MARCUSE'S "ONE-DIMENSIONALITY:" SOCIO-HISTORICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

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Total Mobilization in Advanced Capitalism

In his book on Freud, Eros and Civilization, Herbert Marcuse set the stage for much of his later work. Where his essays in Zeitschrift fur Sozialforschung and Eros and Civilization were largely philosophical excurses, his work from 1964, the year of publication of One-Dimensional Man. was more directly political. The publication of One-Dimensional Man indicated that Marcuse had settled accounts with the tradition of philosophical dualism and was now prepared, with the notion of the "rationality of gratification," to apply these insights to socio-historical analysis. This was both a product of the trajectory of his own selfdevelopment as well as of his new reading of the structural forces within capitalism. In the 1930s, the "authoritarian state" was only beginning to take shape; by the late 1950s, it was clear to all the Frankfurt thinkers just where Marx's earlier theories of the crisis needed to be amended.

In spite of the conventional wisdom among more doctrinaire Marxists that critical theory veers away from Marxism, it is my contention that Marx's method is flexible and as such requires unceasing historical adaptations. What is enduring about Marxian theory is Marx's critique of alienation, his vision of non-alienated work and his theory of internal contradictions. But these contradictions have a wide range of vicissitudes; in fact, where Freud charted the historical vicissitudes of instincts, Marx charted the vicissitudes of socioeconomic structure. With Freud, Marx would have agreed that capitalist social structures are not invariant but are transformed in the crucible of historical change. Thus the Frankfurt thinkers distinguished early from advanced or "late" capitalism¹; they believed that the vicissitudes of

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Marx's "internal contradictions" had changed by the end of World War II, necessitating vital theoretical revisions.

The Frankfurt theorists used the concept of domination to describe the deep internalization of alienation, via what Marcuse in Eros and Civilization called "surplus repression." It was argued that during the transformation of early entrepreneurial capitalism into later state-regulated international forms, there arose crucial new needs for heightened social control and for the total mobilization of human experience. In the first place, human beings can taste the promise of substantive freedom, once the technological infrastructure is sufficiently advanced that it can emancipate them for lives of creative work and leisure. In the second place, as Marx recognized in Capital, capitalism requires a continual cycle between production and consumption; without endless consumption, the production process, the lifeblood of the profit system, will stagnate. The need for heightened social control and the manipulation of consumer preferences is achieved by the internalization of alienation, "introjection," as Marcuse describes it in the 1964 book.

So according to Marcuse, the new reality of domination, rooted in the instinctual structure of individuals, is more difficult to dispel than was previous economic exploitation; domination covers exploitation in the illusions of false harmony and material abundance but it does not eliminate it2. It is important to recognize that the Frankfurt thinkers were not suggesting that capitalism had solved its internal contradictions and overcome alienation but only that in its more "mature" stage it protected itself internally by sending alienation ever deeper into the depths of personality and instinct. Instinct and experience must be mobilized in order to ensure social control in an increasingly advanced technological order and to ensure endless consumption, rooted in the sundering of

work-time and leisure-time. Where bourgeois ideology has before fostered what Marx called "false consciousness," in late capitalism, this ideology penetrates into the very interior of human personality and cannot be directly expunged through rational critique. Where Lukacs thought he could penetrate the haze of a reifying false consciousness simply by explaining the proletariat's world-historical mission to it, today individual proletarians are tightly bound into the seamless web of domination. Their obedience is no longer problematic and the promises of a socialist future are viewed skeptically.

This tightening of the bonds of alienation was largely unforeseen by Marx and early Marxists. But in and of itself it does not overthrow the Marxian categories. While Marcuse, along with his other Frankfurt colleagues, did not reject Marx's aim of the emancipation of labor or the structural theory of capitalist internal contradictions, they were unwilling to retain the letter of Marx's analysis of the crises of capital as expressed in Capital; instead, they viewed the historical process as developmental and subject to numerous significant alterations. Thus the deep structural contradictions of the system emerge in a variety of socio-cultural patterns, depending on the stage of development of the social system in question. The crises may vary across cultures and across historical periods. For example, it could be argued that the threat of another stock-market crash is now forestalled by the manipulations of Keynesian technocrats. But this is not to suggest that late capitalism is free of crises. Marcuse's theoretical effort since Eros and Civilization was to depict the new constellation of forces in advanced capitalism, the vicissitudes of social structure, building on Marx's categories but also going beyond them. So the theory of domination only extended Marx's earlier understanding of alienation³.

This emergence of domination, or more deeply internalized alienation, was a function of ever-tightening linkages between political economy and culture, termed by Marcuse, in *One-Dimensional Man*, the "first" and "second" dimensions. The vicissitudes of capitalist social structure were such as to tighten the connection between base and superstructure, both in the

interest of social control and heightened profitability. Marx did not foresee the extent to which the second dimension of culture and personality could be integrated into the requirements of political economy; for him, the false consciousness of the working class could be dispelled through rational critique and consciousness-raising. After all, rampant unemployment, then the prevalent manifestation of crisis in an earlier capitalism unprotected by a Keynesian state, would directly trigger deep working class resentment. But Marx did not foresee the checks and balances that a Keynesian state could erect to protect the system from within. And thus he did not recognize the depth to which false consciousness would penetrate in becoming what the Frankfurt thinkers called domination.

It has often been contended by critics of the Frankfurt School that they have merely substituted cultural for economic radicalism and thus deemphasized the scientific foundation of Marx's critique of political economy. For example, Phil Slater suggests:

. . . Marcuse's aesthetics ends up in the same contradiction as Adorno's; while art's 'transcendence' is a 'negation' of alienation and reification, the primary task remains the ideological struggle for the emancipation of consciousness: . . . Ultimately, art, even for Marcuse, cannot be geared to this task in an significant sense, and the theory-praxis nexus is lost. In conclusion, it can be stated that whereas Adorno and Horkheimer, as they distanced themselves from critical praxis, were consistent in turning their backs on the revolutionary tradition in art, Marcuse, by contrast, in his attempt to overcome the fundamental flaws of the original 'critical theory of society' (as expounded by Horkheimer and implemented by his team in the Zeitschrift period), can and must free himself from the hypostatisation, idealism and elitism of mainstream Frankfurt School aesthetics, Otherwise, Marcuse's radicalised theoretical activity since the 1960s will remain, in this crucial area, tied up in the contradictions that have marred the Frankfurt School since its inception4.

He suggests that the Frankfurt School lost touch with the theory-praxis nexus largely because they

overemphasized cultural manipulation and ignored political economy. But from the beginning, the Frankfurt position, exemplified by Marcuse's early Zeitschrift essays, has been that culture and political economy have become more inextricably intertwined as the individual is increasingly manipulated by "affirmative" forces. In this sense the Frankfurt thinkers are more economicsoriented than many orthodox Marxists, who view the relationship between base and superstructure as static and who repeat arguments in The German Ideology about the mechanical determination of superstructure by base, thus implying that they are separate to some extent. But the Frankfurt position is that the superstructural sphere--art, politics, daily experience--is increasingly "economized" in face of the imperatives both of social control and profit in advanced capitalism. Surplus repression involves the penetration of political-economic imperatives into culture and personality, producing what Marcuse, in One-Dimensional Man, called the identity of the real and the rational⁵. Culture and political economy are more entangled in late capitalism than they were when Marx wrote, which is why Marx appears to have accorded more ideology-critical and liberatory power to socialist ideas than do the Frankfurt thinkers. It is important to explain why Western workers (who are still objectively alienated from ownership and control of the production process, according to Marxist criteria) have not taken up the revolutionary banner in the straightforward way that Marx expected in Capital, where he suggested, in exuberant optimism, that "the expropriators would be expropriated."

So Marcuse's critical theory in the late 1950s and 1960s began to apply some of his earlier philosophical concerns to socio-historical analysis. His central topic, to explain why the working class had not revolted and to indicate future liberatory potentials, required Marcuse to more fully develop the theory of domination on the basis of an elaboration of his own concept of false needs. Above all, Marcuse, in *One-Dimensional Man*, tries to explain how positivism, a philosophical theory of scientific investigation, has itself become a dominant form of ideology and intensified

domination by collapsing the first and second dimensions. In this analysis, he utilizes categories he had drawn from his investigations of German idealism and of psychoanalysis that serve to explain how these two dimensions can actually fuse. The outcome of this analysis is a theory of the one-dimensional⁶.

One-dimensionality, according to Marcuse, describes the fusion of the levels of cultural critique and political economy, a phenomenon that I pursue more systematically in the next section of this paper. Here it is vital to suggest that onedimensionality was conceived by Marcuse as a direct outcome of the new requirements of total mobilization in advance capitalism and not simply a result of philosophical "mistakes" made by dualists from the Greeks through the positivists of the Vienna Circle. Marcuse here goes beyond philosophical categories pure and simple and on the basis of his work on idealism and the instincts. suggests that one-dimensionality is a pervasive feature of advanced capitalism, utilized to keep human needs as well as human consciousness in perpetual check. One-dimensionality is the translation of philosophical identity-theory, where reality is thought to correspond to reason, into a principle of social organization. This, for Marcuse. is not simply a development of ideology but also of social practice. To the extent to which we accept the given as rational, we function as dutiful workers and consumers. Thus the power of the onedimensional culture of advanced capitalism is not simply to implant false ideas in us but to relate those ideas about the alleged rationality of the real to our social practices.

Marcuse goes further to ground an argument about the new ideology of late capitalism in a discussion of human needs, the central problematic of One-Dimensional Man⁷. The collapse of bourgeois interiority charted philosophically psychologically in his earlier work results in what Marcuse takes to be "false" patterns of human needing in advanced capitalism; indeed domination is "corporealized" in this translation of deeply internalized false consciousness (via what in the book on Freud he called surplus repression) into false needs. And this shift from the level of false consciousness to that of false needs is

consonant with Marcuse's late-1950s attempt to explain new socio-historical developments; he breaks out of the orbit of philosophy precisely where he believes that philosophical categories have become political ones.

Thus emerges a pattern of one-dimensional thought and behavior in which ideas, aspirations, and objectives that, by their content, transcend the established universe of discourses and action are either repelled or reduced to terms of the given system and of its quantitative extension⁸.

One-dimensionality is thus intended to explain what happens when advanced capitalist political economy utilizes culture and personality to reproduce alienation both in the spheres of work and leisure This tightening of the bond between economy and culture, according to Marcuse, occurs as a result of the expansion of the Keynesian management of domestic capitalist economies and of capitalism's global expansion. Marcuse was here heavily influenced by his arrival in the United States in the early 1940s. In this sense, One-Dimensional Man could only have been written in response to the American political and cultural situation, in as much as the United States, in the post-war reconstruction period, was the most "advanced" capitalist society in the West. Marcuse's attempt to address the American circumstance took the form at first of an investigation of its philosophical culture, which valued pragmatism, instrumentalism and valuefreedom. He contended, as noted above, that positivism in the United States was much more a way of life than simply a metatheory of science, allowing the fusion of the first and second dimensions to take place. In Europe and in the third world, where long cultural traditions are more deeply embedded, this fusion of political economy and culture was less total. Indeed, Paul Piccone suggests that critical theory in its post-war Frankfurt formulation was largely a response to the demise of the possibility of "collective subjectivity" in the United States⁹, notably in works such as Horkheimer and Adorno's Dialectic of Enlightenment (1944), Marcuse's One-Dimensional Man (1964) and Adorno's Negative Dialectics (1966). It is Piccone's argument that the total mobilization of capitalism is no longer systematically rational and that the system now has to invent "artificial negativity" in order to preserve pockets of vital creative subjectivity that allow for corporate innovation and the deprogramming of old-style bureaucrats.

. . . It is not surprising that the new generation of Hegelian Marxists in the 1930s took as its point of departure the objective impossibility of collective subjectivity, and sought to preserve whatever free space had been created for the bourgeois individuality that the system increasingly seemed to rule out. In carrying out this theoretical retreat, the new Hegelian Marxists in the 1930s called themselves "critical theorists" and concentrated their analyses on culture and on the psychological dimension. Not only were they developing new conceptual forms for new historical contents, but they found themselves doing so in a new continent. The rise of Nazism and the accompanying anti-Marxism and anti-Semitism made it impossible for the Frankfurt School to work in Germany. So they were confronted, in the American exile, with a full-blown product of a process of social transformation which in Germany was still developing. In spite of its language and constant references to European culture, critical theory came into being in the late 1930s and early 1940s specifically as a theory of American society. Although it still spoke German and had no initial impact in the U.S., critical theory had irrevocable moved beyond its European origins 10.

Piccone thus suggests an important periodization of critical theory: in the period of early monopoly capitalism (the rise of the "authoritarian state" and beginning of capitalism's total mobilization, starting in the 1930s and extending through the 1950s and early 1960s) critical theory sought to preserve any viable remnant of bourgeois interiority, first through cultural and philosophical analysis and then through the use of psychoanalysis. But Piccone suggests that this temporary abandonment of Lukacs' 1923 collective subject for a more individuated concept of opposition is itself historically specific; indeed in later monopoly capitalism, starting with the turmoil of the 1960s,

he argues that the system *loosens* total administration in order to provide itself with idiosyncratic sources of creativity, without which it would simply stagnate. The overrationalization and overbureaucratization of social life, as Max Weber himself saw, results in the stagnation of the entrepreneurial system that erected bureaucracies in the first place, precisely as sources of efficiency and innovation. Thus according to Piccone, the challenge for Marxists in late monopoly capitalism is to exploit this "artificial negativity" as a genuine possibility of non-authoritarian thought and action. The bright young people recruited by the corporations and government might equally well become the critical thinkers of the 1980s.

The Dialectic of Enlightenment

Horkheimer and Adorno in 1944 published what has come to be considered the landmark work of the Frankfurt School 11: Dialectic of Enlightenment can reasonably be read as a more esoteric version of Marcuse's later One-Dimensional Man. Indeed in Eros and Civilization. Marcuse cited Horkheimer and Adorno's book and it is clear that he drew heavily on it for his own arguments. The main idea of Horkheimer and Adorno was that positivism, when it is generalized from a metatheoretical principle of scientific investigation into a lived principle of culture and ideology, becomes a powerful force of domination. The "dialectic" of enlightenment refers to the alternation between pre-industrial mythology and "rational" science. In this regard, the Frankfurt critics were concerned to confront the problem of enlightenment and rationalization in a more dialectical way than Weber had done 12. They suggest that under the rule of positivism we fetishize immediacy and factuality and thus reinforce a false consciousness that prevents us from recognizing dialectical possibilities of liberation contained in the shape of the present.

The dutiful child of modern civilization is possessed by a fear of departing from the facts which, in the very act of perception, the dominant conventions of science, commerce, and politics--cliche-like--have already molded; his anxiety is none other than the fear of social deviation ¹³.

Marcuse draws on this analysis of the dialectic of enlightenment and adds to it a critique of a technological rationality that he perceives to be linked to positivism-as-ideology. This technological rationality serves to achieve "economic-technical coordination" of human needs, weaving a seamless web of domination in which human beings, once stuck, can no longer think rationally and critically about their needs. Speaking of the inauthentic, dominated character if needs in a totally mobilized society, Marcuse says "false are those which are superimposed upon the individual by particular social interests in his repression: the needs which perpetuate toil, aggressiveness, misery, and injustice ¹⁴."

Bourgeois interiority that earlier could protest against the imposition of social on individual need. whether directly through ideology-critique or indirectly through "transcendent" works of higher culture, has been "invaded and whittled down by technological reality." This results in what Marcuse calls mimetic behavior, repetition of the immediately given. Here Marcuse evokes a theme of Horkheimer's 1947 Eclipse of Reason: positivism sanctions imitation of the given because it cannot admit metaphysical concepts. False needs are needs superimposed on the individual by a surrounding social order; the individual repeats his programming in fulfillment of Kantian duty. Here it is important to distinguish between duty and mimesis as agents of domination. Marcuse implies an important distinction between modes of social control in early and late capitalism. Where before workers' obedience was exacted by imposing on them an ideological conception of dutiful behavior, today they are kept in harness in a culture which purges all memories and visions of transcendental possibility. The modern person works not because he/she feels he/she must contribute to the common weal (duty), but because he/she equates the necessity of work with the "freedom" of abundant leisure. False needs thus are false not simply because their content is damaging (fast-food restaurants, television, violent sports) but because they cannot

be examined rationally and critically. The worker no longer feels a sense of duty but works and plays mimetically, in accord with what he/she believes to be the "only possible" reality. Life can be no other way, according to the positivists; it is what it appears to be. Thus needs are formed by a cultural apparatus that imposes the imperative of infinite consumption on people who view it as natural to divide existence into work and leisure.

In the last analysis, the question of what are true and false needs must be answered by the individuals themselves, but only in the last analysis; that is, if and when they are free to give their own answer. As long as they are kept incapable of being autonomous, as long as they are indoctrinated and manipulated (down to their very instincts), their answer to this question cannot be taken as their own. By the same token, however, no tribunal can justly arrogant to itself the right to decide which needs should be developed and satisfied. Any such tribunal is reprehensible, although our revulsion does not do away with the question: How can the people who have been the object of effective and productive domination by themselves create the conditions of freedom ¹⁵?

The harmony of early bourgeois society had to be achieved by convincing the worker to act against his/her immediate self-interest; today, immediate gratification can be tasted in the panoply of cultural and consumer pursuits that surround us. Where early capitalism was penurious and uncertain, late capitalism is hinged around massive Keynesian planning of markets, consumption and investment strategies. The manipulation of taste is a vital component of the contemporary technocrat's agenda. The internalization of false consciousness becomes an automatic response, mimesis, for we lost all reference to a past or future order qualitatively different from the present one.

In an important neo-Frankfurt study, Russell Jacoby terms this loss of memory "social amnesia¹⁶." By social amnesia, he means our loss of memory that serves to collapse the distinction between the rational and the possible. He draws on a sentence from Horkheimer and Adorno's Dialectic of Enlightenment, where they said that

"all reification is a forgetting." Jacoby adds that "The syndrome is a general one. In brief, society has lost its memory, and with it, its mind. The inability or refusal to think back takes its toll in the inability to think." Thus he decries the New Left's rejection of theorizing and historical analysis in favor of a spontaneism that he contends was doomed to failure. A naive progressivism fails to see the historical nature of the present and leads either to utopian thinking or to mere reformism. One-dimensional thinking is directly an example of social amnesia for it suggests that the present is grounded in neither past nor future but is an "eternal present." A dialectical analysis of the present order must show where it came from historically and where it might move in the future. This dialectical motion, according to which the present is both a concretion of the past and the promise of something new, cannot be captured by a unilinear concept of causality or by a positivist fixation on immediate appearances. Social amnesia leads to a superficial understanding of phenomena, a raw empiricism, that fails to examine deep structure underneath the surface of the present. One-dimensionality, in effect, obliterates the past in order to keep the future hidden.

In late capitalism, enlightenment is celebrated as the faculty of competent adjustment to the given. To be rational is to be realistic, not to shoot for the stars. Marcuse, in One-Dimensional Man. suggests that the power of positivism is its ability to deny implausible hypotheses about future social betterment and thus to justify whatever presently exists as the apex of social development. He suggest further, in a theme I will take up in the next section, that technological rationality excludes other possible rationalities such as rationality of gratification; in defining reason as a way of relating given means at hand to desired ends, technocrats collapse the categories of what Weber called formal and substantive reason. The hidden substance of modern rationality is contained in its superficial pragmatism that is defined by whatever is imposed from on high. Thus technical rationality--the logic of the instrument--comes to prevail as thought is reduced to operational definitions, formal logic and mathematics.

The new mode of though is today the predominant tendency in philosophy, psychology, sociology, and other fields. Many of the most seriously troublesome concepts are being "eliminated" by showing that no adequate account of them in terms of operations or behavior can be given. The radical empiricist onslaught. . thus provides the methodological justification for the debunking of the mind by the intellectuals—a positivism which, in its denial of the transcending elements of Reason, forms the academic counterpart of the socially required behavior ¹⁷.

Interestingly, Marcuse treated Weber as one of the most perceptive of positivist sociologists, an early apologist of capitalist rationality but also an imminent critic of it 18. Weber lamented the "iron cage" of technical reason but saw it as inevitable: he was never sanguine about the human consequences of this technical reason that overwhelms all substantive meaning and values in its path. Marcuse here rejects technical reason-the logic of efficiency--on grounds that its apparent formalism contains hidden content, namely profitmaximization in capitalism. Weber erred not in his morbid description of runaway rationality that ignores human values but in his exoneration of a purely technical rationality. Marcuse suggests that such a rationality does not and cannot exist. Indeed, one of the hallmarks of one-dimensional society is its reduction of value and moral questions to operational problems (e.g., poverty defined simply in terms of "social indicators" such as per capita income).

Marcuse's critique of the one-dimensional is thus a critique of Weber. What they share is a lament for the fall of the second dimension of transcendent culture. They differ in their views on the function of this second dimension. For Weber, cultural values were to leaven the pure purposiveness of instrumental rationality; they were to be overlaid on the mundanities of material reproduction such that captains of industry were to dabble in philosophy and attend the opera. But Marcuse suggests that this is doomed to fail because the second dimension, and the valuable bourgeois interiority it protects, is bound to succumb to the gravitational pull of political

economy. By separating material reproduction and a "higher" sphere of cultural values, Weber fails to protect culture as a world apart. Only be refusing to deal in a "pure" technique allegedly devoid of values can this gravitational pull be resisted. So Marcuse suggests that what is an apparently value-free rationality of purposiveness, pragmatism, technique and efficiency actually contains the substantive ethos of profit-maximization; indeed it is the very objectivity of enlightenment in this sense that allows it surreptitiously to become an ideology. There is no such thing as pure reason.

The Critique of Science and Technology

The dialectic of enlightenment serves in late capitalism to banish the metaphysical as nonsense and to perpetuate a "one-dimensional" existence. That the dominant rationality is not pure after all but is always in service to particular ideologies is carefully concealed in the name of social control. Workers must think that they are participating in the noiseless evolution of benign social laws under the guidance of omniscient technocrats who kowtow to no party line. Rationality is to be given in the shape of the real. This leads Marcuse to speculate not simply about the dialectic of enlightenment in this sense but also about the ethos of science and technology that is the new idol.

The most advanced areas of industrial society exhibit throughout these two features: a trend towards consummation of technological rationality, and intensive efforts to contain this trend within the established institutions. Here is the internal contradiction of this civilization: the irrational element in its rationality. It is the token of its achievements. The industrial society which makes technology and science its own is organized for the ever-more-effective domination of man and nature, for the ever-more-effective utilization of its resources. It becomes irrational when the success of these efforts opens new dimensions of human realization. Organization for peace is different from organization for war; the institutions which served the struggle for existence

cannot serve pacification of existence. Life as an end is qualitatively different from life as a means ¹⁹.

His critique of science and technology as embodying oppressive rationalities is also indebted to Horkheimer and Adorno's earlier argument in Dialectic of Enlightenment, Marcuse adds the distinctively Freudian "rationality of gratification" to their critique, arguing that science and technology, as modes of human selfexternalization, can themselves be erotized. This gives rise to the striking concept of a "new" science and technology which will liberate nature and serve a non-alienated forms of human praxis. On the orthodox left, this concept of a new science and technology has often been treated as a central symptom of Marcuse's undergrounded utopianism²⁰. Habermas himself has rejected the postulate of a new science on transcendental arounds.

The idea of a New Science will not stand up to logical scrutiny any more than that of a New Technology, if indeed science is to retain the meaning of modern science inherently oriented to possible technical control. For this function, as for scientific-technical progress in general, there is not more "humane" substitute ²¹.

He argues that science belongs to the realm of technical rationality and not to the realm of self-reflection and self-externalization. Habermas suggests that it is utopian to think that science as a human project can be reconstructed under socialism or that nature can be liberated from an inherently instrumental science and technology.

The resurrection of nature cannot be logically conceived within materialism, no matter how much the early Marx and the speculative minds in the Marxist tradition (Walter Benjamin, Ernst Bloch, Herbert Marcuse, Theodor W. Adorno) find themselves attracted by this heritage of mysticism. Nature does not conform to the categories under which the subject apprehends it in the unresisting way in which a subject can conform to the understanding of another subject on the basis of reciprocal recognition under categories that are binding on both of them²².

He rejects Marcuse's vision of a reconstructed science and technology largely because he rejects the instinctual and biological foundation of Marcuse's critical theory. At issue here is whether science and technology as human projects can be self-expressive at all or whether they are purely oriented to the mastery of nature. Marcuse's position, first sketched in *One-Dimensional Man* and later expanded in *An Essay on Liberation*, is that science can become a playful mode of activity carried out under the "aesthetic ethos," a mode of joyful, non-exploitative interaction with nature. In the 1969 book on liberation, Marcuse suggests that:

The liberated consciousness would promote the development of a science and technology free to discover and realize the possibilities of things and men in the protection and gratification of life, playing with the potentialities of form and matter for the attainment of this goal. Technique would then tend to become art, and art would tend to form reality: the opposition between imagination and reason, higher and lower faculties, poetic and scientific thought, would be invalidated. Emergence of a new Reality Principle: under which a new sensibility and a desublimated scientific intelligence would combine in the creation of an aesthetic ethos²³.

Marcuse argues that scientism--belief in positivist science as a panacea for all social problems--is the epistemology of one-dimensional thought. I have already suggested how crude positivism, according to Marcuse, banishes all metaphysical and normative ideas as nonsense. But he goes further and argues that to suggest that science and technique have value-free rationalities is ideological; indeed, his concept of a "new" science is a rebuttal of this thesis of the disinterested character of science. The belief that social problems can be solved technically, without reference to values, is a vital component of technocratic-capitalist ideology that hands over the keys of power to experts responsible for charting the unfolding of putative evolutionary laws of progress. The ethos of scientism is so powerful because in its name we willingly relinquish our control of social and natural processes. And it may

be that Habermas' otherwise sympathetic critique of the concept of a new science unwittingly plays into the hands of those who suggest that a purely technical rationality ought to obtain in the sphere of material reproduction.

The critique of science and technology was given its first coherent airing in the 1964 book. although Marcuse, in Eros and Civilization, had mentioned that nature ought not to be ruthlessly plundered but should be conceived as a "garden" in which science and technique are benign forms of free self-expression, even expressions of Schiller's "play-impulse²⁴." By suggesting the concept of a happy, joyous science, Marcuse does violence to the Weberian notion that science is the preserve of dispassionate technicians, unconcerned with matters of transcendence. The dualism of science and philosophy is yet another instance of Western philosophical dualism that separates matter and mind. Positivism is the perfection of this dualism, as it suggests that nature unproblematically presents itself to the eye of the scientist and requires no interpretation. In the 1964 book, Marcuse does not pursue this image of a playful science but indicates, in a negative sense, just where technological domination has become a force of onedimensionality. Technological rationality, by pretending to be concerned with efficiency and the pragmatic accomplishment of tasks and not human values, becomes inviolable; it flattens out the distinction between the real and the possible and banishes "idle" speculation about deep structure. In this sense, the technological ethos is indicted by Marcuse not as dystopian-Luddites do because machines impose their unique evil on us but because Marcuse contends that the technical ethos pervades existent capitalist technology. In this sense, Marcuse disagrees with Habermas' contention that there is a science and technology "as such."

In the social reality, despite all change, the domination of man by man is still the historical continuum that links pre-technological and technological Reason. However, the society which projects and undertakes the technological transformation of nature alters the base of domination by gradually replacing personal

dependence (of the slave on the master, the serf on the lord of the manor, the lord on the donor of the fief, etc.) with dependence on the "objective order of things" (on economic laws, the market, etc.). To be sure, the "objective order of things" is itself the result of domination, but it is nevertheless true that domination now generates a higher rationality--that of a society which sustains is hierarchic structure while exploiting ever more efficiently the natural and mental resources. and distributing the benefits of this exploitation on an ever-larger scale. The limits of this rationality, and its sinister force, appear in the progressive enslavement of man by a productive apparatus which perpetuates the struggle for existence and extends it to a total international struggle which ruins the lives of those who build and use this apparatus²⁵.

An alternative science and technology would contain within it a mode of gratification derived from molding and mastering nature. Marcuse in this sense relies on his earlier resolution of philosophical dualism and its split between the realms of freedom and necessity. Science transformed into a mode of self-gratification would not lose its cognitive content, its objectivity: rather its objectivity would be merged with a playful subjectivity that delights in investigating and manipulating the external world. Similarly, technique would not give up its instrumental rationality but would also embody a "play-impulse" through which we derive pleasure from touching and molding nature. Marcuse's vision in this sense presupposes an advanced industrial order in which basic needs can be satisfied. He merely suggests that science is always imbued with deep subjectivity and that once liberated from the ideological strictures of positivism is so destructive, he contends, because it suggests that the external world is static and contains a sufficient rationality, thus canceling the possibility of future dialectical motion.

While Marcuse does not agree with scientific Marxists like Engels that there is a "dialectic of nature" similar to the dialectic of history, he does not believe that science and technique are modes of self-externalization that contain important ontological and political recommendations about the relationship of person to world. Positivism is

political theory because it licenses passive contemplation of a world allegedly beyond human control. And the essence of one-dimensionality is our manipulation by a belief-system that collapses the distinction between political economy and transcendental culture and instead binds us ever further to the reified present. Marcuse's argument about the constraining effect of one-dimensional thought, whether purveyed by positivism, science or technology, is incomplete without a discussion of false needs.

True and False Needs

One-dimensional thought becomes a form of social action and its "introjection" in the form of needs.

No wonder then that, in the most advanced areas of this civilization, the social controls have been introjected to the point where even individual protest is affected at its roots. The intellectual and emotional refusal "to go along" appears neurotic and impotent. This is the sociopsychological aspect of the political event that marks the contemporary period: the passing of the historical forces which, at the preceding stage of industrial society, seemed to represent the possibility of new forms of existence.

But the term "introjection" perhaps no longer describes the way in which the individual by himself reproduces and perpetuates the external controls exercised by his society. Introjection suggests a variety of relatively spontaneous processes by which a Self (Ego) transposes the "outer" into the "inner." Thus introjection implies the existence of an inner dimension distinguished from an even antagonistic to the external exigencies--an individual consciousness and an individual unconscious apart from public opinion and behavior. The idea of "inner freedom" here has its reality: it designates the private space in which man may become and remain "himself."

Today this private space has been invaded and whittled down by technological reality. Mass production and mass distribution claim the entire individual, and industrial psychology has long since ceased to be confined to the factory. The manifold processes of introjection seem to be ossified in almost mechanical reactions. The result is, not adjustment but *mimesis*: as

immediate identification of the individual with *his* society and, through it, with the society as a whole²⁶.

The thrust of *One-Dimensional Man* is to document socio-historically the collapse of bourgeois interiority on the level of human needs. The seamless web of advanced capitalism creates what Marcuse calls "euphoria in unhappiness," willing bondage on the part of citizens who come to relish their own total mobilization. False needs are the outcome of this introjection of the ethos of one-dimensionality, according to which this is not simply the best of all possible worlds but indeed the only possible one. Marcuse suggests that Marxists require a theory of human needs in order to better understand the institutionalized forms of false consciousness today.

This clearly follows from the discussion in his book on Freud of surplus repression and repressive de-sublimation, where the individual against his own objective interests internalizes excessive system requirements of social control and eschews the abundant promises of liberation. In advanced capitalism, according to the Frankfurt argument, this total mobilization of experience is necessary in order to deflect human beings from the recognition that liberation can be tasted and achieved here and now. Marcuse's theory of false needs adds flesh to his earlier argument about the introjection and internalization of domination. And this argument is advanced in the context of the Frankfurt School's emigration to post-war America in which, as Piccone noted earlier, capitalism had reached its most mature phase and in which total mobilization was a vital requirement. One-Dimensional Man is both popularization and Americanization of themes that emerged in the 1930s more as tendential arguments than as concrete socio-historical analysis. It was almost as if the Frankfurt critical theory found direct application only in the 1950s United States, where ideological conformity and the introjection of domination in the form of false needs were "advanced" over anything Marcuse and his colleagues had seen in Europe.

A number of features distinguished the New World setting of critical theory. In the first place, the extent of Keynesian state management of the

economy was greater in the United States during the post-war reconstruction period than in Europe (which was itself being rebuilt under the Marshall Plan). Second, the post-war boom following on war-time abstinence created a cornucopia of consumer commodities and raised consumer's expectations. Third, since there had never been a socialist movement of note in the United States. class-conflict was considerably blunted, allowing state-intervention and the endless manipulation of human needs to continue unhindered. With no coherent left opposition, the post-war reconstruction was increasingly phrased in Cold War terms, thus creating the "artificial negativity" of an enemy without that served the useful function of enhancing domestic patriotism and fostering civic obedience. The political and psychological harmony of advanced capitalism in the 1950s United States required the concretization of the theoretical categories used originally in the Zeitschrift to describe the fall of bourgeois interiority.

Marcuse's discussion of human needs builds on Marx's image of private needs as social needs. But because Marcuse recaptures the biological core, he adds to Marx's theory of the social determination of need a vision of true needs. springing from the non-repressive sublimation of Eros. Marx did not spend much time speculating either about false or true needs because in the early stage of entrepreneurial capitalism needs in general were unproblematic; the problem of "introjection" had not yet emerged. Workers were compelled to act by absolute poverty and this, according to Marx, was to be the mainspring of revolutionary transformation. Marx simply did not foresee the structural requirements in a more advanced stage of capitalism of the mobilization of bourgeois interiority; thus the problem of false needs did not occur to him.

Marcuse adds to Marx a biological dimension that allows one to explain both true and false needs: false are those needs that require surplus repression and that are not freely arrived at in a state of self-determination; true are those needs that emerge through non-repressive desublimation from the externalizations of Eros. In early Marx's terms, true needs are needs of self-externalization

through creative praxis. The particular content of these needs does not interest Marcuse and in *An Essay on Liberation*, he later suggests that it is utopian to itemize what their contents might be. Only in the exuberant process of self-liberation will the contents of the needs be determined; and Marcuse retains what he calls Marx's "joking-ironical" image of the fisherman-hunter-critic, able to move easily across roles and distinguished by his catholicity of self-expressions²⁷. Marcuse agrees with Marx that in a state of freedom there will be incredible diversity in patterns of need and creative work.

The theory of false needs is the application of the analysis of the oppressive functions of scientific and technological rationality in a positivist culture to human "biology." One-dimensionality is not a transpersonal ether that envelops us without our knowing it; it is reproduced on the phenomenologically concrete level of individual need. Thus we come to relish the numerous gadgets and objects that fill our stores as balms for the "eternal" anxiety of exploited and unfilling work. The split between labor and leisure sanctioned by the ancient Greek dualism of Aristotle creates a situation in which needs are relegated to the domain of consumption. But Marcuse, following early Marx, suggests that the truest needs are those that bridge between production and consumption, where we realize our humanity in work that is at once productive and creative. Where Marx, in the Grundrisse sketches the umbilical relationship between production and consumption, Marcuse takes the argument many steps further in analyzing the systemic function of the work-leisure dualism in the service of false needs. Through one-dimensional consciousness we forget that satisfaction and pleasure, even erotic gratification, is attainable in work as well as leisure.

Later examinations of needs and consumption by authors such as Scitovsky, Heller and Leiss²⁸ suggest that false needs in Marcuse's sense are intrinsically unsatisfying; Leiss suggests that there comes a point where the busy consumer cannot keep up with the ceaselessly shifting appearances and allure of commodities. Ecological radicals argue further that the

provisioning of a never-ending cornucopia of products to placate alienated worker-consumers is rapidly becoming an impossibility, in face of imminent energy and resource shortages. What will happen when advanced capitalism simply cannot afford to churn out never-ending doses of commodities? Can capitalism survive in a "steady-state?" Indeed, this dialectic of shattered consumer expectation, as I have argued elsewhere, is one of the most potent crisis-points in advanced capitalism. False needs may be inherently ephemeral, at least in as much as their satisfaction is increasingly ecologically irrational.

Leiss, a former student of Marcuse, suggests that one solution lies in the provisioning of modes of satisfaction that are alternatives to what he calls the high-intensity market setting²⁹. Small-scale production and consumption has been a desideratum of much socialist literature from Godwin through Marx. In this sense, the nonauthoritarian Western interpretation of Marxism has always shied away from hypostatizing inevitably centralized forms of political economy (as in the state-socialist model), recognizing that technological decentralization goes hand in hand with the decentralization and deconcentration of wealth and power. Indeed, the incipient limits to growth and ecological constraints might provide fortuitous opportunities to transform society in radical ways: in the American context, populist resentment of big government and big business might be transformed into a yearning for smallscale socialism rooted in closer harmonies between production and consumption and work and leisure.

Piccone, in his analysis of "artificial negativity," referred to above, suggests that Marcuse's depiction of one-dimensionality is historically peculiar to the most repressive and integrative period of early monopoly capitalism; he argues that the system methodically loosens the binds on subjectivity in its later stage of development. Piccone here argues that Marcuse falsely externalizes the reality of total mobilization in suggesting that false needs have been totalized. The system, in its more mature phase, finds that it cannot survive without inputs of creative subjectivity that guarantee future profit through

savvy long-term planning. A bureaucratized capitalism, where all experience is administered, necessarily stagnates. Piccone, I believe, is correct in periodizing the phase of one-dimensionality. Today the system cultivates needs that superficially break out of the consumption-conformity syndrome of the 1950s. Artificial negativity is bred as "lifestyle," involving sustained attention to "personal growth" and the cultivation of sensibility. Piccone is undecided about whether this negativity, produced by the system itself, can be radicalized as the new left counter culture milieu of the 1960s is broadened into a sober theoretical radicalism in the 1980s.

The periodization of one-dimensionality is important lest critical theory lose its own dialectical character. To suggest that one-dimensionality has become total denies what Marcuse himself, in the 1964 book, calls "the chance of the alternatives." And in the introduction to One-Dimensional Man. he characterizes the revolutionary situation as "ambiguous" and not totally hopeless. The very recognition of one-dimensionality constitutes what Marcuse at the end of the book calls the Great Refusal, the abstract negation of false needs through individual choice. The crucial question in his theoretical work in the later 1960s was whether this initially individualized Refusal could be more than abstract negation but might actually connect individual resistance to larger-scale, even class, types of rebellion. In 1964, Marcuse could not perceive the historicity of one-dimensionality and thus he tended to eternalize false needs and to provide little consequent hopes about their abolition. The criticism that One-Dimensional Man is "only" a book about ideology and consciousness misses the point; in the late 1950s and early 1960s, there were no credible political vehicles for broadening the Great Refusal into political action. And Marcuse, in the spirit of the 1930s essays, suggests that the fall of bourgeois interiority must be resisted at all costs, even if only in initially privatized terms.

Does this mean that the critical theory of society abdicates and leaves the field to an empirical sociology which, freed from all theoretical guidance except a methodological one, succumbs to the fallacies of misplaced concreteness, thus performing an ideological service while proclaiming the limitation of value judgments? Or do the dialectical concepts once again testify to their truth--by comprehending their own situation as that of the society which they analyze? A response might suggest itself if one considers the critical theory precisely at the point of its greatest weakness--its inability to demonstrate the liberating tendencies within the established society.

The critical theory of society, was, at the time of its origin, confronted with the presence of real forces (objective and subjective) in the established society which moved (or could be guided to move) toward more rational and freer institutions by abolishing the existing ones which has become obstacles to progress. These were the empirical grounds on which the theory was erected, and from these empirical grounds derived the idea of the liberation of inherent possibilities-the development, otherwise blocked and distorted, of material and intellectual productivity, faculties and needs. Without the demonstration of such forces, the critique of society would still be valid and rational, but it would be incapable of translating its rationality into terms of historical practice. The conclusion? 'Liberation of inherent possibilities' no longer adequately expresses the historical alternative 30.

This raises the crucial problem of the possible self-transcendence of false needs. Marcuse here rejoins, if implicitly, the great themes of Western Marxism since Lukacs. The overcoming of these self-damaging needs must be an effort and is not quaranteed purely in the cosmic clash of selfcontradictory economic structures. Since Marxism is not determinism. Marcuse stresses that the bourgeois individual must, through critical reflection, undo his own distorted needs, not simply on the level of consciousness but also on the level of desire. The individual is the first battleground of transformative practice. Marcuse thus does not choose between individual selftransformation and class activism but suggests that the latter begins with the former. The individual is the battleground precisely because onedimensionalization has threatened to destroy bourgeois individuality; without that individuality-an individual who at least in though and feeling holds out against total administration--classstruggle is strictly impossible. Lukacs' collective subject can only come to life in and through struggling individuals.

"The Chance of the Alternatives"

Marcuse ends One-Dimensional Man with considerable pessimism, suggesting that "nothing indicates that it will be a good end;" the individual can only engage in the Great Refusal, rejecting the seductive blandishments of the consumer culture and its forced merger of reason and rationality. That this is an abstract and not concrete negation, in Hegel's terminology, I have already noted.

At its most advanced state, domination functions as administration, and in the overdeveloped areas of mass consumption, the administered life becomes the good life of the whole, in the defense of which the opposites are united. This is the pure form of domination. Conversely, its negation appears to be the pure demand for the end of domination—the only truly revolutionary exigency, and the event that would validate the achievements of industrial civilizations. In the face of its efficient denial by the established system, this negation appears in the politically impotent form of the "absolute refusal"—a refusal which seems the more unreasonable the more the established system develops its productivity and alleviates the burden of life 31.

But it might also be the beginning of classbased transformative action. Indeed, it is with the Great Refusal that Marcuse initiates what I have called his dialectic of individual and class. This dialectic works to raise individual rebellion to the level of full-blown collective activism through suitable mediations that join the individual to the social group. These mediations were never spelled out by Marcuse until An Essay on Liberation, where he offers a number of hints but, even then. no hard and fast guidelines. While Marcuse's thought as a whole remains insufficiently programmatic and socio-historical in this sense, it is important to note that he envisaged a dialectic of individual and class and did not reduce transformative activity to "change of consciousness" or strictly personal choice.

Marcuse simply recognizes that the revolution will go nowhere unless people actively desire it.

This sketch of the dialect of individual and class, from its foundation in the Great Refusal, is at one the strength and the weakness of Marcuse's critical theory. It is a strength because it seeks an individuated concept of reason with which to restore subjective autonomy in face of total administration; Marcuse, through his profound merging of German idealism and psychoanalysis. discovers a key to solve philosophical dualism and to hasten the restoration of the struggling individual as the basic resource of a nonauthoritarian Marxism. It is a weakness, however, where Marcuse restricts his analysis to the dominated individual and does not pursue relevant mediations that can relate the Great Refusal to a transindividual social praxis. In his opposition to the orthodox Marxist model of automatic classstruggle, transpiring above the heads of men and women, Marcuse errs by being too individualistic and thus too abstractly negative. In face of revolutionary determinism, he shies away from serious programmatic thinking of a kind that could relate individual protest and self-liberation to the creation of institutional forms like workers' councils. This is largely because Marcuse was situated in a thoroughly unrevolutionary political culture, especially after the Second World War. But it may also have been because Marcuse drank too deeply of bourgeois high culture, especially its art, and often seemed to intimate that the revolution can only be carried on through aesthetic radicalism--necessarily a politics of abstraction.

His arguments about the transcendent function of art in his last work, *The Aesthetic Dimension*, tend to perpetuate the abstract negation of the Great Refusal. Indeed, I read Marcuse as torn between the nitty-gritty activism of the student movement in the late 1960s and a high-flown aesthetics as proper revolutionary vehicles. His 1973 critique of the New Left, *Counterrevolution and Revolt*, reveals his growing ambivalence. He suggests that the New Left was too individualist and not attuned enough to the dialectic of individual and class.

The new individualism raises the problem of the relation between personal and political rebellion, private liberation and social revolution. The inevitable antagonism, the tension between these, too easily collapse into an immediate identification, destroying the potential in both of them. True, no qualitative social change, no socialism, is possible without the emergence of a new rationality and sensibility in the individuals themselves: no radical social change without a radical change of the individual agents of change. However, this individual liberation means transcendence beyond the bourgeois individuals: it means overcoming the bourgeois individual (who is constituted in the tension between personal, private realization and social performance) while at the same time restoring the dimension of self, of the privacy which the bourgeois culture had once created 32.

On the one hand, he is saying the New Left was too individualistic; on the other, bourgeois culture is self-negating because it does not overcome its own interiority. Marcuse could not find an adequate concept of mediation in order to wend his way between the Scylla of uniformed New Left subjectivism and the Charybdis of radical aesthetics, inherently unpolitical. While he had much more sympathy for the student movement than most Marxists at the time, he decried its insufficient rationality, indeed its revolt against reason per se. But this is not to say that Marcuse found a better, more effective, mode of bridging the individual and the collective.

I read Marcuse as wavering between the immediacy of New Left politics and the mediacy of bourgeois art as a form of imminent critique of an "advanced" bourgeois order. Those who decry the "apolitical" character of critical theory miss the point; Marcuse could not find a "collective subject" capable of embodying the non-authoritarian aims of the New Left and of rising above spontaneism. His venture into aesthetic theory was occasioned by a political situation in the 1970s when radical politics was defunct and the American workingclass self-contradictorily embraced "neoconservative" solutions to the deepening economic and social crisis. The charge that critical theory is apolitical says more about the prevalent political culture than about the men who were associated

with the Frankfurt School. Indeed, Marcuse more than any other Frankfurt thinker, actively engaged the New Left and plumbed it for Marxian significance. That Marcuse ultimately found it to be wanting--too individualistic, too immediate--was not his own fault or the fault of his critical theory. And his important 1973 critique of the New Left, Counter-revolution and Revolt, stand as a monument of sympathetic dialectical criticism. Instead of rendering ex cathedra judgments on the grave of the New Left, Marcuse tried to salvage its important oppositional content, just as he had tried to do more systematically in the 1969 An Essay on Liberation, which remains the more important theoretical statement.

NOTES

- On this subject, see, for example, Ernest Mandel's Late Capitalism, (London: NLB, 1975). Mandel, however, charges the Frankfurt thinkers and especially Marcuse with reifying science and technology as peculiar features of late capitalism. cf. pp. 502-503.
- On the Frankfurt use of the concept of domination, see Trent Schroyer, The Critique of Domination, (New York: Braziler, 1973). Also see Martin Jay's history of the Frankfurt School on this, The Dialectical Imagination, (Boston: Little Brown, 1975).
- This argument about the interconnection of reification, alienation and domination is pursued at greater length in my Western Marxism: An Introduction, (Santa Monica: Goodyear, 1979). See especially Chapter Four, "Hegelian Marxism II: The Theory of Domination," pp. 145-188.
- Phil Slater, Origin and Significance of the Frankfurt School, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977), pp. 147-148.
- See Herbert Marcuse, One-Dimensional Man, (Boston: Beacon, 1964), p. 11.
- For an excellent survey of Marcuse's theory of onedimensionality by some of his former students, see the essays contained in Paul Breines' Critical Interruptions, (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970).
- For neo-Marcuseist treatments of the problem of human needs, see William Leiss, The Limits to Satisfaction, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press,

- 1976); and Agnes Heller, *The Theory of Needs in Marx*. (London: Allison and Busby, 1976).
- 8. One-Dimensional Man, p. 12.
- See Paul Piccone, "Beyond Identity Theory," in John O'Neill (ed.), On Critical Theory, (New York: Seabury, 1976), pp. 129-144.
- 10. Ibid., p. 9.
- Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment, (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972).
- 12. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- 13. *Ibid.*, p. xiv.
- 14. One-Dimensional Man, pp. 10-11.
- 15. One-Dimensional Man, p. 6.
- See Russell Jacoby, Social Amnesia, (Boston: Beacon, 1975).
- 17. Ibid., p. 13.
- See Marcuse's essay, "Industrialization and Capitalism in Max Weber," in *Negations*, (Boston: Beacon, 1968), pp. 201-226.
- 19. One-Dimensional Man, p. 17.
- I treat this issue of the Marxian critique of science and technology in my "Marcuse and Habermas on New Science," in *Polity*, Vol. IX, No. 2, Winter 1976, pp. 158-181.
- Jurgen Habermas, Toward a Rational Society, (Boston: Beacon, 1970), p. 88.
- Jurgen Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests, (Boston: Beacon, 1971), pp. 32-33.
- Herbert Marcuse, An Essay on Liberation, (London: Penguin, 1969), p. 24.
- Herbert Marcuse, Eros and Civilization, (New York, Vintage, 1955), p.
- 25. One-Dimensional Man, p. 144.
- 26. *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.
- Herbert Marcuse, An Essay on Liberation, (London: Penguin), p.
- Tibor Scitovsky, The Joyless Economy, Agnes Heller, The Theory of Needs in Marx, (London: Allison and Busby, 1976); William Leiss, The Limits to Satisfaction, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976).
- See Leiss, The Limits to Satisfaction, especially pp. 104-113.
- 30. One-Dimensional Man, pp. 254-255.
- 31. Ibid., p. 255.
- 32. Herbert Marcuse, Counterrevolution and Revolt, (Boston: Beacon, 1973), p. 48