation of the concept into reality. The "*Aufhebung*" of philosophy is proclaimed in Hegel's system.

We know that Hegel's announcement of the advent of Reason and Freedom in history was wildly premature (or simply wrong). However, the very notion that philosophy is cancelled by its fulfillment anticipates the decisive trend of the period which begins at the time of his death. The *Phenomenology of the Spirit,* according to Hegel the road to the "absolute idea"—to true philosophy, is in fact the road to its destruction: it spells the demise of idealism. To the degree to which philosophy comprehends history and the philosophical concepts "incorporate" history, philosophy becomes materialistic, and to the degree to which philosophical materialism comes to grips with the basic facts of history, it undermines the abstract sovereignty of philosophy. Hegel's idealistic reconciliation of philosophy with reality was of short duration. In the development of thought from Hegel to Feuerbach and Marx, reconciliation turns into radical activism: the philosophical concepts, "translated" into materialistic ones, are to become the theoretical guide for social and political practice.

We must now ask: what miraculous event has bridged the gap between philosophy and reality? And why does this juncture lead (apparently) to the "negation of philosophy"? There is a familiar answer: reality has "overtaken" philosophy in a very empirical sense: scientific, technical, material progress has preempted the domain of philosophy, or rather of all "*pure*" philosophy which tried to remove from its concepts their historical denominator. Such philosophy seems to be *reduced* to the order of an intellectual exercise; rather removed from the human condition, and only modestly interested *in* the human condition.

What is the point in subtle epistemological investigations when science and technology, not unduly worried about the foundations of their knowledge, increase daily their mastery of nature and man? What is the point of a linguistic analysis which steers clear of the transformation of language (ordinary language!) into an instrument of political control? What is the point in philosophical reflections on the meaning of good and evil when Auschwitz, the Indonesian massacres, and the war in Vietnam provide a definition which suffocates all discussion on ethics? And what is the point in further philosophical occupation with Reason and Freedom when the resources and the features of a rational society, and the need for liberation are all too clear, and the problem is, not their concept but the political practice of their realization?

The weight of reality has become too heavy, its ingression into abstract thought too large for philosophy as a separate discipline—even in terms of the academic division of labor. Today, it seems impossible to think, to analyze, to define anything without thinking, analyzing, defining the language, the behavior, the conditions of the existing society. This is perhaps the hidden rationale of a philosophy which, renouncing all transcendence, faithfully sticks to the analysis of ordinary language; the rationale of Wittgenstein's elegant program for the self-reduction of philosophy, the first phase of which ends in the familiar exhortation to silence *in rebus philosophicis*, since what can be *said*, i.e. the propositions of natural science, is "something that has nothing to do with philosophy." This early radicalism partakes—much more than the later linguistic philosophy—of the total suspicion of all ideology which now seems to extend to all modes of thought which transcend the given reality.

This verdict hits thought itself, thought in the emphatic sense, which is essentially abstract. The abstract universals of philosophy are replaced in reality by the emergence of a *concrete* universal: a common goal—a common fight—solidarity. Marx already sketched it in its two manifestations: establishment of a "world market," and realization of man as *Gattungswesen*, "species-being." The global development of the productive forces tends to dissolve the petrified distinctions and conflicts of class, race, nationality—the entire social division of labor which sets man against man, the particular against the universal interest, politically required suppression against possible liberation.

On the material, historical basis provided by the possible conquest of scarcity and blind nature, the translation of Reason and Freedom into existential conditions on a universal scale is within the reaches of man. The abstract, universal *Telos* of the philosophical quest is now translatable into the real Subject of history: it is emerging in the global struggle against the powerful international and national policies of domination and exploitation which tend to converge beyond all boundaries and particularities; and the rebellion against these policies assumes an equally universal character. And behind the particular, immediate grievances and struggles of the peoples in rebellion, lies the one universal demand for human freedom pure and simple—a demand on *all* existing forms of society, capitalist and socialist, democratic and authoritarian, East and West.

The reality which has overtaken and overwhelmed philosophy also affects the relevance of its most concrete and actual discipline: social and political philosophy. The efforts to elaborate the critical theoretical concepts which could develop political consciousness and guide political practice out of the established society are losing contact with the very reality they want to join. The political philosopher faces, rather embarrassed, the deep-seated suspicion, the contempt for theoretical preoccupation on the part of even some of the most "rational" among the rebellious young intelligentsia—a derogation of thought in favor of immediate and direct action on the part of the militants. They are aware of the fact that this position flatly contradicts Marxian theory, that it is grossly undialectical, "vulgar," etc. They are willing to put up with this accusation; they insist on the absorption of thought in reality; what they are being taught and what they learn must be "relevant to their life here and now" . . . Are they right on their own terms, and with respect to their own goals?

The answer to that question depends on that to a larger question: does the contemporary situation which I tried to describe indeed call for the sacrifice (or absorption) of thought, of theory by action? Does it indeed call for the *Aufhebung* of philosophy since reality, by virtue of its own development, its *progress*, has invalidated the historical relevance of philosophy? So that, as Marxian theory predicted, only logic and epistemology remain as its genuine domain?

My answer is negative. Paradoxically, the new relevance of reality, its capability of changing the world, far from making the theoretical philosophical effort superfluous and a luxury, demands a renewed and restructured theoretical effort. Obviously and inevitably, this statement appears as, and is, a declaration *pro domo*, but one's own theoretical house is not necessarily a sanctuary from reality, it may also be a workshop for intellectual weapons offered to reality.

The need for a sustained theoretical effort, for a new abstraction from the immediate experience is suggested by this experience itself, which if raised to the level of critical consciousness, calls for a re-examination of the relation between theory and practice—philosophy and reality. The historical conditions in which Marx confidently proclaimed the "definite negation" of philosophy have changed. He envisaged the convergence of consciousness and existence: the exploited classes would become aware of their inhuman situation and of the necessity and the way to replace it by a free and rational society. He knew that this convergence did not prevail, that it had to be achieved in a long political struggle. Prevailing instead was the *discrepancy* between consciousness and existence.

In 1844, Marx wrote that what matters is not what the proletariat *thinks* it is, but what it *is*. For a long time, in fact in some of the less advanced industrial societies until this very day, this antagonism and contrast between consciousness and existence seemed to be definitely reduced and their unity seemed to be established: the worker *thinks* how and what he *is*, namely, exploited and abused—in spite of, or precisely because of the rising standard of living. However, in the most advanced industrial countries, the political consciousness is suffocated, overpowered by a social reality which, by virtue of its technical and material achievements and capabilities, seems to call for protection, perpetuation, improvement of the status quo rather than for radical change. And yet, critical theory demonstrates the *objective* need for such change, and the practice of the protectors and defenders of the status quo verifies this demonstration ever more emphatically.

Under these circumstances, the analysis and development of a transcending consciousness—the germane task of philosophy—assumes renewed urgency. The more uncompromising, the less "private" the commitment to change, the greater the need for learning the conditions, resources, and prospects for change in the society *as a whole*. And since the laws, the forces which move this society as a whole are still experienced as "blind" forces, operating behind the backs of the individuals, since the appearance still conceals the essence, abstraction from the appearance still is the first step toward gaining concreteness, namely, the new concreteness which is that of liberation. It matters little whether you ascribe this theoretical effort to the philosopher, sociologist, psychologist, or historian: reality has long since superseded even the academic division of labor—they are all in the same boat, or ought to be. More than a hundred years ago, Marx called philosophy "the head of the emancipation of man"—we should be worthy of this compliment!

But if reality itself, the concrete social and political reality now calls for the critical philosophical effort—as a guide for action—this does not mean a mere continuation of the manifold philosophical tradition. To be sure, there is much in this tradition which must be preserved (and restored as against the debunking ideological tendencies which, in the academic establishment, want to discard some of the most advanced concepts of traditional rationalism and empiricism): this tradition must be adequately taught and learned, precisely because these concepts are still antagonistic to the given reality, and project conditions of man and nature which now have become subject to materialization, translation into reality.

However, the preservation of this philosophical tradition, and its defense against the twofold attack by the militant, radical activists on the one side, and the pure and neutral technicians of academic thought on the other, does not mean simple repetition. The brute ingression of reality into conceptual thought demands rethinking, sometimes recantation in cases where philosophy has accepted, with too good a conscience, established conditions and values as the terms and termini of thought. Such rethinking is imposed upon philosophy by a reality *in need of philosophy,* that is to say, in need of modes of thought which can *counteract* the massive ideological indoctrination practiced by the advanced repressive societies of today. This counteracting philosophy would have to sacrifice its puritan neutralism in exchange for a critical analysis which transcends the false consciousness and its universe of discourse and behavior toward its historical "concept." Such a philosophy would be materialistic to the extent to which it preserves in its concepts the full concreteness, the dead and living matter of the social reality; it would be idealistic in as much as it analyzes this reality in the light of its "idea," that is, its real possibilities.

Let me, by way of illustration, suggest some areas in which certain changes in reality become relevant for philosophy and call for philosophical rethinking.

1. *Linguistic analysis.* In reality, language has been made, to a considerable extent, into an instrument of control and manipulation. This transformation affects the syntactical as well as conceptual structure of language, the definition and the vocabulary. The distortion and falsification of the "rationality" of language, and the way in which it impedes independent thinking (and feeling, even perceiving!) appear as an appropriate field of critical analysis and evaluation: political linguistics as the full concretization—and conceptualization of linguistic analysis.
2. *Aesthetics.* The familiar and periodical "crisis of art" has today assumed a form which jeopardizes the very existence of art as art. The notion of the "end of art" becomes the more realistic the more art, in its most radical and destructive expressions, is smoothly absorbed and incorporated into the very reality it wants to indict and subvert. This situation calls for a renewal of philosophical aesthetics: analysis, not so much of the artist and his creativity, not of the "aesthetic experience," as an analysis of the work of art itself, its ontological and historical place and function in the interaction between art and society.
3. *Epistemology.* The modes and the extent to which society (i.e., objects and "data" as specific historical facts) enters into this process of knowing at all levels (sense perception, memory, reasoning) and blends with physiological and psychological processes requires an investigation which hitherto has been left to the "sociology of knowledge." However, the problem calls for a "transcendental" rather than sociological analysis. Such analysis would differ from Kant in as much as it would treat

the "forms of intuition" and the "categories of understanding" not as "pure" but as historical forms and concepts. These would be *a priori* because they would belong to the "conditions of possible experience," but they would be a *historical a priori* in the sense that their universality and necessity are defined (limited) by a specific, experienced historical universe.

4. The *history of philosophy* offers many areas in need of reinterpretation. To mention only one: Plato's demonstration of the best form of government is still easily ridiculed and judged under the dual aspect of its obviously repulsive features and its irreconcilable conflict with liberal and democratic values. But there is another aspect to the *Republic*; namely, the internal relation between the theory of knowledge and the theory of government, political theory. Government is here made conditional upon the attainment of the highest mode of knowledge, and on the actually available possibilities to attain them. If the first part of the premise is accepted, the conclusion seems inevitable: as long as this knowledge is not attainable by all citizens, democracy implies a dangerous reduction (if not abolition) of the qualification for government; authentic democracy presupposes equality in the ways, means, and time necessary for acquiring the highest level of knowledge.

"Relevance to reality" has become one of the slogans by which our militant students oppose the academic establishment. They insist that what is taught and learned should be relevant to their life, here and now. The time-honored hostility against history, but also against abstract thought, theory itself is present again. We should not belittle the justification of this claim: relevant today is the action, the practice that can get us *out of* a society in which well-being, even being is at the price of destruction, waste, and oppression on a global scale. But relevant to this goal is not any private and particular practice; relevant is only a practice in which the universal suffering and the universal protest appear in the particular action—a practice which demonstrates the need and the aim of liberation. And such a practice, if it is to obtain a mass base (that is, to become universal, social rather than particular action), presupposes knowledge of the conditions, limitations, and capabilities of change. They derive from the structure, dynamic, and history of the existing society: to know them as conditions and prospects of action means to understand them in terms of a *theory* of society, of the whole which they form, closed toward the past, open toward the future—open within a given range of alternatives. In this sense, action itself—in order to be able to attain its goal—calls for thought, for theory. The relation between theory and practice is truly a dialectical one: "it is not enough that thought should strive toward its realization; reality itself must also strive toward thought." Today, this is perhaps more necessary than before. False consciousness and truth are inextricably intertwined: the benefits of the affluent society are *real*, technical progress is *real*, the rise in the GNP is *real*—and so are the frustration, waste, oppression, and misery inflicted by the same reality. To be sure, this dialectic of progress is nothing new; new are the deadly efficient (and comforting) controls which bar its awareness; new is the scope of the false consciousness, its all but immediate, direct coincidence, harmony with reality. Change, the changing practice presupposes the break of this harmony, the emancipation of thought —*abstract* thought. For the concepts, images, and goals which are to guide this practice are not yet concrete, cannot be "read off" the existing facts and conditions; they are still transcendent.—Their elaboration involves a re-examination of the past, where the failures as well as the discoveries, the false as well as the true consciousness originated. This means learning, and it requires intellectual discipline and energy—the theoretical discipline and energy which will find concreteness in the discipline and energy of action.

Philosophy was at the origin of the radical historical effort to "change the world" in the image of Freedom and Reason; the effort has not yet attained its end. The famous Feuerbach-thesis never meant that now it is no longer necessary to interpret the world—we can just go about changing it. This undertaking today is even more difficult than before: the world must be interpreted again in order to be changed; and a good part of this interpretation requires critical thought, philosophical thought. *Pro domo* or not—I think we still have a job to be done—an *increasingly serious*, and, I hope, an increasingly RISKY job!

University of California, San Diego

THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN A CHANGING SOCIETY*

Bob Goldburg is still my favorite rabbi. I hope that my young friends here tonight will not be disappointed when I talk tonight mainly to the parents.

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* *Editors' note*:
"The Role of Religion in Society" presents an unpublished transcript of a lecture Marcuse delivered at the Congregation Mishkan Israel, Hamden, Connecticut on April 25, 1969. A series of letters found in Herbert Marcuse's personal papers of correspondence with the Temple Rabbi Robert E. Goldburg indicated that Marcuse had previously lectured at the Temple and was good friends with the Rabbi. On May 6, 1969 Rabbi Goldburg wrote Marcuse, thanking him for the lecture and saying: "The way you handled the question period was absolutely superb and I also must thank you for one other thing. The following day, Alan Schiff told me we had a resignation from the Temple. We have been trying to get rid of this crazy woman for a long time and you did it. Other members were offended, not at you, but at so many young people who were not properly attired – isn't that delightful? I keep responding that Moses, Jesus and Einstein all had long hair – so you see – in every way your being here was a total

It seems to me that once in a while you should talk to the parents and remind them of some non-negotiable demands. Even today I believe that no evaluation of the role of religion in changing society can be made without meeting the criticism of religion by Marx. And I will very briefly restate the main points of his criticism. According to him all religion, but especially monotheistic religion, originates in the miserable human condition which in turn is to a great extent due to the repressive and exploitative character of society. Under these circumstances man seeks consolation and compensation for a life of want, frustration, and suffering—compensation for the prevailing injustice and inequality. And thus man forms the image, feels, experiences the image, of an all-powerful, all-wise, all-just father—rewarding, but also punishing and revenging—an all-powerful father who holds out the promise of a better life in which injustice will be undone, suffering will cease, and happiness and bliss will finally come. Now this explanation of the origin of religion makes it quite clear that Marx does not see religion as a willful creation of some men or even one man; he sees it rather as the expression—the very understandable expression—of the experience of injustice and misery here on earth. Injustice and misery which is not abolished here on earth and therefore transfigured—transferred as it were, postponed into a metaphysical realm after death. However, this deep-rooted feeling—especially among the underprivileged population—has been organized and exploited by powerful groups in the society; this deep-rooted feeling, this search for salvation for final justice has been, as it were, institutionalized in churches and orders, and has thus been made into a powerful instrument of domination. It has taught the meek to remain meek; it has taught the poor not to mind their poverty; it has taught the oppressed not to mind oppression too much because all this will be changed later on. Suffering and submission to the injustice and misery here on earth appear only as a transitory and necessary station on the road to eternal bliss. Disobedience, revolt against the established secular order, appeared this way also as a revolt against the divine order, and in this way injustice and inequality were perpetuated here on earth. Now, already Marx called religion the heart of the heartless world. In the famous passage in which the sentence occurs that "religion is the opium of the people" there is this other phrase which is usually forgotten or repressed—I've just quoted it—according to which religion is the heart of a heartless world. This phrase emphasizes the need for religion as long as mental and physical oppression prevail and no effective forces striving for change of these conditions are operating. In other words, religion *can* and *should* disappear from earth and can disappear from earth according to Marx only by the collective effort to establish justice, equality, and happiness

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delight." In the lecture, Marcuse presents dialectical perspectives on religion that valorize the critical spirit of prophetic traditions while criticizing religious orthodoxy that can be a bulwark of conservatism.

here on earth. And in this way the abolition of religion would presuppose the coming about of a free and just society.

Now I recalled very briefly some of the features of the Marxian conception in order to point out the twofold function of religion, a twofold function which was operative until this very day. On the one hand, religion is articulating and sustaining the vision of a fulfillment of human needs and aspirations for all men; and secondly, religion is postponing and relegating the fulfillment of this vision to another life after death. Now corresponding to this twofold function, we can see in religion two very different elements; one, a critical, sometimes even radical *no* to prevailing inequality, injustice, and misery, and in this respect a progressive force. The quotation from Amos you have heard just a while ago is one of the best instances for this very concrete, critical, radical, even revolutionary element in religion. But, on the other hand, religion works as a tranquillizing, soothing, acceptance of prevailing conditions, since they are not the decisive conditions for human salvation anyway. And since they are willed, ordained by God. In this way religion—as we can say—introjects, internalizes repression, the revolt against unjust secular authority easily appears as revolt against God himself. The most obvious instance of this transformation we find in Luther's Protestantism, in his concept of Christian liberty, according to which man is perfectly free even in chains, even in prison, because his freedom is an inner freedom, and an inner freedom only—freedom of conscience, freedom of thought—which is perfectly compatible with the most miserable and oppressive existential condition. Moreover, this kind of religion has instilled into man a deeprooted sense of guilt. His misery and the injustice done to him is a punishment of disobedience to God and again this sense of guilt prevents him effectively from protesting against the existing conditions. Now implied in this tranquillizing and soothing function of religion is the reconciliation of conditions which indeed were very hard to reconcile; reconciliation between religion and war—as we have seen it throughout history without interruption—reconciliation between religion and business, no matter how aggressive, no matter how exploitative business may be, and above all reconciliation between religion and hypocrisy. "Be good without striving to do away with the evil you see"—this makes religion for holidays only. After the holidays, you can go back and start all over again exactly as you did before. Now, generally, these two elements—the progressive and the submissive ones—are both inherent in religion; but in the history of religion the first, the critical and radical element, has soon become a heretical trend persecuted by the established church. I believe that the canonization of the prophets is one of the rare exceptions in this development.

Now the role of religion in changing society as I want to discuss it with you tonight is related to this twofold function of religion and the mixture of these two elements, the protesting one and the accepting one; the radical one and the tranquillizing one; the mixture of these two elements. But the historical role a religion can play in changing a society is never determined by religion itself; it can only be determined by the society in which the religion develops. In fact, religion did contribute to changing society. I've only to remind you of the Protestant Reformation and its connection with the rise of the spirit of capitalism, and the Puritan revolution which was connected with the overthrow of political absolutism. In this period a new religious idea served to promote and introject into the individual an entirely new social morality which was required by the emerging new social order. Above all, a rigid work morale and work discipline, valid for all men and not only for the underlying population, and what the great sociologist, Max Weber, called an inner worldly asceticism; that is to say, a systematic and methodical savings and reinvestment of gains rather than wasting them in conspicuous consumption. But instead of dealing with these historical instances, let us rather have a look at the situation today. Now in trying to evaluate with you the role of religion today, I would like to state to you very clearly the assumption on which I will proceed. This assumption is that we live in a profoundly immoral and profoundly inhuman society behind the veil of a free democratic process and behind the veil of prosperity. Behind the veil of prosperity, waste, destruction, and war, the brutalization of entire populations, and poverty and misery not only abroad but within our national frontiers—and all this in a historical period in which the resources for the liberation of all men would be available if they would be rationally used in the interests of man and not only in the interests of certain vested interests. Now, against this society you see today the global rebellion of the youth, together with the liberation movements of the oppressed people in the Third World, and in the black liberation movement.

I said—and I emphasized—the *immoral* character of this society in this rebellion and the rebellion is directed against an entire system of values—our entire culture, our entire universe of discourse and behavior from the most intimate private to the most public social relationships. What is at stake are not only our institutions or the institutions on the other side of the Iron Curtain; not only the political and economic conditions. What is at stake is our entire way of life, and the very principles which govern our culture; that is to say, this rebellion is in its decisive element anti-authoritarian and it involves all spheres of the human existence—sexual, moral, political, economic. At the same time this rebellion is characterized by new goals and a new strategy. It is aiming at a society which has as little to do with our existence here, as with what calls itself socialist in the Soviet Union and in the Soviet satellites. It has as its goal the vision of what has been called humanistic or libertarian socialism with a true translation of democracy into action, and the strategy faced with the petrified conditions of our own society is looking for new and effective ways of protest. It is trying to find a language in the everyday life as well as in art and literature in which it can communicate its new visions because the established and available language is co-opted and is distorted by the establishment to such an extent that it cannot carry any more the new vision.

Now, the question: What does religion in this situation have to do with it? Obviously, in this rebellion religion appears as part of the discredited and compromised culture. If religion has anything to do with the father image, I'm afraid we have to say today that the father image merges with the image of all the fathers who have contributed to create, or who have been silent in, the world of Auschwitz and Buchenwald, the world of the ghettos, the world of Vietnam. This is the world the fathers—our fathers and we—have created in which the young generation is supposed to live, and and I think we should try to get that once and for all into our consciousness; we do not have to look very long for the strange reasons why such a rebellion and such a widespread rebellion occurs today. It is this world the older generations have created, or against which the older generations have not done anything effectively, and it is a world of mental and physical pollution which is becoming more and more physically intolerable for the young. Now this situation, the awareness of this work created by the older generations—in this respect we are all accessories to it—this weakens the sense of guilt which is so essential to religion. I think what we can see and really witness today is what may be called a radical transformation of the Oedipus complex. Not the sons, the fathers are guilty; and the threat of a fatherless society, a society without fathers, already appears in the youth rebellion of today. The rejection of all kinds of personal leadership to be replaced by collective leadership, life in communes, self-government, and so on. Now I would like to point out what we see at work here is by no means the traditional generation conflict. It is far more than that. A far larger and far more profound radical transformation announces itself here—on a basis larger and deeper than ever before, reaching down into the very roots and instincts of the rebellious youth.

In this process we can speak of a new secularization of religion, not however in the traditional sense. The progressive critical elements of religion which I have mentioned at the beginning—they must today be made complete. They must be translated into reality, translated into word and deed, to be heard and seen and felt in our daily life, and not merely as pious profession of faith on holidays, not merely as a ritual or custom or tradition. In other words—and I apologize for this brutal formulation—religion must become, if it makes any effort to take its own truth seriously—must become the expression of a political attitude and must show political concern. The question is: How? I believe that you fathers and mothers cannot and should not participate in the rebellion of the youth—perhaps you should not even approve of it—unless you are anyway incorrigible and tested radicals. You should not even approve of it because you don't speak their language, you don't have their minds, souls, and bodies; you don't live any more in the same universe of discourse and communication. Nor should you moralize these youths, appeal to the morality and values of *your* fathers; by the way, I would like to point out that instead of the 'your' I could just as well say 'our' because I definitely include myself in this category. You should not appeal to the morality and values of our fathers, for it is precisely this hypocritical morality, these hypocritical values that are compromised in the eyes of this youth. These values and this morality, they have been invalidated by the established societies, by the uninterrupted series of betrayed ideas, unfulfilled promises, by the blatant hypocrisy which prevails everywhere, by continued injustice, war, and oppression. And last, not least, by the triumph of business as usual and by the submission of the allegedly higher values to the national or vested interests. If we become fully conscious of the seriousness of this situation we have to paraphrase the famous question and ask: Is religion still possible after Auschwitz? There's only one point and only one area where you—we—can have communication with the youth; namely, in the indictment of our policy, in the indictment of what those who rule our lives are doing with this country and with our own lives, and to use all possible means of protest. This is the only medium of communication still left. Again, what has this to do with religion? Is that not merely and entirely a political demand? I emphasized from the beginning the moral implications of this rebellion: the assault on the morality of the establishment is itself motivated by another morality—an anti-puritanism, a libertarian morality, but a morality nevertheless. And this goes hand in hand with the rigorous and almost punitive political morality as far as the ideas of justice, equality and freedom are taken seriously, and as far as the insistence prevails to translate them into reality. Now, if this is the case, if here indeed a new morality is at work which at the same time reveals the hypocritical character of the traditional morality, then it seems to me that religion may have very much to do with this new morality and here another aspect of religion is at stake; namely, the sense of guilt. Here is a guilt to be redeemed. The refusal to partake of the establishment is also today the refusal to become guilty, to become guilty of the crime of silence. The rebels of today may be guilty too. They are guilty perhaps of not being washed properly and not being dressed properly. They are perhaps even guilty of disrupting classes, of throwing eggs, of destroying property, but at least they are not guilty of a far heavier and far more serious crime, namely being accessory to the wholesale slaughter that is going on in Vietnam today.

Let me conclude: the revival of the heretic element in religion is today, in my view, on the agenda. Religion is primarily indictment, refusal of the established conditions and of the established powers as a final authority on what is moral, and what is right behavior; in this sense, religion today is indeed and should be in conflict, antagonistic to the reasonableness and standards which prevail in the establishment. This reasonableness, this rationality has increasingly become an instrument of domination and destruction; and we see how even the greatest achievements of science are today used for destructive and annihilating purposes, rather than for the protection and amelioration of life. Now, in the indictment of this reason, in the indictment of this condition, religion may indeed help to transform society. But it may help to transform society only as heresy, only as protest and criticism, and it will help only if it indeed goes about to translate its message into practice here on earth!

VI

CONVERSATION WITH MARCUSE IN *PSYCHOLOGY TODAY*

REVOLUTIONARY EROTICISM, THE TACTICS OF TERROR, THE YOUNG, PSYCHOTHERAPY, THE ENVIRONMENT, TECHNOLOGY, REICH*

Herbert Marcuse: I hope you don't intend to ask me about my theories or writings. It is useless for me to try to elaborate what I have written. If I could have said it more clearly I would have; I still try. Nor do I think it will be particularly interesting to talk about my private psyche. I have never been analyzed. I apparently didn't need it. Psychologically, I hope, I am not interesting at all. I am fairly normal.

Sam Keen: As a public phenomenon you seem to have sprung full-grown from the head of Zeus. Suddenly students in rebellion all over the world have claimed Herbert Marcuse as an ally and a major prophet of their hoped-for new age. What events nurtured your passionate commitment to a revolutionary analysis of the modern world?

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* *Editors' note*:
"A Conversation with Marcuse: Revolutionary Eroticism, The Tactics of Terror, the Young, Psychotherapy, the Environment, Technology, Reich" is an interview Marcuse gave to Sam Keen and John Raser that appeared in *Psychology Today* (1971), pp. 35–40, 60–66. Covering a variety of topics, this frank discussion offers Marcuse's succinct takes on group psychology, the individual and humanity's reconciliation with nature as well as a variety of other themes. Here we see Marcuse in sharp form that displays his ability to reframe the questions that are posed to him while, at the same time, provoking a deeper line of questioning. It also shows him defending his more critical and philosophical version of psychoanalysis against younger interviewers who appear highly sympathetic to his work but who advocate more fashionable and current versions of psychoanalysis about which Marcuse is skeptical. Following the interview, we include in boxed format an introduction to Marcuse by one of the interviewers, John Raser, that accompanied the *Psychology Today* interview reproduced here. Raser's comments provide an illuminating picture of Marcuse in the early 1970s.

Marcuse: Well obviously it didn't spring from the head of Zeus, although it might seem like it since my books have only recently become popular here and in Europe. As a young student I read Marx and what was then considered avant-garde literature.

Keen: Do you remember a time when you were not an intensely political and philosophical human being? What created your passion?

Marcuse: My passion came from my personal experience of the betrayal and defeat of the German revolution and the organization of the fascist counterrevolution which eventually brought Hitler to power. I was 20 when the German revolution broke out. I was in the last half year of my army service and was stationed in Berlin. I got my first revolutionary experience as a member of a Soldiers' Council but it was a brief experience because the revolution was quickly betrayed.

In 1919, I think, I left Berlin and went to Freiburg where I became absorbed in my studies of comparative literature, philosophy and economics. I was relatively dormant politically for the next 14 years until I left Germany in 1933 and joined the Institute for Social Research in Geneva. During the year at the Institute my political passion was reawakened under the influence of my colleagues Max Horkheimer and T. W. Adorno. After my immigration to America in 1934, these men, along with Hegel, Marx and Freud, continued to be the dominant influences upon my thought. Recently there were differences between Horkheimer and myself.

Keen: What were these differences?

Marcuse: We have different evaluations of the world-wide student movement and of the character of American politics. I see in the student movement a vital social and political force; my friends are reluctant to do so. They see America as a progressive and even liberal society compared to the Soviet Union. While I agree with their condemnation of the Soviet regime and agree that there are still progressive and liberal forces active in U.S. society, I see U.S. policies, domestic as well as foreign, as systematically repressive of human freedom.

John Raser: We know that the antithesis between repression and freedom is one cornerstone of your thought, and that you believe that a radical restructuring of society is necessary to end repression and to liberate the human psyche. But short of this utopian restructuring of society, do you see any role for psychotherapy in sowing the seeds of liberation? Or do you think that therapy as it is currently conceived and practiced is in effect conformist, privatistic and antirevolutionary?

Marcuse: Obviously if psychiatry merely helps the patient adjust to a sick society so that he can function in it, it only moves him from one kind of sickness to another. Even Freud admitted this, but rejected the idea that psychoanalysts should make patients into revolutionaries or rebels against their society. Freud as a person may have been bourgeois and conservative. Yet his theory contains transcending radical elements. So you cannot say that Freudian theory and practice are either conformist or non-conformist.

They are both, and I think—although Freud would reject this—that his decisive concepts are definitely revolutionary.

Keen: I think that Freud, like Melville, was haunted by dreams of both the easy freedom of the South Seas and the chaotic terror of the peasant revolution.

Raser: Perhaps traditional American psychiatry suffers from the same defect as Freud in that it almost totally ignores the political implications of its theory. Only you, Norman O. Brown, and perhaps Erik Erikson, have been willing to deal seriously with the political implications of Freud's analysis of the repressed and liberated psyche.

Marcuse: But a problem arises here. American society generates a lot of pathology among individuals. It creates a lot of psychic casualties. Therefore American psychiatrists have been overwhelmed with the need to treat patients who simply cannot function. If a person cannot digest, if he cannot eat, these functions have to be restored and politics and social consciousness have to be excluded unless they become essential for the therapy. Just as a physician need not ask about the moral or political opinions of a patient in order to cure him of pneumonia, so a psychiatrist usually need not treat the specific politics of a patient in order to cure him of some psychosomatic illness.

You just can't say generally whether psychiatry is politically reactionary or conformist.

Raser: You mean in theory. You can, I think, in practice.

Marcuse: In what sense?

Raser: In its fee structure, in its privatism, in its emphasis on the correction of pathology rather than the stimulation of growth, and in its habit of adjusting people to the existing world of work and social injustice. I think one telling indication of the apolitical stance of American therapists is evident in the fate of Wilhelm Reich. Reich insisted upon a marriage between Freud and Marx, the body and the body politic. But American Reichians have all but ignored Reich's political insights and claimed only his analysis of the physical dynamics of character structure.

Keen: That may be a rather pessimistic view. I think there are some revolutionary implications in the whole movement toward group therapy. Psychology is becoming more popular and vulgar in a positive sense. Don't you agree?

Marcuse: I must tell you that anything I say about group therapy is an impertinence because I have not studied it. I know about encounter and gestalt groups only from reports of the kinds of things that go on there. I read the catalogs of the Esalen Institute. To me this is sufficient to be horrified. This administration of happiness is nauseating to me. They teach people to touch each other and hold hands! If somebody cannot learn that by himself, by trial and error, he may just as well give up.

Raser: But in point of fact a lot of people in our society are afraid to reach out and touch others. They remain isolated, lonely and insensitive.

Marcuse: Then they are not going to be helped by learning these things in a contrived and mechanical way. Such things have to come out of a person, as his or her own, without organization.

Raser: Let me offer a slightly different perspective about the significance of these sensitivity and encounter groups. It is a similar argument used by some apologists for LSD. If a person has grown up in a society where from infancy his fantasies and sensibilities have been stifled, he may not even know what forms of imagination and intimacy are possible. Some people have claimed that the hallucinogenics draw aside the curtain screening off a rich world of imagination. In a similar way people in these groups can learn how to reach out and touch others.

Marcuse: But you are always being touched today and slapped on the shoulder and all of that whether you want it or not.

Keen: But if a competitive society destroys tenderness and intimacy then perhaps we have to use contrived means to reawaken them.

Marcuse: I may be very wrong but I feel that a human being has to learn some things by himself. If someone has to study a textbook on sexual behavior in order to learn how to make love to his wife or girl, something is wrong with him.

Keen: The analysis of shame you make in *An Essay on Liberation* seems to bear on this subject. You say that a capitalistic society takes the Oedipal situation and compounds it by authoritarian political and economic structures, and thus psychological and political repression creates a personality that is deeply shamed and guilt-ridden. If shame and guilt cut us off from our sensibilities, doesn't it follow that a revolutionary form of therapy would have to de-shame the individual?

How do you suggest that we go about the process of de-shaming?

Marcuse: I think you have brought up the decisive point. I would say that shame is something positive and authentic. There are qualities and dimensions of the human being that are his own possessions—and I mean that in a nonexploitative and nonacquisitive way. They are his own and he shares them only with those whom he chooses. They do not belong to the community and they are not a public affair.

Keen: But you seem to be implying that only shame would protect privacy. Surely it is possible for an individual—a human being—to have privacy without shame.

Marcuse: I don't see how. If, for example, you are supposed to have a sexual relationship with someone before the eyes of the group, this is a regressive and repressive development. This is even true for something as minor as holding hands. If that must be rehearsed in a group the authentic erotic element is lost.

Raser: I would like to argue with you a bit on the basis of personal experience in such groups. The kind of competitive society in which we live makes it very difficult, for instance, for a man to accept his feeling of intimacy and warmth for another man.

Marcuse: Yes, that is true.

Raser: Almost all our male-to-male relationships are hostile and distant or involve a backslapping, shallow friendship game. As D. H. Lawrence said, men don't even know how to be friends without risking homosexual panic. Well, in these groups I have learned through contrived little exercises directed by clever people to own some of my warm, erotic feelings for other men.

Marcuse: You speak now only for other men? Would you say the same for a man–woman or woman–woman relationship?

Raser: Surely. My experience is that some of these new therapeutic techniques can aid in increasing the erotic component of *all* relationships and can help to create the new sensibilities about which you write so eloquently. Having allowed yourself to be open in a protected environment that says *It is O.K. for you to experiment with new ways of seeing and being* then you have opened that window to the new sensibilities.

Marcuse: Yes, but only if you already have them within yourself.

Raser: I think people do but society forces us to repress them. I am not talking about generating emotions, but about liberating those that have long been denied and twisted. I think I have learned much of this from your own writings.

Keen: In this sense the therapist is like the Zen master—a kind of trickster, who says *I give you permission to do something that you really don't need permission to do.*

Marcuse: Yes, you are quite right. I said from the beginning that I was impertinent to talk about such matters. But if I give you my spontaneous reactions I must come back to what I said before. There is for me in all of this something too didactic. The teacher is saying, *Be real, natural. Feel more.* You know I am very much in favor of learning. Some people say, probably correctly, that I am very authoritarian. But there are just some dimensions of human existence where the concept of organized teaching and learning seems to be inapplicable. Well, I really don't want to pass judgment. This is one of my prejudices. I consider it a prejudice. Maybe the groups are right and I am wrong. I don't know.

Raser: When we talk about psychic health as involving the release of repressed sensibilities that may be threatening to social norms then we raise the question as to what we mean by sanity. An emerging motif in therapy stresses the positive value of madness—of minipsychoses as breakthrough experiences that permit reintegration of the psyche on a higher level. For some, the criterion of successful therapy has become how crazy and autonomous—how independent of ordinary social controls—the patient becomes. R. D. Laing, for instance, sees adjustment to society as sick. You must surely consider this a radical approach to therapy.

Marcuse: Well I met Laing, but we seem to be unable to find common ground. I am certainly opposed to any trend which glorifies nuts just because they are nuts. Certainly you will not help society by making people crazier than they are. What you get is only a society with one craziness against another craziness. There is a kind of craziness you need if you are going to work in a revolutionary way within a repressive society without being crushed by it. But this form of madness cannot be produced by psychiatry. It is a madness of the *logos* and is highly rational. It involves insight into the basic ills of society and analysis of the ways and means at your disposal for changing things. So I don't see why you have to make people crazy in order to make them rebels against their society. To the contrary, any person with his five senses intact and with a more or less developed consciousness should be able to become a rebel without any help at all from a psychiatrist.

Keen: In *An Essay on Liberation* you talk about the need to develop both a new sensibility and a new rationality. Wouldn't the new sensibility include a deeper appreciation of the unconscious, of the playful and irrational dimension of the mind? This might release a motive power—a joyousness, if you like—that may not be characteristic of the pure rationality and analysis that you see as the major faculties of the rebel.

Marcuse: Yes, but this development of the new consciousness and of the new sensibility is in itself a rational process which cannot be attained artificially or synthetically. Liberation, for instance, cannot be achieved through drugs. They may provide the individual occasion, the starting shock, but the effect can only be sustained by translating the chemical reaction into political commitment. The real emancipation of man can take place only in a different society after a fundamental change in values and in political and economic structures. Now here is a paradox, for I have always insisted that this new rationality and sensibility must emerge *prior* to the change. They are necessary to bring about the change. We cannot possibly expect human beings who have been distorted and mutilated by being born into and living in this society to set up new institutions and relationships that are really liberating and emancipating. In other words—and perhaps this softens the paradox—at least some human beings with new values and new aspirations must exist and do their work *prior* to the massive change that will make general liberation possible.

Raser: It sounds suspiciously like the old problem of the chicken and the egg. Where will such virgin consciousness come from in a tainted society?

Marcuse: What do you mean, where will they come from? They are already here. I see this new type emerging in the young, especially among the students. The militant kids have made this transvaluation of values. They do not accept the established values of the society. They are, so far as I know them, totally nonviolent and non-aggressive in their instincts. They feel they know that with the resources available we could create a decent society almost from one day to the next, were it not for the overwhelming power of the Establishment.

Raser: You say you don't think drugs are responsible for this new sensibility on the part of the young. What might be?

Marcuse: We know fairly well what has articulated it in this country. This new attitude started in the early '60s when many of these kids went down to the South and saw, for the first time, how American democracy and equality were really functioning. It was a traumatic shock to them. Then came the war in Southeast Asia as the second traumatic shock. Now repression at home and abroad has been fortified by the Nixon Administration. So I don't think you have to ask for any artificial or mysterious explanations of the new militancy. It is what you should expect from kids who are not integrated into this society, who are not yet willing to sell out. It is frequently said that the militant students are a spoiled, privileged, middle-class elite. That is only true to a very limited extent. And even to the extent that it is true it is precisely this privileged position which gives them enough distance and dissociation from the society to be anguished rather than absorbed by it.

Keen: How important do you think the presence of the nuclear specter has been in creating disillusionment with the old values and stirring up a search for the new?

Raser: A young girl I know recently said, "The bomb has fallen and we are the mutations."

Marcuse: Excellent. She is quite right. However, I think the threat of nuclear war is by no means the worst thing we are facing. It is quite possible that the superpowers will come to an agreement not to use nuclear weapons in their own interests. The real catastrophe is the prospect of total moronization, dehumanization and manipulation of man.

Keen: In a strange way the present generation is post-mortem. They have lived with the possibility of the death of all civilization and so they have developed a kind of gaiety or abandon, an attitude of *what is there to lose?*

Marcuse: They have seen daily the painful contrast between what is actually being done with the available resources of the human community and what might be done. Seeing all the barbarism, repression, exploitation and injustice, they have lost the illusion that they live in a civilized society. So, once again, I don't see any need to look for hidden or mystical motives to account for the emergence of a militant youth.

Raser: Your remark about the possibility of the superpowers getting together raises a question for me. Anatol Rapoport has argued that the main actors in the drama of human conflicts are no longer individuals but systems, superorganisms in which human beings play roughly the same role that the cell plays in the body. He calls these organisms *Stati Belligerens*—war-waging states. The most developed of these are Russia and the United States. These states are vast bureaucratic complexes with their own information receptors, data-processing centers, decision rules, communication networks, memory systems and effectors. To these mechanical leviathans, private human passions are totally irrelevant.

Marcuse: If he makes no distinctions between these bureaucracies then this is the type of generalization to which I must object. First, we are not informed about the direction China is going. And the Western world, capitalism and Soviet socialism cannot really be thrown into the same boat because their *potential* development is so different.

Raser: But what about the lesser assertion that we have a growing kind of superorganism that is not responsive to the individual?

Marcuse: Yes, but why call it an organism? I cannot subscribe to the view that our social conflicts should be interpreted as battles between the individual and the superbeast. In my view there is a much simpler formulation—the established powers wage a concerted and organized fight against any attempt at revolution from below. And such revolutions are usually class efforts or group efforts rather than individual efforts.

Keen: This raises the crucial question about the whole category of the individual. Some radicals see the need to go beyond the notion of individual consciousness and to create a new form of tribal or communal consciousness. Would you say the concept of the individual is obsolete?

Marcuse: I wouldn't say the concept of the individual is obsolete. It is premature. The real human individual does not yet exist. What you have is a questionable bourgeois individual whose identity is based upon competitive performance against all other "individuals."

Keen: If the psyche of the quasi-individual of today is organized around the principles of performance and competition, what would be the organizing principles of a new revolutionary person? What would his sensibilities and rationality look like?

Marcuse: Let me first formulate it negatively because the negative contains the positive. It would be a psyche, a mind, an instinctual structure that could no longer tolerate aggression, domination, exploitation, ugliness, hypocrisy or dehumanizing, routine performance. Positively you can see it as the growth of the esthetic and the erotic components in the instinctual and mental structure. I see it manifested today in the protest against the commercial violation of nature, against plastic beauty and real ugliness, against pseudovirility and brutal heroism.

Raser: When you talk about the instinctual structure of the new man are you implying a return to a more natural state? Is this a Neo-Romanticism?

Marcuse: Definitely not. I have been criticized for being against science and technology. This is utter nonsense. A decent human society can only be founded on the achievements of science and technology. The mere fact that in a free society all alienated labor must be reduced to a minimum presupposes a high degree of scientific and technical progress. The possibility of an aesthetic, joyful transformation of the environment depends upon continuing technical advance. How can you speak of a return? This vision anticipates the future, it does not yearn for the past.

Raser: Well, among certain elements of the young there is today a real nostalgia for the simple, the primitive, the wilds, the animals. It seems to be based on a hatred of technology in all of its manifestations.

Marcuse: I would say it is a hatred of the present *abuses* of technology. I see nothing wrong with it; it does not entertain the notion of the noble savage. There is absolutely nothing wrong with establishing a libidinal relationship with nature; in fact, I think it is part of the liberation of man. But on the social scale there can never be a recurrence of a previous stage which existed only in mythology and poetry.

Keen: One of your friends told me of luring you to Montana for a lecture with the promise that he would show you wild mountain sheep. I take it that somewhere in your vision of Utopia there must be a wild place?

Marcuse: Yes, but not too wild. We don't want animals who eat each other and eat humans. We must not ignore the fact that nature is by no means gentle. It is just as cruel as the human reality. That is why I insist that the liberation of man involves the liberation and reconciliation of nature.

Raser: "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together . . ."

Marcuse: My allergy against the Scriptures is not such that I must say *a priori* that every single thing in the Scriptures is reactionary and repressive.

Keen: What would the reconciliation between man and nature look like?

Marcuse: Negatively, it would mean stopping the ruthless violation and destruction of nature. The ecological movement is beginning to spell out how this might be done. Already there is a consciousness of the damage this pollution of nature is doing to man. But the ecological movement must seek not the mere beautification of the existing Establishment but a radical transformation of the very institutions and enterprises which waste our resources and pollute the earth. They must be abolished and replaced by ones that drastically reduce pollution to an absolute minimum.

Raser: You think some pollution is inevitable then?

Marcuse: I don't know. That is a question for honest scientists and technologists. But I want to make clear what I mean by undoing the violation of nature. There is general agreement that an essential transformation of the environment and the humanization of life would imply the dissolution of the present cities and the creation of an architecture that reestablishes harmony between human habitation and the surrounding natural environment, as was the case in medieval towns in Europe where you still have the feeling of a symbiosis between man and nature. I don't see any reason why such a goal on a much higher level cannot be attained today. Certainly the automobile would have to be replaced as the chief means of transportation; noise and massive togetherness would have to be eliminated; population growth would have to be reduced. Instead of bulldozers tearing out trees and flattening the landscape they could follow the outlines of hills and valleys and respect the existing vegetation. So it doesn't mean the renunciation of machines but a more sensitive use of them.

Raser: As you are talking I am reminded of Norman O. Brown's idea of putting rational thought and technology underground and letting poetry and madness play on the surface. You sound sympathetic to this notion.

Marcuse: I do. But don't they already play on the surface? My difference with my friend Norman Brown is that in my view he is too mystical and escapist, particularly in his last book, *Love's Body.* He wants to abolish things which I am very much interested in retaining. For instance, if I understand his mysticism correctly it includes abolition of the distinction between male and female and creation of an androgynous person. He seems to see the distinction between male and female as the product of repression. I do not. It is the last difference I want to see abolished.

Keen: But Brown's language is so metaphorical it is hard to know whether he is advocating an end to genital sexuality or merely an end to the obsession with genital sexuality. I see a great similarity between your talk about new sensibilities and his idea that erotic consciousness involves breaking down the boundaries of the world through poetry—for instance, the boundaries between the body and the body politic.

Marcuse: But my basic objection is on political grounds. I want my concept of sensibility to be understood as a revolutionary concept, while *Love's Body* lives and takes refuge in a mystical universe.

Keen: I understand the difference between you and Brown in this way: when he talks about the body becoming erotic he is advocating wordplay and poetic vision. Therefore, he uses the word "body" metaphorically. When you speak of new sensibilities you are talking about a new relationship between the actual body and the body politic.

Marcuse: That's right. The eroticized body would rebel against exploitation, competition, false virility, conquest of space and violation of nature—all the established conditions. In this context we can say that the seeds of revolution lie in the emancipation of the senses [Marx]—but only when the senses become practical, productive forces in changing reality.

Keen: Then the real limitations to the development of sensibility are first in the community and only then in the psyche?

Marcuse: No, I would have to say it the other way around. You will be able to establish an authentic community only if it consists of human beings who have this new sensibility.

Raser: It seems like a closed circle to me.

Marcuse: Why?

Raser: If the structure of our psyche, that form of our consciousness, is so determined by the nature of the society in which we live I can't understand how you can have transformation of the individual without the transformation of society and vice versa.

Marcuse: I can't see it clearly either. But as we discussed before, you can be determined by your community and the determination can be a *negative* one.

Keen: So you may be determined to fight that which is determining you.

Marcuse: Yes.

Raser: Speaking about people who seem to be determined to resist the conditions that violate them, would you like to say anything about Angela Davis?

Marcuse: Well, I can only say what I have said before. Angela was my best student, or one of my three or four best students. She certainly has demonstrated beyond the shadow of a doubt that she is not only highly intelligent but also a highly sensitive human being. And if you were to ask me how she came to involve herself in this Soledad kidnapping and killing, my first reaction would be that as far as I know it is the highest principle of Anglo-Saxon law to consider a person innocent unless his or her guilt has been proven in a court of law. No such proof has been given. What do we actually know of her role in this affair? I suppose we know that two or three or four guns were bought and registered in her name. Is that enough to pass judgment? These guns were reportedly used in the kidnapping. Do we know whether she even knew about it? Do we know how and for what purpose she gave the guns away if she did give them away? We don't know any of that. Angela became active in black politics only relatively recently. While she was at Brandeis and until 1965 she was practically nonpolitical. Then she went to Frankfurt am Main for two years and when she came to La Jolla in 1967 she became involved immediately in the black movement. I don't find anything contradictory in an unusually high level of intelligence and sensitivity and becoming directly active in politics. Angela was brought up in Alabama and had experienced in her own mind, and probably in her own body, all the deprivations of the black people there. It was perfectly natural for her to become active in politics.

Raser: On a more general level how do you feel about the increasing turn toward violence on the part of the young militants, black and white?

Marcuse: As you probably know, I make a distinction between violence and counterviolence. The violence of aggression is different from the violence of defense not only in its means and goals but in the instinctual structure out of which it grows. If somebody assails you on the street you instinctively react with all possible defensive violence at your disposal. This is certainly quite different from the violence of shooting into a crowd or tear-gassing a demonstration. Let me say further, there are acts of violence by pseudopolitical radicals that I think are stupid, criminal, and only play into the hands of the Establishment.

Raser: Such as kidnapping and bombing?

Marcuse: I don't want to single out specific instances and groups. I leave it to your imagination which ones I mean. Terror has been effective historically only if the terrorizing groups are already in power. Think, for example, of the Jacobin terror during the French Revolution. That was terror exercised by the group holding power, not by a group fighting for it. Groups trying to gain power have never been able to use terror effectively for any length of time. Look at the anarchists and nihilists in Russia. It didn't help one bit.

Raser: You said a moment ago that you see defensive and aggressive violence growing out of different instinctual or psychic structures. Would you elaborate on that?

Marcuse: Let me state the matter in Freudian terms. The balance between the aggressive instinct and the life instinct is different in the two forms of violence. In offensive violence the aggressive component has practically subdued the erotic. In defensive violence it is the other way around. I admit that this is very speculative and abstract but it seems to make sense. There is the familiar example of the sublimation of aggressive instincts in the interests of the life instincts in Freud's interpretation of the surgeon. The surgeon's primary aggressiveness is sublimated by placing it in the service of the preservation of life.

In our society as a whole we have not succeeded in sublimating these aggressive instincts. They are rampant in a way that is unprecedented in the world. This is perhaps the most violent society that has existed in civilization. That is why we need the concept of the death instinct to explain what is going on. Unlike the Romans, the Medici, the Huns, or other societies characterized by high levels of interpersonal violence, in America violence is managed, manipulated and steered from above. It seems ingrained in the social institutions and relationships.

Keen: There seems to be a fine dividing line between violence and competitiveness. The Dutch historian Johan Huizinga in his classic book *Homo Ludens* says that the essence of play is the contest, or the *agon*. Can you conceive of a man in whom all violence, all competition was eradicated, a non-agonal man?

Marcuse: Certainly not. I cannot imagine a human society without what you call the agonal component. I don't think you can or ought to eliminate it because it brings great benefits. I can, for example, well envisage creative competition in refining and improving life on earth.

Raser: You don't think competition has an internal logic that leads it to escalate toward destructive violence?

Marcuse: No, I am afraid I am a terrible optimist. I realize that it does so today—that competition escalates toward violence—but if we can transform society this need not be the case.

Keen: Your thought has been subject to repeated attack from both the Right and the Left. Would you like to beat your critics to the punch with any self-criticism?

Marcuse: Yes. I must say about myself that I have probably emphasized unduly the most extreme and radical goals of the revolution-to-be. And I did not see to what extent we are already in the midst of what I call a preventive counterrevolution in which the established society is using all possible mental and physical means to suppress the radical opposition. So the heroic period of the militant student opposition is over. You see the heroic period was that of the hippies and Yippies. They did their thing. They did an indispensable job. They were heroes. They probably still are, but we have moved into a different period, a higher period in terms of historical sequence. We are now in the midst of the organized counterrevolution. You cannot have fun with fascism. What is required is a wholesale re-examination of the strategy of the movement.

Keen: So perhaps the strategy of confrontation politics is not appropriate in this stage?

Marcuse: That depends on what you mean by confrontation. The forms of confrontation are already changing. Take, for example, the case of the university. The sit-in, the occupation of buildings, and other forms of protest will now be met with legal action. The authorities will get injunctions, take the demonstrators to court, and sentence them to jail or heavy fines. This will finish many of the protesters for years. So it is becoming increasingly costly to use forms of confrontation which were still possible a year ago. Everyone in the movement has to reflect and think out what forms of effective confrontation and organization are still open to them in this period of counterrevolution.

Raser: Do you have ideas of possible directions?

Marcuse: That should be left to the movement. You know that I have always rejected the role of a father or grandfather of the movement. I am not its spiritual adviser. And I have enough confidence in the active and authentic students to believe that they can do that by themselves. They don't need me.

"MAR-COO-ZA, MAR-COO-ZA"

The hall is jammed with students. More gather outside around loudspeakers. One group bangs on the doors chanting, "Mar-coo-za, Mar-coo-za, Mar-coo-za." A tall man hunches over the podium waiting for the clamor to subside. He seems no fiery prophet and certainly no wild revolutionary; his body is aging and his eyes are tired. But then his rich voice reaches out and his charisma radiates. He tells of freedom and oppression, labor and love, of how art, sexuality and reason itself are enslaved by the work culture. He imagines an erotic world of play and joy, where man, nature and music will be spontaneous and free. He damns the "progressive moronization of humanity," and applause thunders. It is a familiar scene in a dozen countries, where, to his surprise and delight, the 72-year-old prophet from Berlin finds himself honored by questing and militant youth.

Herbert Marcuse's life has been full. Privileged son of an affluent Jewish family, he studied literature during his youth. After activist Army days he became disillusioned with the German revolution and turned to studies in philosophy. He received a Ph.D. from the University of Freiburg in 1922 and, like Sartre, became Martin Heidegger's assistant. Later, tantalized by the unorthodox ideas of young Wilhelm

Reich, he joined the Institute for Social Research in Geneva at the invitation of T. W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer when Nazism forced him to leave Germany in 1933. After a year he immigrated to the United States, taught at Columbia, and became a citizen in 1940. During World War II he worked for the Office of Strategic Services and later in the State Department. In 1951 he resumed his academic career at Columbia, Harvard and Brandeis, then, in 1965, moved to the University of California at San Diego.

Now he lives with his wife Inge in a tract house in La Jolla on the edge of the U.C.S.D. campus where he instructs graduate students in philosophy. Serene in old age, he puffs cigars, basks in the La Jolla sunshine and is intrigued by the inpouring of threat and abuse.

The New York Times Magazine has given him double billing as "the angel of the apocalypse" and "the most important philosopher alive." His writings with their twin themes of reason and eros begin to tell us why. In *Reason and Revolution* (1941) he explains Hegel's position to have been that a decisive turn in history came when, with the French Revolution, modern man first discovered reason's potential for challenging existing society. In *Eros and Civilization* (1955) he rejects Freud's thesis that while the infant's whole body is erotic, biological development and socialization must *necessarily* channel eroticism toward genital sexuality, thus releasing the rest of the body for the impersonal work of civilization. Marcuse claims that while this has been historically true it need not continue to be so, since a careful application of technology could now free man from scarcity and stuporous work. Like Marx he is convinced that once freed, man could awaken to new sensibilities. He could become playful and gentle, erotic in all his dimensions, no longer enamored of conquest, adventure and power. However, in *Soviet Marxism* (1958) he describes Stalinist Soviet reality as a brutal bureaucratization of Marx's humanistic vision.

In *One-Dimensional Man* (1964), his most popular work, he abjures today's technological states, arguing that all-encompassing affluence dulls the sensitivities and that the vaunted new sexuality is at best a sapping diversion and at worst an ally of profit and manipulation. He despairs at the extent to which all aspects of existence are co-opted by the repressive bureaucratic ethic. Even free time, art and play are harnessed to recreate energy needed for the enervating work of servicing the technoculture. How can this situation be changed? In an essay that troubles traditional liberals, "Repressive Tolerance" (1965), he gives some hints by modifying John Stuart Mill's contention that changes in social structure and values must occur only after discussion and testing in the marketplace of ideas. Marcuse reasons that this makes sense only if all participants in the discussion are rational, informed and free from indoctrination. That condition does not exist, for everywhere radical dissent is co-opted or repressed. To redress the situation, those who preach racism, hatred and intolerance should be restrained in turn. Finally, in *An Essay on Liberation* (1969), by far his most hopeful statement, he asserts that some youthful and alienated members of society—militant students and black people—are nurturing seeds of a new sensibility from which nonrepressive Utopia might eventually blossom.

Such ideas have stirred a prodigious uproar. He has been portrayed in *National Review* as an "apostle of chaos" and condemned by Arthur Schlesinger for extolling primitive emotion over restraint and reason. The American Legion demands that he be fired. Letters signed "K.K.K." have threatened his life. *Pravda* has damned him as a "false prophet" and "a werewolf." Sidney Hook sneers that "Marcuse would ruthlessly suppress all who disagree with him about how to make man and society freer"; Erich Fromm writes, "Marcuse seems to imply that because perversions—like sadism or coprophilia—cannot result in procreation, they are more 'free' than genital sexuality"; while *Fortune* deplores his "lush, cosmic, romanticism" which "reverberates ominously through the corridors of our time."

It figures. Critics like Hook and Fromm, despite their Marxism and humanism, do not really challenge the most fundamental premises of existing morality. Marcuse does. Like Picasso's later drawings, Marcuse's utopian thought conveys with bold strokes a vision of the erotic possibilities of human life. His concept of man as a playful animal longing to unfold his sensuous nature is not apt to delight *Pravda*, the K.K.K. or totalitarian moralists of any stripe. Then too, youths have found in Marcuse an eloquent voice for their instinctive disdain of the performance culture. So the troubled elders naturally view Marcuse, like Socrates, as a corrupter of the young. And indeed his writings can spur action. By confirming the feelings of those already disillusioned with industrial society's failure to nurture freedom, he furnishes the ideological genesis for developing alternative life-styles. But finally, much resistance to Marcuse is based not so much on his writings as upon his radical political stances. He champions student militants against the Establishment. He decries "increasing repression" under the Nixon Administration. He refuses to turn his back on his former pupil Angela Davis. His consistent espousal of radical action is an offense to liberals who have opted for sensible gradualism and modification rather than eradication of the political culture. He even puts down the triple consciousness of Charles Reich.

We come still closer to the man if we fall into the rhythm of his days. Eavesdrop as he admonishes a friend about his motorcycle because "it is a fascist invention which equates speed and power with virility and besides it makes a dreadful noise and pollutes terribly." Spot him in a peace march, protesting unacclaimed. Listen to the whirring air conditioner in his ugly cement-and-steel office join the roar of jets in drowning out his voice as he says, "We must get rid of our present cities." Watch the give and take, as he engages his rich and disciplined mind with the probing ones of his students, leading them into new dimensions of awareness. Discover him strolling beneath the cliffs on Torrey Pines Beach hand in hand with his wife. Observe his courtly joking with the secretaries who provide the final barrier against the always curious and often hostile public. He overflows with a joyous lustiness, with *eros* if you will.

Eros is the key to his thought. His work is grounded in Freud's concepts of Eros and Thanatos, the instinct for life and the seduction of easeful death. But Freud was obsessed with civilization's repression of the life instinct; Marcuse dreams of a miracle of reason and imagination whereby man could escape his bondage as a work animal and search out the road to Utopia. Hegel fathered his commitment to reason—the *logos*. It is reason that arbitrates Eros and Thanatos. Through reason the death instinct can be sublimated to the service of life. Through reason men can learn to throw off the shackles of repression. And then through reason liberated man can use science and art to create a society in which eroticism can pervade his whole being and flood his relationships with nature and with his fellows. But this eroticism is not the rampantly self-seeking sexuality described by Freud, nor is it the metaphorical union of all fancied by Norman Brown [see "Norman O. Brown's Body," *P.T.*, August]. It is instead a "creative human existence" disciplined by reason, enriched with passion, suffused with joy. Repressive and alienating societies transcended, man could fully develop his sensibilities and flower in all his dimensions. His body could be transformed into an instrument of pleasure; his mind could expand to higher levels of consciousness: Psyche and *logos* could bloom.

In some ways Marcuse's visions of revolution and Utopia differ little from fundamentalist dreams of redemption and heaven. He lives within a curious boundary. He is a philosopher in the European romantic tradition and his thought is largely unaffected by the work of natural and behavioral scientists, from Charles Darwin to Loren Eiseley, who have begun to explore the sometimes brutal evolutionary drive-mechanisms by which life seeks ever more complexity, ever new frontiers of consciousness. Nor does his Utopia reflect the growing evidence that love and aggression are not really in opposition, but are fundamentally entwined in society, in the psyche, and even in the body's chemistry. Untouched by these new visions of the dynamic of life, Marcuse is restricted to Marx's "end of history" and Freud's "infantile sexuality." He almost seems to want a world in which man will not respond joyously to challenge, risk and danger. Can he really picture a natural order in which "animals do not eat each other"? If so, isn't he indeed dreaming of a final haven and the end of evolution's embattled quest? Is his eroticism then a closed circle, trapped in immanence, going nowhere? Or, on the other hand, how can we be sure that once they are liberated, man's erotic instincts will not run wild?

The deeper you go in questions with him, the more he enlivens the imagination. His vision may be limited, but it is luminous and steady. It is a vision of man at last using his vast capacities and accomplishments to maximize human joy. And "without vision," said an earlier prophet, "the people perish."

—John Raser

VII

LATE PHILOSOPHICAL/ POLITICAL REFLECTIONS

ECOLOGY AND THE CRITIQUE OF MODERN SOCIETY*[1]

Thank you for the warm welcome. I am glad to be able to address the wilderness class. Actually, I'm not sure what to say because I don't see any more problems. As you know, President Carter has turned over some thirty-six million acres of wilderness land to commercial development. There isn't much wilderness left to preserve. But we still will try, nonetheless.

What I propose to do is to discuss the destruction of nature in the context of the general destructiveness which characterizes our society. I will then trace the roots of this destructiveness in individuals themselves; that is, I will examine psychological destructiveness within individuals.

My discussion today relies largely upon basic psychoanalytic concepts developed by Sigmund Freud. At the outset, I would like to define, in brief

* *Editors' note*:
"Ecology and the Critique of Modern Society" provides a text in article form of a lecture that Marcuse gave to a wilderness class in California, which was first published in *Capitalism, Nature, and Socialism*, vol. 3, no. 3 (September 1992) pp. 29–38. The text describes within the ecology movement a transformation of radical ecological critiques into corporate friendly solutions – a trend that Marcuse resists. The lecture can be read along with Marcuse's 1972 "Ecology and Revolution," presented at a symposium on the topic in Paris and translated and published in the September 1972 of the journal *Liberation*; it is also found in *Herbert Marcuse and the New Left, volume* 3, *Collected Papers of Herbert Marcuse*, edited with Introduction by Douglas Kellner (London and New York: Routledge, 2005) pp. 173–77. Following Marcuse's lecture, we include *Commentaries on Marcuse and Ecology* (pp. 213ff) by Andrew Feenberg, Joel Kovel, Douglas Kellner, and C. Fred Alford. The commentaries followed Marcuse's text in the same issue of *Capitalism, Nature and Socialism*, vol. 3, no. 3 (September 1992), pp. 38–48, from which we extracted Marcuse's talk.

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[1] "Ecology and the Critique of Modern Society," a talk delivered shortly before Herbert Marcuse's death in 1979, is published here for the first time, with the gracious consent of Peter Marcuse. Copyright © 1992 by Peter Marcuse.

and oversimplified manner, the most important Freudian concepts I use. There is, first, Freud's hypothesis that the living organism is shaped by two primary drives, or instincts. One of these he called Eros, erotic energy, life instincts; these terms are more or less synonymous. The other primary drive he called Thanatos, destructive energy, the wish to destroy life, to annihilate life. Freud attributed this wish to a primary death instinct in human beings. The only other psychoanalytic concept I want briefly to explain is what Freud calls the reality principle. The reality principle can simply be defined as the sum total of those norms and values which are supposed to govern normal behavior in an established society.

The last thing I will do today is briefly to sketch the prospects for radical change in today's society. Radical change I define as a change, not only in the basic institutions and relationships of an established society, but also in individual consciousness in such a society. Radical change may even be so deep as to affect the individual unconscious. This definition enables us to distinguish radical change of an entire social system from changes within that system. In other words, radical change must entail both a change in society's institutions, and also a change in the character structure predominant among individuals in that society.

In my view, our society today is characterized by a prevalence in its individual members of a destructive character structure. But how can we speak of such a phenomenon? How can we identify destructive character structure in our society today? I suggest that certain symbolic events, symbolic issues, symbolic actions illustrate and illuminate society's depth dimension. This is that dimension wherein society reproduces itself in the consciousness of individuals and in their unconscious as well. This depth dimension is one foundation for maintenance of society's established political and economic order.

I will offer three examples of such symbolic events, illustrations of society's depth dimension, in a moment. First, I want to point out that the destructiveness of which I have spoken, the destructive character structure so prominent in our society today, must be seen in the context of the institutionalized destructiveness characteristic of both foreign and domestic affairs. This institutionalized destructiveness is well-known, and examples thereof are easy to provide. They include the constant increase in the military budget at the expense of social welfare, the proliferation of nuclear installations, the general poisoning and polluting of our life environment, the blatant subordination of human rights to the requirements of global strategy, and the threat of war in case of a challenge to this strategy. This institutionalized destruction is both open and legitimate. It provides the context within which the individual reproduction of destructiveness takes place.

Let me turn to my three examples of symbolic events or happenings, instances which illuminate society's depth dimension. First, the fate in federal court of a state nuclear regulatory statute. This statute would have placed a moratorium on all nuclear installations in the state which lacked adequate means of preventing deadly atomic waste. The judge in question invalidated this statute because he held it to be unconstitutional. Brutal interpretation: *viva la muerte*! Long live death! Second, the letter on Auschwitz which appeared in a large newspaper. In this letter, a woman complained that the publication of a photograph of Auschwitz on the first page of the paper was (and I quote) "a matter of extremely bad taste." What was the point, the woman asked, of bringing up this horror again? Did people still need to be conscious of Auschwitz? Brutal interpretation: forget it. Third and last, the term "nazi surfer." Along with this term goes the symbol of the swastika. Both the phrase and the symbol are proudly adopted by, and applied to, surfers (and I quote) "totally dedicated to surfing." Brutal interpretation: not necessary. The avowedly (and, I take it, sincerely) unpolitical intent of "nazi surfer" does not cancel the inner unconscious affinity with the most destructive regime of the century which is here expressed as a matter of linguistic identification.

Let me return to my theoretical discussion. The primary drive toward destructiveness resides in individuals themselves, as does the other primary drive, Eros. The balance between these two drives also is found within individuals. I refer to the balance between their will and wish to live, and their will and wish to destroy life, the balance between the life instinct and the death instinct. Both drives, according to Freud, are constantly fused within the individual. If one drive is increased, this comes at the expense of the other drive. In other words, any increase in destructive energy in the organism leads, mechanically and necessarily, to a weakening of Eros, to a weakening of the life instinct. This is an extremely important notion.

The fact that these primary drives are individual drives may seem to commit and restrict any theory of social change to the matter of individual psychology. How can we make the connection between individual psychology and social psychology? How can we make the transition from individual psychology to the instinctual base of a whole society, nay, of a whole civilization? I suggest that the contrast and opposition between individual psychology and social psychology is misleading. There is no separation between the two. To varying degrees, all individuals are socialized human beings. Society's prevailing reality principle governs the manifestation even of individual primary drives, as well as those of the ego and of the subconscious. Individuals introject the values and goals which are incorporated in social institutions, in the social division of labor, in the established power structure, and so on. And conversely, social institutions and policies reflect (both in affirmation and negation) the socialized needs of individuals, which in this way become their own needs.

This is one of the most important processes in contemporary society. In effect, needs which actually are offered to individuals by institutions, and in many cases are imposed upon individuals, end up becoming the individuals' own needs and wants. This acceptance of superimposed needs makes for an affirmative character structure. It makes for affirmation of and conformity to the established system of needs, whether that affirmation and conformity are voluntary or enforced. In fact, even if approbation gives way to negation, even if it gives way to non-conformist social behavior, this behavior is largely determined by what the non-conformist denies and opposes. To accept and affirm externally superimposed and introjected needs—this negative introjection makes for radical character structure.

Radical character structure. I want to give you now, in psychoanalytic terms, a definition of radical character structure—which will lead us immediately into our problem today.

A radical character structure is defined, on a Freudian basis, as a preponderance in the individual of life instincts over the death instinct, a preponderance of erotic energy over destructive drives.

In the development of Western civilization, the mechanisms of introjection have been refined and enlarged to such an extent that the socially required affirmative character structure normally does not have to be brutally enforced, as is the case under authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. In democratic societies, introjection (along with the forces of law and order, ever ready and legitimate) suffice to keep the system going. Moreover, in the advanced industrial countries, affirmative introjection and a conformist consciousness are facilitated by the fact that they proceed on rational grounds and have a material foundation. I refer to the existence of a high standard of living for the majority of the privileged population, and to a considerably relaxed social and sexual morality. These facts, to a considerable extent, compensate for the intensified alienation in work and leisure which characterizes this society. In other words, conformist consciousness provides not only an imaginary compensation but also a real one. This militates against the rise of a radical character structure.

In the so-called consumer society, however, contemporary satisfaction appears as vicarious and repressive when it is contrasted with the real possibility of liberation here and now. It appears repressive when contrasted with what Ernst Bloch once called the concrete utopia. Bloch's notion of concrete utopia refers to a society where human beings no longer have to live their lives as means for earning a living in alienated performances. Concrete utopia: "utopia" because such a society is a real historical possibility.

Now, in a democratic state, the effectiveness and extent of affirmative introjection can be measured. It can be measured by the level of support for the existing society. This support is expressed, for example, in election results, in the absence of organized radical opposition, in public opinion polls, in the acceptance of aggression and corruption as normal procedures in business and administration. Once introjection, under the weight of compensatory satisfaction, has taken root in the individual, people can be granted a considerable freedom of co-determination. People will, for good reasons, support or at least suffer their leaders, even to the point at which self-destruction is threatened. Under the conditions of advanced industrial society, satisfaction is always tied to destruction. The domination of nature is tied to the violation of nature. The search for new sources of energy is tied to the poisoning of the life environment. Security is tied to servitude, national interest to global expansion. Technical progress is tied to progressive manipulation and control of human beings.

And yet, the potential forces of social change are there. Those forces present the potential for emergence of a character structure in which emancipatory drives gain ascendancy over compensatory ones. This tendency appears today as a primary rebellion of mind and body, of consciousness and of the unconscious. It appears as a rebellion against the destructive productivity of established society and against the intensified repression and frustration bound up with this productivity. These phenomena may well foreshadow a subversion of the instinctual bases of modern civilization.

Before briefly sketching the historically new features of this rebellion, I shall explicate the concept of destructiveness as applied to our society. The concept of destruction is obscured and anaesthetized by the fact that destruction itself is internally joined to production and productivity. The latter, even as it consumes and destroys human and natural resources, also increases the material and cultural satisfactions available to the majority of the people. Destructiveness today rarely appears in its pure form without proper rationalization and compensation. Violence finds a well provided, manageable outlet in popular culture, in the use and abuse of machine power, and in the cancerous growth of the defense industry. The last of these is made palatable by the invocation of "national interest," which has long since become flexible enough to be applied the world over.

No wonder, then, that under these circumstances it is difficult to develop a non-conformist consciousness, a radical character structure. No wonder that organized opposition is difficult to sustain. No wonder such opposition is constantly impeded by despair, illusion, escapism, and so on. For all these reasons, today's rebellion becomes visible only in small groups which cut across social classes—for example, the student movement, women's liberation, citizen initiatives, ecology, collectives, communes, and so on. Moreover, especially in Europe, this rebellion assumes a consciously emphasized personal character, methodically practiced. It features a preoccupation with one's own psyche, one's own drives, with self-analysis, the celebration of one's own problems, that famous voyage into man's own private internal world. This return into oneself is loosely connected with the political world. Personal difficulties and problems and doubts are (without negation) related and explained in terms of social conditions, and vice versa. Politics is personalized. We see "politics in the first person."

The social and political function of this primary, personal radicalization of consciousness is highly ambivalent. On the one hand, it indicates depoliticization, retreat, and escape. But on the other hand, this return to the self opens or recaptures a new dimension of social change. This dimension is that of the subjectivity and the consciousness of individuals. It is individuals, after all, who (en masse or as individuals) remain the agents of historical change. Thus, contemporary small-group rebellion is characterized by an often desperate effort to counteract the neglect of the individual found in traditional radical practice. Moreover, this "politics in the first person" also counteracts a society of effective integration. In modern society, the process of affirmative introjection equalizes individuals on the surface. Their introjected needs and aspirations are universalized; they become general, common throughout the society. Change, however, presupposes a disintegration of this universality.

Change presupposes a gradual subversion of existing needs so that, in individuals themselves, their interest in compensatory satisfaction comes to be superseded by emancipatory needs. These emancipatory needs are not new needs. They are not simply a matter of speculation or prediction. These needs are present, here and now. They permeate the lives of individuals. These needs accompany individual behavior and question it, but they are present only in a form which is more or less effectively repressed and distorted. Such emancipatory needs include at least the following. First, the need for drastically reducing socially necessary alienated labor and replacing it with creative work. Second, the need for autonomous free time instead of directed leisure. Third, the need for an end to role playing. Fourth, the need for receptivity, tranquility and abounding joy, instead of the constant noise of production.

Evidently, the satisfaction of these emancipatory needs is incompatible with the established state capitalist and state socialist societies. It is incompatible with social systems reproduced through full-time alienated labor and self-propelling performances, both productive and unproductive. The specter which haunts advanced industrial society today is the obsolescence of full-time alienation. Awareness of this specter is diffused among the entire population to a greater or lesser degree. Popular awareness of this obsolescence shows forth in the weakening of those operational values which today govern the behavior society requires. The Puritan work ethic is weakening, for example, as is patriarchal morality. Legitimate business converges with the Mafia; the demands of the unions shift from wage increases to reduction in working time; and so on.

That an alternative quality of life is possible has been proven. Bloch's concrete utopia can be achieved. Nonetheless, a large majority of the population continues to reject the very idea of radical change. Part of the reason for this is the overwhelming power and compensatory force of established society. Another part of the reason is the introjection of this society's obvious advantages. But a further reason is found in the basic instinctual structure of individuals themselves. Thus we come, finally, to a brief discussion of the roots of this repulsion from historically possible change in individuals themselves.

As I mentioned at the outset, Freud argues that the human organism exhibits a primary drive for a state of existence without painful tension, for a state of freedom from pain. Freud located this state of fulfillment and freedom at the very beginning of life, at life in the womb. Consequently, he viewed the drive for a state of painlessness as a wish to return to a previous stage of life, prior to conscious organic life. He attributed this wish to return to previous stages of life to a death and destruction instinct. This death and destruction instinct strives to attain a negation of life through externalization. That means that this drive is directed away from the individual, away from himself or herself. It is directed to life outside the individual. This drive is externalized; if it were not, we simply would have a suicidal situation. It is directed towards the destruction of other living things, of other living beings, and of nature. Freud called this drive "a long detour to death."

Can we now speculate, against Freud, that the striving for a state of freedom from pain pertains to Eros, to the life instincts, rather than to the death instinct? If so, this wish for fulfillment would attain its goal not in the beginning of life, but in the flowering and maturity of life. It would serve, not as a wish to return, but as a wish to progress. It would serve to protect and enhance life itself. The drive for painlessness, for the pacification of existence, would then seek fulfillment in protective care for living things. It would find fulfillment in the recapture and restoration of our life environment, and in the restoration of nature, both external and within human beings. This is just the way in which I view today's environmental movement, today's ecology movement.

The ecology movement reveals itself in the last analysis as a political and psychological movement of liberation. It is political because it confronts the concerted power of big capital, whose vital interests the movement threatens. It is psychological because (and this is a most important point) the pacification of external nature, the protection of the life-environment, will also pacify nature within men and women. A successful environmentalism will, within individuals, subordinate destructive energy to erotic energy.

Today, the strength of this transcending force of Eros towards fulfillment is dangerously reduced by the social organization of destructive energy. Consequently, the life instincts become all but powerless to spur a revolt against the ruling reality principle. What the force of Eros is powerful enough to do is the following. It serves to move a non-conformist group, together with other groups of non-silent citizens, to a protest very different from traditional forms of radical protest. The appearance in this protest of new language, new behavior, new goals, testifies to the psychosomatic roots thereof. What we have is a politicization of erotic energy. This, I suggest, is the distinguishing mark of most radical movements today. These movements do not represent class struggle in the traditional sense. They do not constitute a struggle to replace one power structure with another. Rather, these radical movements are existential revolts against an obsolete reality principle. They are a revolt carried by the mind and body of individuals themselves. A result which is intellectual as well as instinctual. A revolt in which the whole organism, the very soul of the human being, becomes political. A revolt of the life instincts against organized and socialized destruction.

Once again I must point out the ambivalence of this otherwise hopeful rebellion. The individualization and somatization of radical protest, its concentration on the sensibility and feelings of individuals, conflicts with the organization and self-discipline which is required by an effective political praxis. The struggle to change those objective, economic and political conditions which are the basis for the psychosomatic, subjective transformation seems to be weakening. The body and soul of individuals have always been expendable, ready to be sacrificed (or to sacrifice themselves) for a reified, hypostatized whole—be that the State, the Church, or the Revolution. Sensibility and imagination are no match for the realists who determine our life. In other words, a certain powerlessness seems to be an inherent characteristic of any radical opposition which remains outside the mass organizations of political parties, trade unions, and so on.

Modern radical protest may seem condemned to marginal significance when compared with the effectiveness of mass organizations. However, such powerlessness has always been the initial quality of groups and individuals which upheld human rights and human goals over and above the so-called realistic goals. The weakness of these movements is perhaps a token of their authenticity. Their isolation is perhaps a token of the desperate efforts needed to break out of the all-embracing system of domination, to break the continuum of realistic, profitable destruction.

The return which modern radical movements have made, their return into the psychosomatic domain of life-instincts, their return to the image of the concrete utopia, may help to redefine the human goal of radical change. And I will venture to define that goal in one short sentence. The goal of radical change today is the emergence of human beings who are physically and mentally incapable of inventing another Auschwitz.

The objection to this lofty goal which is sometimes made, namely the objection that this goal is incompatible with the nature of man, testifies only to one thing. It testifies to the degree to which this objection has succumbed to a conformist ideology. This latter ideology presents the historical continuum of repression and regression as a law of nature. Against that ideology, I insist that there is no such thing as an immutable human nature. Over and above the animal level, human beings are malleable, body and mind, down to their very instinctual structure. Men and women can be computerized into robots, yes—but they can also refuse. Thank you.

COMMENTARIES

I.

From this last speech of Marcuse's one can get a good idea what he was all about. The specifics of doctrine are less important than the tone and thrust.

Marcuse was an old man when he gave this speech. Most of us knew him only as an old man. He spoke slowly, forcefully, with both seriousness and irony, from out of the depths of history to us who still had no history. Those depths were visible on his face, in his strongly accented voice. An auditorium full of young students listening to this powerful, self-assured indictment of the system must have felt the force of a judgment made from out of those depths, and taken hope.

Marcuse did not express mere personal opinions as we might have; he had the authority of an intellectual and political tradition. On that basis he unhesitatingly confronted the contemporary world, however shocking or bizarre his claims might seem to the conformist consensus of both the establishment and the Left. And often he was right, on the War in Vietnam, nuclear energy, the bankruptcy of socialism in the Soviet Union, the greatness and the limitations of the New Left, the decline of the proletarian threat to capitalism, the coming importance of feminism and ecology.

The central question of Marcuse's thought appears clearly in this short speech: from what standpoint can society be judged now that it has succeeded in feeding its members? Recognizing the arbitrariness of mere moral outrage, Marx measured capitalism by reference to an immanent criterion, the unsatisfied needs of the population. But that approach collapses as soon as capitalism proves itself capable of delivering the goods. Then the (fulfilled) needs of the individuals legitimate the established system. Radicalism means opposition, not just to the failures and deficiencies of that system, but to its very successes.

It takes astonishing nerve to persist in this challenge. But as Marcuse once wrote, "obstinacy [is] a genuine quality of philosophical thought."[2] To be obstinate means to reject the easy reconciliation with society, to keep a *sense of reality* based on longer time spans, deeper tensions, higher goals, than those recognized today by a fashionable "post-modernism."

Marcuse maintained a critical stance by reference to several parallel registers of phenomenon. First, there are some hard facts that don't go away: the persistence of war, hunger, periodic ecological catastrophes. Second, there is the aesthetic failure of contemporary society, the undeniable contradiction between its daily ugliness and criteria of beauty elaborated in millennia of artistic endeavor, both in folk and high art. Third, there is the equally undeniable fact of massive manipulation of consciousness through the media and consumerist ideology. Fourth, there are the self-evident demands for fulfilling work and security of life that remain unmet for the vast majority. Finally, there is the proliferation of signs and symptoms of deep psychic disturbances and dissatisfactions beneath the surface glow of success. These signs and symptoms take both personal and political forms; indeed the distinction between these two forms is often difficult to make.

What converts this list of discontents into an indictment of the system is the contention that the benefits of our society are won at this price, that unlike isolated "problems" that could be solved piecemeal, these issues reveal the inherent limitations of contemporary capitalism.

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[2] Herbert Marcuse, *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968) p. 143.

This society, Marcuse argues, has the material potential to "pacify" existence but artificially maintains competition and violence as the basis for domination and inequality. As he put it in his last speech: "The specter which haunts advanced industrial society today is the obsolescence of full-time alienation." And further: radical political struggle today consists in "existential revolts against an obsolete reality principle."

Marcuse's concept of "*obsolescence*" situates his critique historically. The revolutionary judgment has always been made in the future anterior tense, as when Saint-Just imagined what "cold posterity" *will have said* concerning the absurdity of monarchy. Thus Marcuse is not merely complaining about a system he doesn't like. He is imagining how it will appear to a backward glance rooted in the wider context of values evolved over past centuries and destined to achieve realization in future ones. The obsolescence of that system will be obvious in this hypothetical future, justifying the obstinacy of those who persisted in critique through these difficult times.

With the collapse of Soviet communism, the last alibi of historicist opposition to capitalism has died. We can no longer rest our case for change, if we ever did, on the realized achievements of "socialism." We are one step closer to a world in which only Marcuse's type of principled opposition is available. His thought has never been more relevant.

—**Andrew Feenberg**

II.

It is good to see these words of Herbert Marcuse find the light of day, where they may fertilize the radical ecology movement. Marcuse has been in eclipse for some years, but his time may be returning. He fell from grace on the Left when the counter-culture movements fizzled and became co-opted, and when a politics of scarcity/survival replaced his politics predicated on abundance. However, the current necessity to rethink the socialist project from its roots up brings the vision of Marcuse into a new focus. Marcuse has never been irrelevant; but the radical subjects upon which his discourse touched—students and Third World revolutionaries—proved unable to bear the torch of emancipation. Yet the defeat of certain forces does not invalidate the cause for which they fought. The emancipation of humanity is a project as old as history itself, and it does not stop because one contingent or another may have been turned back. It finds, rather, new subjects out of new historical conjunctures to pick up the thread of struggle.

Herbert Marcuse was above all a philosopher of emancipation, who heightened our consciousness as to the ontological conditions through which people could free themselves. He also remained faithful to the spirit of Marx, however much Marxists of his day may have anathematized him for his heterodoxy. Within his frame of reference Marcuse was able to thematize the philosophical foundation of ecological politics: the relations between humanity and nature. As radical ecology becomes the emerging revolutionary subject for our time—and, given the nature of the environmental crisis, for the foreseeable future—Marcuse once again comes into focus. I would even say that we need Marcuse's emphasis upon emancipation more than ever, given the fact that radical ecology has all too often shown a proclivity to move rightwards, even to degenerate into fascism.

Marcuse's lecture continues along the lines of his reading of Freud in *Eros and Civilization*. This adds an essential dimension to ecological discourse. Freud gave us a way of speaking of the body as a site of lived experience—that body which is the actual point of co-existence between the human and natural worlds and which, therefore, must be reclaimed in any emancipated relation to nature. We can be certain Marcuse's reading is one which Freud himself would have rejected and of which the psychoanalytic establishment is utterly incapable. Like Freud, Marcuse grounds the human subject in nature through the postulation of "instincts." But Marcuse's notion of instincts is unlike anything devised by conventional psychoanalysis. Where Freudian thought sees humanity limited from below by its animal nature, Marcuse sees instinct as the potentiality of a fully humanized nature. Instinct is not the pre-human, but the not-yet-human. Marcuse derives this from Freud's metatheoretical speculations in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* as to Eros and Thanatos, the instincts of life and death. However, so radical is the departure from Freud that the maneuver may be seen as mainly heuristic, Marcuse's way of finding a theoretical wedge with which to cleave an impasse within Marxist discourse.

Marcuse's intervention is peculiarly strategic, in that radical ecology needs to comprehend the boundary between humanity and nature if it is to undo the domination of nature. A discourse of instinct, however, even one so spectacularly radical as that of Marcuse, falls short. Ultimately, his Eros becomes a non-specific "life force," beyond the human being, which pulls the human being towards itself, i.e., a kind of god. There is even a kind of crypto-mechanism implied by this instinct which somehow gives energy to the human subject. Where is the Other in Marcuse, or intersubjectivity? Where is the foundation of sociality in this body, which supposedly strives to protect nature?

We need to see rather how the body is already humanized nature, which is to say, fully dialectical. Human beings must live by positing some distinction between themselves and nature: language itself is formed in this space as the precondition for sociality, and encodes the world with human meaning. Both the body, i.e., nature claimed by the self, and the external nature which is not claimed by the self, are drawn into this zone of difference. But we have a choice, whether to *split* ourselves from nature and make it radically Other—the classical Cartesian attitude out of which capitalism has grown; or whether to *differentiate* ourselves from nature, that is, to recognize it in ourselves, as body, and to recognize ourselves in it, as those who care for the earth. Splitting characterizes both the Freudian view of instinct as the animal *id* to the human *ego*, as well as a view which denies all instinct-like terms and sees humans as entirely socially constructed. Differentiation, on the other hand, comprehends Marcuse's view of instinct, in which nature and humanity mutually transform each other, but adds to it a specifically human dimension. Thus splitting negates its opposite, while differentiation engages its opposite in a dialectic, preserving difference but radically transforming both self and other. This is a very radical path, as it requires the systematic undoing of all forms of domination to complete. At the other end will be a fully humanized being, capable of emancipation as well as caring for the earth.

—Joel Kovel

III.

Herbert Marcuse's late 1970s talk articulates his vision of liberation and sense of the importance of ecology for the radical project. The lecture argues that genuine ecology requires a transformation of human nature, as well as the preservation and protection of external nature from capitalist and state communist pollution and destruction. Rooting his vision of human liberation in the Frankfurt School notion of the embeddedness of human beings in nature, Marcuse believed that until aggression and violence within human beings were diminished, there necessarily would be continued destruction of nature, as well as violence against other human beings. Consequently, Marcuse stressed the importance of radical psychology and transforming inner nature, both to preserve external nature and to diminish violence in society.

Marcuse's ecological vision is rooted in his reflections on the early Marx. The author of one of the first reviews of Marx's 1844 *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts,* Marcuse rooted his philosophy in the early Marx's philosophical naturalism and humanism.[3] In Marx's anthropology, taken up and developed by Marcuse, the human being was a natural being, part and parcel of nature. Capitalism, in this view, produced an alienation of human beings by alienating individuals from many-sided activity by forcing upon them a specialized and one-sided capitalist division of labor. Under capitalism, life is organized around labor, around the production of commodities for private profit, and individuals are forced to engage in external, coercive, and one-sided activity. For Marx, by contrast, humans are many-sided human beings with a wealth of needs and potentialities which are suppressed under capitalism. The human being is both an individual and social being for Marx and capitalism neither allows for the full development of individuality, nor for the possibility of diverse, social and cooperative relationships. Instead, it promotes greed, competition, and asocial behavior.

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[3] See Herbert Marcuse, "The Foundations of Historical Materialism," in *Studies in Critical Philosophy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973), originally published in 1932. I discuss this essay and other elements of Marcuse's theory in *Herbert Marcuse and the Crisis of Marxism* (London and Berkeley: Macmillan Press and University of California Press, 1984).

Marcuse followed this early Marxian critique of capitalism throughout his life, focusing analysis on how contemporary capitalism produced false needs and repressed both individuality and sociality. He also followed the early Marx's concept of human beings as desiring beings, conceptualizing desire as part of nature, exemplified both in erotic desire for other human beings and instinctive needs for freedom and happiness. During the late 1940s and 1950s, Marcuse radicalized his anthropology, incorporating the Freudian instinct theory into his Marxist view of human nature, producing a version of Freudo-Marxism that he stuck with until the end, as is evident in "Ecology and the Critique of the Modern Society," which uses the Freudian instinct theory to criticize contemporary forms of destruction of the environment.

Marcuse sympathized, though not uncritically, with the environmental movements since the early 1970s. In a symposium on "Ecology and Revolution" in Paris in 1972, some of which was translated in the September 1972 issue of *Liberation*, Marcuse argued that the most militant groups of the period were fighting "against the war crimes being committed against the Vietnamese people." Yet he saw ecology as an important component of that struggle, arguing that "the violation of the earth is a vital aspect of the counterrevolution." For Marcuse, the U.S. intervention in Vietnam was waging "ecocide" against the environment, as well as genocide against the people: "It is no longer enough to do away with people living now; life must also be denied to those who aren't even born yet by burning and poisoning the earth, defoliating the forests, blowing up the dikes. This bloody insanity will not alter the ultimate course of the war but it is a very clear expression of where contemporary capitalism is at: the cruel waste of productive resources in the imperialist homeland goes hand in hand with the cruel waste of destructive forces and consumption of commodities of death manufactured by the war industry."

In his major writings, Marcuse consistently followed the Frankfurt School's emphasis on reconciliation with nature as an important component of human liberation, and also stressed the importance of peace and harmony among human beings as the goal of an emancipated society.[4] Marcuse consistently called for a new concept of socialism that made peace, joy, happiness, freedom, and oneness with nature a primary component of an alternative society. Producing new institutions, social relations, and culture would make possible, in his liberatory vision, the sort of non-alienated labor, erotic relations, and harmonious community envisaged by Fourier and the utopian socialists. A radical ecology, then, which relentlessly criticized environmental destruction, as well as the destruction of human beings, and that struggled for a society without violence, destruction, and pollution was part of Marcuse's vision of liberation.

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[4] On the Frankfurt School, see Douglas Kellner, *Critical Theory, Marxism, and Modernity* (London and Baltimore: Polity and Johns Hopkins Press, 1989).

The lecture on ecology published here was presented in California to a wilderness class. Marcuse sarcastically opens by stating that there may no longer be a problem of preserving the wilderness, as President Carter had turned over some thirty-six million acres of wilderness land to commercial development. This trend accelerated tremendously during the Reagan era, in which his Secretary of the Interior, James Watt, wanted to turn over all government lands and wilderness preserves to commercial development. Had Marcuse lived through the Reagan era, we would no doubt have benefited from some radical Marcusean critiques of this monstrous epoch.

There was, for Marcuse, a contradiction between capitalist productivity and nature, for in its quest for higher profits and the domination of nature, capitalism inevitably destroyed nature. Capitalist production manifested an unleashing of aggressive and destructive energies which destroyed life and polluted nature. In this process, human beings are transformed into tools of labor and become instruments of destruction. Introjecting capitalism's aggressive, competitive, and destructive impulses, individuals themselves engage in ever more virulent destruction of the natural environment and anything (individuals, communities, and nations) which stands in the way of its productive exploitation of resources, people, and markets.

The relevance of Marcuse's argument should be apparent in the aftermath of the ecocide and genocide of the Persian Gulf war. While ecologists warned from the beginning of the disastrous environmental effects of a Gulf war, establishment scientists claimed that potential oil spills and fires did not threaten more than regional destruction. Evidently, Bush and his War Lords allowed no environmental restraints on their high-tech Iraqi massacre and destruction of the fragile Gulf region environment. In late January, 1991, Bush signed an order freeing the military from the burden of producing environmental impact reports, which was required after the environmental effects of the Vietnam war became known. Henceforth, free of all restrictions, the Bush/Schwarzkopf war machine merrily bombed Iraqi nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons facilities, and attempted to destroy Iraq's oil industry, causing severe fires throughout Iraq; the environmental damage caused by the U.S.-led coalition bombing was so severe that the Bush administration directed all Federal agencies not to reveal to the public any information concerning environmental damage. The U.S. would release no satellite photos of the region and refused to disclose the effects of U.S.-led coalition bombing on the region.[5]

Thus both the Iraqi and U.S. forces were responsible for environmental terrorism and both sides committed horrific acts of human and environmental destruction. Indeed, war itself in the high-tech age *is* environmental terrorism and ecocide as advanced technology destroys the earth and annihilates human beings. From this perspective, the high-tech massacre in the Gulf region reveals the insanity of the Western project of the domination of nature, in which a military machine sees the economic and military infrastructure and people of Iraq as objects to dominate and even destroy. The human and ecological holocaust discloses the importance of Marcuse's argument that individuals must change their very sensibilities and instinctual structure so that they can no longer commit or tolerate such atrocities against nature and other human beings. The euphoria in destruction and wide-spread support of U.S. Gulf War crimes in the general population shows the extent of societal regression during the conservative hegemony of the last years and the need for re-education and humanization of the population. "Postmodern" cynicism and nihilism will not help us deal with such problems; thus we must return to the classical thinkers of the emancipatory tradition to guide us in the struggles ahead and out of the long night of darkness in the era of Reagan and Bush.

—Douglas Kellner

IV.

I have not read much Marcuse in recent years, and after reading this lecture I shall read more. Not because I believe that most of what he says is correct, or even because I believe that his fundamental thesis, that human nature can be transformed and recreated in radically new ways, is correct. Rather because the simplicity and power of his thought is more impressive and more important today than ever before. Today we live in an intellectual world, at least within the academy, in which cleverness of expression seems to have become the highest value. Texts are equated with life under the doctrine of intertextuality (texts refer only to other texts, never the world), and the cynical mimicry of the one-dimensionality of advanced industrial society (for example, Baudrillard's "hyperreality") substitutes for criticism. Most unfortunately, these approaches have become identified with a type of intellectual radicalism, as though radicalism had nothing to do with a radical analysis of real existing society. Marcuse's "Ecology and the Critique of Modern Society" is a breath of fresh air.

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[5] Eventually, the Saudis admitted that the coalition bombing produced at least 30 percent of the oil spills and over fifty of the fires. See Douglas Kellner, *The Persian Gulf TV War* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992) for exposés of the propaganda and disinformation campaigns whereby the Bush administration mobilized consent to its high-tech massacre and covered over its crimes through propaganda and lies.

More than this, I find myself attracted to what is actually Marcuse's most problematic concept: an instinctual basis for socialism in the demands of Eros. Marcuse turns to Eros as an alternative to history, a history that failed to see the proletariat fulfill its revolutionary role. In a word, Eros takes the place of the proletariat as subject of the revolution. It is this that helps to explain why Marcuse would at once seek to render Eros historical ("there is no such thing as an immutable human nature"), and remove it from history—a contradictory undertaking, to say the least. What Marcuse wants to say is that society reaches so deeply into the human being that it can manipulate and exploit humanity's deepest instinctual needs. Society has always done this, of course, but never with the effectiveness of advanced industrial society, which has yet to meet an emancipatory need it could not exploit. Yet, if Eros is merely a creature of history, then it loses its great revolutionary virtue: its utter demandingness (for Eros, too much satisfaction is never enough), as well as its desire for real and genuine fulfillment now and forever. It is these virtues that render Eros immune to the intrusions of history, and the false promises of capitalist society, and that make Eros such a potent and a permanent revolutionary force, even in exile, so to speak, deep within the alienated body and one-dimensional mind.

I do not think that Marcuse ever solved this dilemma: to make Eros historical, so that it might be liberated by changes in technology, labor, and society, is to risk its emancipatory potential, which rests in its immunity to social influences. "Ecology and the Critique of Modern Society" gives me no reason to alter this judgment. Yet, if Marcuse did not solve this dilemma, he continued up until the very end to work within the space created by it: an account of human nature which appreciates that this nature is always potentially more than it historically appears to be. This turns out, I believe, to be a tremendously fruitful space, one defined and bounded by the play of Eros and history. It is this aspect of Eros, its role as signpost to the body in history, that is most valuable, not the question of whether Eros might become the organizing principle of society. On the contrary, to focus exclusively on the utopian promise inherent in Eros risks ignoring its value in the here-and-now: as a reminder of the fundamental reality of the human desire for peace, joy, and happiness. Nothing is more important and valuable than this, which does not mean that these things can only be valued in an all or nothing fashion.

Marcuse's understandable rage that most have experienced so little peace, joy, and happiness in their lives is, one suspects, what leads him to formulate the issue as all or nothing, as though billions of humans have little to lose. About this conclusion we must be careful, however, if only because, *ceteris paribus*, more peace, joy, and happiness is better than less. Furthermore, while attributes such as truth, justice, and reason sometimes seem to have a reality independent of their embodiment in individual humans, peace, joy, and happiness do not. It is only the peace, joy, and happiness of individuals that make sense, which is not to say that the pursuit of these values is not a collective one, for it is. Marcuse makes a similar claim in "On Hedonism."[6] Unlike universal values, happiness is an attribute of individuals. If social theory can remember this, it will be less likely to sacrifice individuals to history or ideas. In the end, this is the great value of Eros in Marcuse's project: to make this sacrifice less likely.

—**C. Fred Alford**

CHILDREN OF PROMETHEUS: 25 THESES ON TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY*

1) Criteria of progress: level of the control of nature, level of human freedom. Both tendencies reciprocally condition one another, positively and negatively: control over nature is simultaneously control over human beings, by means of technical–scientific mechanisms of control, conditioning, manipulation; the apparatus of unfreedom. *But:* control over nature is also the production and utilization of the means for the liberation from the struggle for existence—the apparatus of freedom.

2) From the very beginning Western industrial society has established the primacy of control over nature at the expense of freedom. This occurred within the framework of a political emancipation (bourgeois democracy). This democracy compensated human beings for the subjugation of their work through the election (largely illusory) of the rulers by the ruled and through the elevation of the standard of living (quantitative advance).

3) This system of domination is reproduced through the satisfaction of the material and cultural needs of the majority of the population—and through the simultaneous manipulation of needs and through the governmental apparatus which more and more regulated the economy.

4) The perception of autonomy (or at least participatory governance) makes possible the internalization of the needs that reproduce the system (needs immanent to the system): that which is imposed becomes that which is offered, then that which is chosen, belonging to the individual.

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[6] "On Hedonism" in Herbert Marcuse, *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968).

* *Editors' note*:
"Children of Prometheus: 25 Theses on Technology and Society" provides a translation by Charles Reitz of a late lecture that Marcuse gave in May 1979 in the Frankfurter "Römerberg-Gespräche." It was published in *Neues Forum* 307/8 and reprinted in the Tübingen publication *Tüte*, 23–25. The editors of the latter note that the lecture notes were presented in the form of a "Referat" and have the character of a philosophical position paper that accounts for their condensed form. We find this text to be an especially concise account of Marcuse's final reflections on technology and society.

5) Advances in the development of the capitalism's forces of production are compelled by its own internal dynamics: exploitation of nature intensively and extensively necessary, increases in the productivity of labor through the pressures of expanded accumulation and the rate of profit. The result: development of the forces of production according to the principle of productive destruction, i.e. the nuclear power industry, poisoning the environment, dehumanization of work, aggression even in "popular culture," sports, traffic, music, pornography.

6) The process of productive destruction within the framework of a capitalist society is irreversible. Overcoming the principle of productive destruction contradicts the organizational principle of capitalism.

7) The necessity of expansion and of alienated labor. In the current period an indication of the possible negation of the quantitative advance is not primarily found in the political-economic infrastructure (no inevitable crisis!), but instead in the cultural sphere (cultural revolution!): in the disintegration of the norms upon whose acceptance in the behavior of people the legitimation and the functioning of capitalism is grounded (behavior at work and during free time).

8) Among those norms that no longer appear as legitimate are: puritanical work, human existence as an instrument of production, bourgeois sexual morality, the performance principle . . .

This refusal to legitimate the given does not just occur in the "catalyst groups" of the counter-culture (the student movement, women's movement, in grass roots democracy, etc.), but also in the working class itself: spontaneous sabotage, absenteeism, the demand to reduce the working day.

9) The negation of the quantitative advance is a specific negation: it gathers its real strength from tendencies *within* the established society that already transcend it. These emerge subjectively in the radical transvaluation of values of the counter-culture; objectively in the development (overdevelopment) of the productive forces, which is making the supercession of scarcity into a realistic possibility (that is obstructed by dominant political-economic interests).

10) The transvaluation of values in the cultural revolution is not to be dismissed as mere ideology, superstructure, given the concreteness of this Utopia. It is supported by a true consciousness, which is at the same time an anticipatory consciousness. In addition, this consciousness is being actualized in personal and social behavior.

For example: language freed from taboo; emancipation of the body from being an instrument of production: the "new sensuousness"; taking leave from competitive struggles . . .

11) Technical progress is an objective necessity for capitalism as well as for emancipation. The latter depends upon the further development of automation up to that point where the prevailing "economics of time" (*Bahro*) can be overthrown: free, creative time as the time for life.

12) But it is perhaps fallacious to conclude that only the misuse of science

and technology is responsible for the ongoing repression: the transvaluation of values and compulsions, the emancipation of subjectivity, of consciousness, might very well have an impact on the very conception of technology itself and in the structure of the technical-scientific apparatus . . .

Perhaps technology is a wound that can only be healed by the weapon that caused it: not the destruction of technology but its re-construction for the reconciliation of nature and society.

13) It would also be fallacious to conclude that the dissolution of the repressive society could be attained through an enforced reduction of consumption: that would mean starting emancipation by intensifying repression!

The decisive role of the "subjective factor": emancipation from the consumerism of society must become a vital need of individuals themselves. And again this would require: a radical transformation of the consciousness and the depth-psychological structure of individuals.

The pre-condition for this is the internal weakening of the consumerism of society in its political-economic infrastructure.

14) But a sinking standard of living will not transform the quality of the established system of needs: even if people could no longer have more automobiles, more "gadgets," more comfort, they would still desire these commodities! Unfulfilled desire remains desire!

What must be changed would be the ground beneath the political-economic foundation: the relationship between the drives toward destruction and towards life in the psychosomatic structure of individuals.

This means: transformation of the psychosomatic structure that prevails now, which supports the acceptance of destruction, alienated life as the routine, and where aggression and destruction are not only tacitly embraced.

15) How is this transformation of individuals itself to come about?

The "children of Prometheus" are not "clueless": those who rule the economy and politics, who decide what constitutes progress, continue to do so. They are not much interested in a long-term view: the others, who cannot bear this kind of progress, are constituting themselves almost spontaneously into an opposition in new kinds of ways, for the most part outside of and against the established political parties and class organizations.

16) This is a protest from all classes of society, motivated by a deep, visceral, and intellectual inability to comply, by a will to rescue whatever humanity, joy, and autonomy may still be rescued: a revolt of the life-instincts against the socially organized death-instinct.

17) This protest against productive-destructive advance mobilizes the subjective factor in the transformation: it anchors emancipation in the subjectivity that had been made into an object.

18) The anchoring of this revolt in the subjectivity of human existence makes the movement resist comprehensive organization.

This weakens its impact, isolates it from the masses, and lends it an elitist quality and an apolitical character: escape from political theory and practice.

19) Miscalculation: the political worth of subjectivization is to be found in the values of autonomy (which are repressed in mass organizations and their ideologies). This is to be found in a concretization of the qualitative difference long ago relegated to being abstract.

What matters is each individual and the solidarity among individuals; not simply classes or masses!

20) If traditional political and labor union organizations themselves are reproducing destructive advance, and if society's contradictions are harmonized into a repressive unity: an untrue whole, in which progress continues, but without ever getting beyond this whole, then the forces of a qualitative advance may well emerge in anticipatory (premature) counter-cultural forms centered on individuals!

21) But this counter-movement is extremely ambivalent: on the one hand the (literal) "incorporation" of the revolt against quantitative advance is negative inasmuch as it remains refusal; on the other hand, in this time of total integration, it is positive where it preserves a concrete utopia that transcends the established order; where it insists on the creative receptivity of sensuousness against the productivity of instrumental reason, where it insists on the rights of the pleasure principle against the omnipotence of the performance principle.

22) This advance towards the new is emerging today in the women's movement against patriarchal domination, which came of age socially only under capitalism; in the protests against the nuclear power industry and the destruction of nature as an ecological space that cut across all fixed class boundaries; and—in the student movement, which despite being declared dead, still lives on in struggles against the degradation of teaching and learning into activities that reproduce the system.

23) While these forms of protest are proving their (unorthodox) political worth, politization breaks down where refusal remains bogged down in inwardness: this distrust of politics then leads to the illusory politics expressed as "internal immigration" or a "politics in the first person."

24) This internal immigration leads to the publication of what is merely private (especially prevalent in literature): the self blossoms into the center of the political world as well.

But—not all of the problems, concerns, and experiences of the self are socially relevant or may be ascribed to class society!

25) There is a criterion today that can distinguish authentic from inauthentic inwardness; that inwardness, that recollection made public, that does not hold tightly to the remembrance of Auschwitz, that disavows Auschwitz as inconsequential, is escapism, a dodge; and a concept of progress is (in the worst sense) abstract which does not conceive of a world where Auschwitz is still possible.

CRITICAL PHILOSOPHY: A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE WITH DR. HERBERT MARCUSE*

Helen Hawkins: Herbert Marcuse is one of the best known and one of the most controversial of contemporary philosophers. Born and educated in Germany, Marcuse came to the United States in 1934 and became an American citizen in 1940. The most widely read of his several books are *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud* and *One-Dimensional Man*, which made him the intellectual idol of New Left militants in the late sixties.

Dr. Marcuse, what do *you* consider the primary function of philosophy?

Herbert Marcuse: Well, this is supposed to be a personal statement. For me philosophy is critical philosophy and the concern of critical philosophy is the human condition. It seems that human beings, men and women, have had a rather frustrating, hard and harsh and repressive life throughout history. This it seems has not improved at all with technical progress. Now critical philosophy tries to find out what are the reasons for this condition and, even more important, what are the real possibilities of building a society in which this would no longer be the case.

Hawkins: In the preface to your *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory* in 1941, you said that you hoped to revive "the power of negative thinking." Is that what you mean by "critical philosophy"?

Marcuse: That's one aspect of it. Negative thinking in the sense that not everything is accepted at face value, that conformity can be a very repressive attitude, and that negative thinking in the form of a critique—a real critique of existing conditions—is in itself a progressive force, or can *be* a progressive force.

Hawkins: So do you see the role of the philosopher as an agent of historical change?

Marcuse: Exactly. And that is one of the things in which—well, this is a personal statement, because I would say that the majority of my colleagues would not agree with it.

Hawkins: Have you then been criticized for this position?

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* *Editors' note*:
Marcuse's April 1979 KPBS Interview on "Critical Philosophy" presents in publication for the first time an eight-page transcription of an interview in English for the San Diego Public Broadcasting System (PBS) network found in Marcuse's personal collection. The interview was conducted by Dr. Helen Hawkins, Director, KPBS Humanities Office for the Viewpoints series, and interrogates Marcuse's conception of philosophy, his appropriation of Freud and his politics. A May 16, 1979 letter from Helen Hawkins to Marcuse notes: "We have already had eight requests for program transcripts, a number of very positive viewer responses, and no complaints at all! We will be offering the program to other western public television stations after the full series has aired."

Marcuse: I have been plenty criticized for this position, but I don't mind that.

Hawkins: Now, you identify yourself as a Marxist . . .

Marcuse: Yes.

Hawkins: . . . but we hear the word Marxist used for a wide variety of positions. What does "Marxist" mean to you—as *you* practice it?

Marcuse: Well, let me first say that I never denied that I am a Marxist, I don't deny it today although as you just mentioned, if I look around and see what calls itself Marxist today, I would rather not use the term. For example, every more or less despotic left wing regime in the world is called a Marxist regime. There's no connection between the two. What I mean by "Marxist" is somebody who still takes Marx's idea of a socialist society as a free *and* democratic society seriously. And that is what I'm trying to do, and to find out whether there are any tendencies which point in this direction today.

Hawkins: Now it would appear from what I have read of your work and the comments that I've seen on it that the kind of social change your critical philosophy would lead toward might involve the necessity for revolution. For you, what kind of a revolution does that mean? Is it revolution in the sense of violent upheaval, or gradual change, or what?

Marcuse: Well, we cannot, if we look at history, we cannot find any example of a non-violent revolution, including the American Revolution. I say we cannot expect that this continuity of violence would suddenly stop, although Marx himself has foreseen the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism. And he has even mentioned in this connection the United States as one of the countries, whereby democratic vote, socialism could gain a majority. I must say frankly that today it seems to me the chances for such a non-violent revolution are worse than they were before.

Hawkins: Do I read you correctly, though, that then a philosopher, or philosophy, should encourage revolution?

Marcuse: A philosopher, and especially a philosopher working at the university, should not encourage and should not advocate. If he or she presents the facts as they are and the tendencies which are observable in our society, then the students will by themselves get the idea that a good change is necessary and is possible.

Hawkins: I'd like to return to what might be the ultimate implications of that position a little later, but first what I'd like to do is to look at some of your work. The first book that really caught the attention of people outside of academia was *Eros and Civilization* in 1955. And it does seem that that book suggests many of the ideas that you later elaborated in future work.

Marcuse: Yes.

Hawkins: You've called that an "extrapolation" of Freud.

Marcuse: Because I use hypotheses of Freud's, going beyond them. In other words, what I say and state in Freudian terms, is not necessarily that which Freud himself would have used and approved of.

Hawkins: What you've essentially done in that book is to challenge Freud's own suggestion, in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, that repression is a necessary part of any civilization?

Marcuse: Well, I think you are going a little too far.

Hawkins: Am I?

Marcuse: Yes, definitely. Because it is true that I think neither I nor anyone else can imagine a civilization without repression. I make the distinction between repression and what I call "surplus repression." That is to say, in the course of civilization many taboos, many restrictions have been imposed which are actually not necessary any more in terms of the possible development of human beings. So I certainly would not say that civilization can be without *any* repression.

Hawkins: But you would say that the *degree* of repression is . . .

Marcuse: The *degree* of repression is decisive.

Hawkins: And you lay that to technological changes that make this kind of repression no longer as necessary?

Marcuse: No, I wouldn't say that repression today is no longer necessary — *surplus* repression is no longer necessary. That is to say, repression that goes beyond the *basic* taboos and the *basic* prohibitions any and every civilization depends upon.

Hawkins: Now you used the term "Eros" in that book to signify more than the ordinary person would . . .

Marcuse: Yes. I think I use the term in agreement with Freud, in a much wider sense. Eros is not identical with sexuality. Sexuality, according to Freud, is a partial and local drive, whereas Eros actually activates the entire human organism and the entire human personality. He identified Eros with the life instincts, and I think that is a very good explanation. Understandable, however, only if we add the other primary drive of Freud's—the destruction or death instinct. So you would have in the human organism two primary drives: erotic energy, life instincts; and destructive energy, death instinct. Now I still use Freud's terminology because it seems to me that our present society is characterized by a considerable strengthening of the destruction and death instincts over and above Eros and the life instincts. That's my general image.

Hawkins: And you suggest that by focusing on the . . .

Marcuse: By strengthening the life instincts, change to the better could be achieved.

Hawkins: Now that book has been criticized, as has all of your work, on several grounds. One, that it does distort Freud, some would say. But of course I guess any hypotheses can be interpreted by others as they will. But another suggestion has been made, or criticism has been made, that you do a lot of asserting without supporting arguments or evidence. How do you respond to this?

Marcuse: Can you give me an example of that?

Hawkins: Well, for example . . .

Marcuse: It may well be that I say many things that can not be proven in the sense of a *scientific* proof as we understand it today, but I use hypotheses, and I think I *do* illustrate and fortify the hypothesis by pointing to facts.

Hawkins: I think one of the contexts of that kind of criticism was that your type of philosophy could be considered to be in opposition to the "scientific" or "Comtean" or—what are some of the other terms for that?—where the only thing that can be accepted as real is that which is demonstrable through scientific evidence.

Marcuse: Well, I would accept "demonstrable"; I would reject "according to scientific evidence." Because then we would use a concept of proof and evidence which is valid *only* for the natural sciences—physics, biology, whatever it is—but can not be simply applied to the humanities and social sciences.

Hawkins: Another comment that's made about that book is that it is *very* optimistic and in fact possibly *too* optimistic in terms of its view of human nature's, if I could use that term, potential. Do you feel that it is an overly optimistic view?

Marcuse: I desperately try to maintain my optimism even today. I actually want to be pessimistic, and I think there is more justification for it, but as I look around there are still so many things which are good and which are positive, and there are *still* quite a few tendencies that make and indicate a change to the better, that I'm rather optimist.

Hawkins: Well now your 1964 book, that is really the most widely read—*One-Dimensional Man* . . .

Marcuse: Yes, unfortunately. I think the Freud book was much better.

Hawkins: . . . was *very* pessimistic. You say that . . .

Marcuse: . . . the Freud book was much better.

Hawkins: Yet in that *One-Dimensional Man* book, you severely indicted modern industrial society and the kind of person that has resulted from it.

Marcuse: Well I would say not *I* indicted it; it indicts itself.

Hawkins: Ah.

Is the kind of attitude that was reflected in that book a reflection of the times and have you changed your ideas that you expressed in that book at all since then?

Marcuse: It is a reflection of the times. I *have* changed my ideas somehow after 1968–69, because I see in these years the emergence of a new and potentially rather promising and powerful opposition against the destructive tendencies in our society today.

Hawkins: Now in *One-Dimensional Man* you essentially said, if I am not misinterpreting you, that modern man in industrial society is so much the captive, as it were, of his own technological affluence . . .

Marcuse: —which he cannot control—

Hawkins: . . . that he has become part of the system, and that the working class, which was so long expected to be the locus of change or revolution, is now co-opted into the system. And the indictment you made of things like television and other kinds of public media as ways of controlling society were very sharp. Do you still feel that there is that much of a sense of capture of the people by the system?

Marcuse: Well it certainly isn't any lighter than it was before. The degree of control, especially after the use of computers and so on, has been intensified rather than weakened. But what for me is an optimistic sign is that in the opposition of '68–'69, it was demonstrated that a—not escape, that a coming-out-of, that a breaking-with the universal controls is possible. Possible at that time still in small groups, collectives, communes, whatever there is, but the serious attempt to try relationships between human beings which are not in the repressive sense controlled from above, from outside.

Hawkins: You didn't see that the, what is considered to be, the failure of the French student "revolution" as it were, in 1968, as a set-back then?

Marcuse: It may be a temporary set-back. I would not say, as practically everyone says—let's apply it to this country—that the student movement was defeated, that it doesn't exist any more. It has changed its form; it still exists; and, what is to me the most important thing, some of the *values* proclaimed by the student movement have actually penetrated the society as a whole and are diffused among the population as a whole. For example (let me give you an example, otherwise it's too abstract), the general, almost general awareness that one does not *have* to work eight hours a day, plus the hours required for transportation, in an inhuman and routine and mechanized way, that one can live *much* easier, without giving up most of the achievements of culture and so on—this is one of the achievements of the student movement and this can be demonstrated, by the way.

Hawkins: Now you did say, in *One-Dimensional Man*, that the missing dimension was the dimension of critical awareness, of "negative thinking."

Marcuse: Yes.

Hawkins: Now, have you then decided that *since* then that awareness has developed?

Marcuse: Since then. *One-Dimensional Man* came out in '64, and the student movement in '68–'69.

Hawkins: I think probably *the* most controversial of your work is what you said in the essay, "Repressive Tolerance" . . .

Marcuse: I know.

Hawkins: . . . in which you suggested that liberal toleration of other views was illusory, that the only views that are tolerated in fact are the status quo-type views and that what dissent is tolerated is only tolerated so far as it has no effect. And you suggested that there really ought to be some sort of suppression of the kinds of what you called "destructive" views—destructive of life.

Marcuse: I'm afraid I still think so. Let me give you an example. I believe that if the Weimar Republic in Germany would not have tolerated the Hitler movement to the very end, 1933, we may well have been spared a world war and the extermination of six million Jews.

Hawkins: Of course the major question that's raised about that . . .

Marcuse: . . . what kind, that's right, what kind . . .

Hawkins: . . . is who decides which and when ideas should be suppressed.

Marcuse: I would say every halfway intellectual, normal being in, for example, reading what Hitler constantly said and constantly published, would *know* that this is a deadly destructive movement—he doesn't need any philosophical or scientific proof for it.

Hawkins: Well, we can see that looking back at it, but in the context of today, who is going to make the decisions as to what kinds of dangerous ideas should be suppressed? Do you count on the democratic process to do that?

Marcuse: To tell you the truth, yes. Who decides *today* what is to be repressed and what is not to be repressed? Who decides today? Again I would say, if what I said in "Repressive Tolerance" makes any sense it presupposes a *really* democratic society in which the people themselves can be shown and can see what is destructive and what is not.

Hawkins: That sounds almost unachievable.

Marcuse: That is certainly, for the time being, utopian. And I would like to say one thing very clearly. In the present situation in this country I would certainly defend to the very last the civil liberties and civil rights because that is the only counterforce against the intensified control and repression.

Hawkins: So that what that really means then is that your suggestion that some ideas are so destructive that they must be repressed, couldn't happen now.

Marcuse: I wouldn't say it couldn't happen. I wouldn't say that. But it is at present in this country not acute.

Hawkins: Now you did say that in recent years you've seen an emergence of the kind of new sensibility that some of your later work suggested was really needed, that there would be a whole new kind of man or person developing. Is that something that you see as happening only in Western civilization or do you see it in other parts of the world as well?

Marcuse: I would say you do see it in other parts of the world too, perhaps in some of the liberation movements in the Third World, for example, but *essentially* it is confined, so far, to the advanced industrial countries in the West.

Hawkins: And your "critical philosophy" has, in fact, been directed primarily to analyzing *that* society.

Marcuse: Because that is the society I know, and that I can do.

Hawkins: Now you said in your 1972 book, *Counterrevolution and Revolt*, that the counterrevolution was in the ascendant and that the route to change, really, was through theory, through education, through persuasion.

Do you then see the role of the universities, the colleges, as very strong in the change process?

Marcuse: They could have a very decisive effect, but unfortunately, as you know, there is a tendency to transform the universities into professional schools at the expense of such disciplines as the humanities and the social sciences, which is a very dangerous tendency because it actually stifles any criticism that goes beyond a very well set framework.

Hawkins: Do you feel that the major centers of critical thought *are* in the universities today?

Marcuse: I would say some of them are still in the universities, quite a few; and probably the majority outside, in the manifestations of what is still called the New Left.

Hawkins: Speaking of the New Left, at the time that *One-Dimensional Man* was picked up by the student militants particularly, there were a lot of New Left people, or people who were identified by that term, who were very much supportive of your ideas. Are you still considered one of the leading lights in that framework, or have they gone beyond you or in different directions?

Marcuse: They have gone beyond me; they have gone below me. And I never considered myself as the idol or as the father or grandfather of the New Left. What happened was a coincidence of ideas and opinions. The students didn't have to read *One-Dimensional Man* in order to protest, in order to rebel. So I still consider myself very much sympathetic and part of whatever is left of this movement.

Hawkins: Now the students of that era, you say, didn't *have* to read the book, primarily because they were experiencing what you were describing.

Marcuse: They were experiencing in their own body and mind what motivated them to rebel.

Hawkins: Do you think they, when they *did* read your book, understood your work?

Marcuse: That I don't know.

Hawkins: Because that *is* one major question that's raised about your writings—that they are *very* difficult to understand, even by people who have a background in the philosophical framework that you use.

Marcuse: I know, and I regret it deeply. I try to write clearer. On the other hand, I take comfort from the fact that quite a few people do and did understand it.

Hawkins: The question that I'd like to get back to in the very short time we have left is that *if* one argues for change, and if that change will require revolution, and if revolution is unlikely to come about without violence, does not that then give validation to violence which in turn may perhaps validate terrorism?

Marcuse: Advocacy of violence, under all circumstances in our situation, should be taboo. Violence may be considered justified only as counter-violence. In the sentence in "Repressive Tolerance" I explicitly said that there is a so-called right of resistance, a natural right of resistance for suppressed minorities after all legal means have been exhausted. I also added that if then these minorities rebel, that might break the chain of violence which we had throughout history. I am a little less optimistic in respect to this topic. I would say the breaking of the chain of violence is probably only thinkable in a long historical process, but not that quickly.

Hawkins: Well, Dr. Marcuse, I know many Americans will disagree with some of your ideas if not all of them, and yet I'm sure we can all benefit from considering the questions you ask about our society and the goals we should seek. Thank you very much for clarifying your views for us.

And thank *you* very much for joining us. Goodnight.

AFTERWORD

Remembering Marcuse

Andrew Feenberg

I first met Marcuse in 1965 shortly after he joined the Philosophy Department of the new University of California, San Diego (UCSD). The move to the palms and beaches of southern California seemed to contradict the gloomy pessimism of his writings. But in person Marcuse was not gloomy at all. I recall my own surprise at his ironic humor and his rejection of the exaggerated gestures of respect that some students believed appropriate for a German professor.

I am forewarned in writing this memoir by an incident that occurred a week or two after I arrived. A graduate student from Berkeley, then the Mecca of revolt, entered the department office where Marcuse was chatting with another professor. The student introduced himself and claimed to be in awe of the great minds gathered before him. Marcuse mocked him mercilessly. I would not want to deserve that mockery, but nevertheless I do think of Marcuse as a truly impressive person. I will try to explain why in the following remarks.

Marcuse was an outstanding figure at UCSD both as a political leader and as a scholar. His uncompromising criticism of the War in Vietnam made him a hero for the leftwing students on campus. But his courses were rigorous; in the classroom he was simply a dedicated teacher of the history of philosophy. Nevertheless, he became a target of conservative criticism and was eventually expelled from the university in a complicated maneuver designed to placate Governor Ronald Reagan while preserving the appearance of academic freedom.

I studied Hegel and Heidegger with Marcuse, not Marx. Marcuse viewed them as great idealist philosophers with whom he was still engaged in dialogue. From Hegel he took the idea that each stage in history lives in the shadow of a better future the realization of which it obstructs. We who studied with Marcuse found in his Hegelian vision a validation of our own dissent. Our protests were not merely personal but belonged to History with a capital H.

Marcuse believed, perhaps incorrectly, that he took very little from his teacher Heidegger. His disappointment over Heidegger's Nazism was never assuaged. Yet he acknowledged the importance of Heidegger's false path as an advance to the outer limits of bourgeois philosophy. What did he mean by this backhanded tribute?

Marcuse criticized Heidegger's early phenomenological approach for abandoning the concrete ground of history. But there was also something positive about a philosophy that could resist the hegemony of the "facts," the vulgar scientistic naturalism then predominant in American philosophy. And Marcuse's own most radical speculations on the "new sensibility" of the New Left implied a phenomenological concept of lived experience. Some of us were immunized against positivism with a therapeutic dose of phenomenology we learned from Marcuse despite his own skepticism.

Even before he became famous Marcuse was the star of the UCSD Philosophy Department. His very real erudition and charm gained him the respect of many scientists in this science-dominated university. His speeches at rallies against the War in Vietnam were attended by hundreds and eventually thousands of students on our rapidly growing campus. We knew how fortunate we were to have such a teacher and I think he was truly dedicated to us despite our clumsiness and naivety. He took his intellectual mission seriously but he also demonstrated with us for our causes which were his as well. When his student Angela Davis was accused of political crimes, he defended her publicly, attracting undesirable [and even dangerous] attention on the right. When his life was threatened his students showed up to patrol his house. When he was fired from the university we wanted to protest but he discouraged us. He had worked out a deal allowing him to finish his work with his last graduate students. I benefited from this deal; his priorities were clear.

Marcuse is remembered today primarily for his remarkable prominence during the late 1960s and '70s. Few philosophers have achieved such fame. He was not simply a "public intellectual"; he was a media celebrity, precisely the sort of thing he criticized in his writings.

I was present when Marcuse first discovered his paradoxical status. He was already well known on the Left in the United States and Germany, but he was not yet famous in the world at large. He arrived in Paris for a UNESCO conference on Marx in early May of 1968, just as the largest protest movement of the '60s broke out a few blocks from his hotel. On entering the main conference hall, Marcuse was swarmed by journalists with cameras and notebooks. Unbeknownst to him, he had been the object of a press campaign in the preceding week which painted him as the "guru" of the student revolt. (A few weeks later the newspapers published articles refuting their own inflated estimate of his role.)

A young reporter had observed Marcuse's discomfort at this unexpected attention. He whispered in my ear that he would be happy to help "the professor" to escape. When he promised to ask no questions I agreed to relay his message. We soon found ourselves in a small car fleeing the scene to Marcuse's great relief. The reporter offered to take us anywhere in Paris. Marcuse asked to meet the North Vietnamese delegation to the Paris peace talks, which had just begun.

We asked at the desk of the Lutetia Hotel for an audience with the Vietnamese. They sent us the delegate responsible for public relations. He was a small, extremely thin and poorly dressed fellow who could not have looked less like a diplomat. He opened the conversation by complimenting Marcuse on his great age. Marcuse was taken aback; he did not think of himself as the "ancient of days," on the contrary! After a further exchange of compliments, the conversation took a political turn. Marcuse warned the Vietnamese not to count on the American working class to end the war. His interlocutor nodded sympathetically. No doubt the Vietnamese had reached the same conclusion long before.

On the walk to his hotel afterwards, Marcuse was recognized by the students who had just seized the Ecole des Beaux Arts. They invited him to address their general assembly. Marcuse greeted them in the name of the American movement and praised them for rejecting consumer society. This puzzled the Maoists in the audience, who were seeking a Chinese style "worker–peasant alliance" against French capitalism. Marcuse presented a rather different notion in his UNESCO talk, "A Revision of the Concept of Revolution." He argued that the revolution was no longer just a matter of replacing one ruling class with another, but also concerned the technological underpinnings of modern societies generally. The "continuity of domination" could be broken only by the transformation of a repressive technological infrastructure.

Marcuse soon identified this project with the May Events. This was the last major outburst of opposition to advanced capitalism. Its famous slogan, "All Power to the Imagination," corresponded exactly to Marcuse's transformative vision. Nineteen sixty-eight was the "messianic moment" in Walter Benjamin's sense; it laid down the horizon of progressive possibility for our time. Marcuse paid tribute to the activists who animated this moment in the preface to his most optimistic book, the *Essay on Liberation.*

What was it about Marcuse that made him a symbol of this moment? He was not flamboyant and did not seek publicity. His writings were considered obscure and although his books sold widely it is hard to believe that they were widely read. Two things made Marcuse such an attractive symbol: certain of his ideas converged with the sensibility of the movement, and he emanated a peculiar kind of personal authority. He was not only old, he was a German philosopher who had lived through many of the major events of the 20th century and survived to tell the tale. It is easy to dismiss the enthusiasm of youth, but not so easy to ignore the fidelity of age to the dreams of youth.

This is where Marcuse like his friend, the Marxist literary critic Lucien Goldmann, differed from many of those who attended the UNESCO conference. Goldmann expressed outrage that we were merely discussing revolution while the real thing unfolded outside the conference hall in the streets. But not all the participants took the movement seriously. After Marcuse left Paris I met a well known Italian Marxist in the courtyard of the Sorbonne, which we students had "liberated" a few days before. I was full of enthusiasm, but he complained that we had created a carnival, not a revolution. Adorno's notion that the movement was a form of "pseudo-activity" had a certain currency among older leftwing intellectuals who failed to recognize themselves in its slogans, demands and, crucially, its style. Marcuse did not share our confidence that revolution was around the corner, but he appreciated our spirit and found traces in it of the "negativity" advocated by the Frankfurt School.

As he later explained, it was merely a coincidence that his ideas linked him to a movement he no more than others had foreseen. But what a coincidence! Marcuse called for a less repressive society that valued peace and pleasure over war and sacrifice. He argued for eliminating the competitive pressures and acquisitiveness of rich societies in which poverty could finally be eliminated and work transformed into a creative activity. He protested inequality and media manipulation and analyzed their causes in the structure of the system. These ideas were all themes of the movement, indeed they quickly became clichés, and they were developed with philosophical rigor in Marcuse's books and speeches.

Much has been made of Marcuse's ideas on sexuality. He is remembered mistakenly as an advocate of the sort of orgiastic excess associated in the public mind with the movement if not actually enjoyed by many of the participants. In fact he anticipated some of Foucault's most counterintuitive conclusions about the politics of sexuality in modern societies. He introduced the concept of "repressive desublimation" to explain the instrumentalization of sex by the system. He argued that the intense focus on sexual attractiveness and sexual activity was not liberating but was part of the larger process of containing libidinal energy within the confines of the existing society. Of course Marcuse opposed the sexual Puritanism that still had considerable influence in America, but he also sounded the alarm over exaggerated expectations of sexual liberation.

A shared dystopian vision of American society constituted the most interesting of the coincidental convergences between Marcuse and the movement. The New Left experienced America as a closed system capable of repelling or absorbing opposition. Marcuse's thought belonged to a tradition of dystopian critique which had long expressed such notions. Like Huxley, he saw a threat to individuality in the rise of modern technological society. Cultural pessimism of this sort was rare on the left where most Marxists still celebrated technical progress while anxiously awaiting the proletarian revolution. By contrast Marcuse emphasized the role of science and technology in the organization of a repressive system.

These themes appealed to a generation of young people who grew up in the America of the 1950s when the ideology of progress was at its height. We were masters of the atom and had put a man on the moon! No less significant was the integration of the labor unions into consumer society, which demonstrated the obsolescence of socialism. These achievements announced the end of history, the triumph of the existing society over its own utopian potential. To many in the New Left and the counter-culture, radical change seemed both necessary and impossible. But paradoxically, by the end of the 1960s, the dystopian vision of isolated social critics like Marcuse was echoed by a mass movement. For that movement, the struggle against the War in Vietnam became a surrogate for the struggle against the imperium of technology at home.

Beyond these convergences of ideas, there was a peculiar charisma about the person of Marcuse evident to those present at the many protest meetings at which he spoke. He did not indulge in the emotional gestures and rhetorical flourishes of a political orator, but addressed his audience soberly as someone authorized by historical experience and philosophical reflection. This stance made a shocking contrast to the content of his discourse. Here was an old and presumably wise professor calmly advocating revolution in complacent and self-satisfied America.

But perhaps something more profound was at work in Marcuse's astonishing presence. He had participated as a young conscript in the Berlin soldiers' council in the German revolution that followed World War I. He had fled the Nazis and worked for their defeat during World War II and for the denazification of German society afterwards. He had criticized both postwar American society and Soviet communism as failed realizations of democratic ideals. Few of those present at his speeches were aware of the details, but these accumulated experiences seemed somehow expressed in his person, in the deep and strongly accented voice that spoke with authority of the European disaster and foresaw a similar fate for American imperial ambitions despite the triumphalist discourse of the politicians and the media. Thus beyond a convergence of ideas, Marcuse's presence evoked a kind of mentorship. He taught the value of a life of political engagement by his example.

These impressions of Marcuse's impact can be explained in terms of the theory of experience which he shared with his Frankfurt School colleagues. They worried that the capacity for experience had been damaged by the development of modern society. Presumably, in earlier times a richer and more complex relation to reality was available. Walter Benjamin was the source of this critical notion of experience. He distinguished between *Erfahrung*, experience shaped by a deep relation to reality, and *Erlebnis*, experience as a momentary response to passing sensation. *Erfahrung* registers the real at a subconscious level and changes the person who undergoes it, while *Erlebnis* is a defensive response to the speed and shock of dail life in a modern society. *Erlebnis* has no resonance and quickly slips out o consciousness as new experiences challenge the subject. These characteristi modern experiences leave few traces in contrast to *Erfahrung*, which has kind of existential depth. In terms of this distinction Marcuse represente the possibility and the result of a rich and deeply reflected politica *Erfahrung*, something not yet available to his young audience.

But this audience had something to teach Marcuse. His historical experience was not yet over. His involvement in the New Left represented a fina chapter in which his own ideas underwent a further transformation. Wha did Marcuse draw from the movement? Here we have his own testimony i many articles and books written from the late ’60s until his death in 1979 These texts testify to a revision of his earlier dystopianism. The one dimensional society was effectively challenged, if not at the political level, a the deeper level of culture. At this level a successor to the traditional concep of proletarian revolution had appeared.

Of course Marcuse never imagined that students could overthrow th system. He always insisted that revolution, were it possible at all, could onl be the work of the mass of the population. Rather, what the New Left an the counter-culture revealed were structures of sensibility that, if generalized would destabilize the society and expose it to revolutionary transformation It was this sensibility rather than the old idea of class consciousness, base on narrowly conceived interests, that constituted the new threat to capitalism. Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that Marcuse reinterprete the notion of consciousness in this richer form, revealed by the contemporar movements for radical change.

His theory of the new sensibility, explained in the *Essay on Liberation* contained an implicit response to the Frankfurt School’s pessimistic visio of the decline of experience. Marcuse had argued earlier that advance capitalism reached down into the very instincts with its promised paradis of consumption. Now, he claimed, this overwhelming force of socia integration was answered by a new form of resistance. This was not simpl a matter of political opinion or intellectual critique, but more profoundly an existential revulsion at the destructiveness of the system.

The new sensibility was informed by the aesthetic imagination whic opened up the aura of possibility surrounding the “facts of life” establishe by capitalism and the technological system that supported its rule. Perceptio was no longer confined to the given, but had become critical. Alternative to the oppressive structures of the society appeared thinkable once again The individuals regained the mental independence required to break wit the rituals of conformity that bound them to the system. The persona had become political, as participants in the movement liked to say. Th New Left thus renewed the power of the negative, the driving force behin history.

But for Marcuse it was not enough for the personal to become political. It was also necessary for the political to become technological. Here his thought joined that of the most radical participants in the May Events. After 1968 Marcuse amplified his earlier rather abstract remarks on technology. At a time when many Marxists were skeptical of environmentalism, seen as a diversion from the class struggle, Marcuse argued that the technological domination of both human beings and nature traces back to the same source: the indifference of capitalism to the essential potentialities and life requirements of its workers and resources. But Marcuse was no technophobe. He did not propose a return to premodern conditions. Rather, he argued that the imagination could inform technological design and realize the values underlying the movement in the very structure of the machines. A technology respectful of human beings and nature could replace a system adapted to competition and war. This would be a technology of liberation capable of supporting a modern society without reproducing the domination inherited from the past.

These speculations on technology turned out to be prescient. Old deterministic and technocratic notions have been weakened by a generation of environmental protest. Today we are in the midst of a vast movement to transform technology in response to climate change, although it is not clear that this will have the radical consequences Marcuse foresaw. Perhaps technology is another scene on which the dystopian logic of advanced capitalism has the power to absorb all opposition. Perhaps not. There is a new spirit of concern for nature in the air and whether it is compatible with capitalism as we know it is very much in doubt.

What are we to make of these late developments in Marcuse's thought? His ideas seem remote after the last thirty years of increasingly reactionary political and social developments. Yet the horizon of radical politics has not shifted much since Marcuse's day. We still hope for many of the changes the New Left struggled to achieve. Feminism, environmentalism, various democratic alternatives to capitalism all survive as ideals despite what Marcuse called the "preventive counter-revolution" that responded politically to the rise of the Left.

It is therefore too soon to dismiss Marcuse's vision of a new kind of revolution based on changes in experience and technology. But radical change will certainly be far slower and more complex than we expected in the 1960s. Marcuse eventually realized there would be no continuous development of the movement but rather a "long march through the institutions," a long period of reaction and consolidation of advanced capitalism. Were he alive today, he would be looking for evidence of the slow growth of the new sensibility wherever it could be found, not dogmatically calling for a revival of the New Left.

Marcuse's argument thus has a prefigurative significance. Like Marx studying the Paris Commune, Marcuse generalized from a limited historical experience to lessons valid for the long term. He recognized the extent to which the system had anchored itself in the psyche and the technological infrastructure of advanced societies and theorized a deeper form of resistance. He did not predict the revolution but elaborated the conditions of its possibility. For those still interested in radical alternatives, his thought should be an essential reference.

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