

Philosophy, Psychoanalysis, and Emancipation, by H. Marcuse

a. People / Organizations: https://monoskop.org/images/7/7c/MARCUSE_Herbert_-_Coll._papers_5_-_Philosophy_Psychoanalysis_and_Emancipation.pdf

b. Quotes:

- "...our world is a world of shadows. We are prisoners in the captivity of the body, chained by our appetites, cheated by our senses" - Author (pg. 125)

c. General Notes:

- Introduction, by D. Kellner, et. al. (pg. 1)
 - "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." (pg. 8-9)
- Chapter 1 - Interventions (pg. 76)
 - Theses on Scientific Philosophy (pg. 76)
 - "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)." (pg. 76)
 - "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." (pg. 77)
 - "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." (pg. 77)
 - **"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" (pg. 77)
 - "Scientific philosophy has no capacity to make a critical judgment among differing interests: they are all "facts" in the same way." (pg. 78)
 - Idealism and Positivism (pg. 92)
 - "I have chosen idealism and positivism as the two types of philosophical thinking which have dominated the entire history of Western thought." (pg. 92)
 - "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.)" (pg. 93)
 - "The latter view is that of idealism" (pg. 93)
 - ◆ "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." (pg. 93-94)
 - ◇ "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." (pg. 94)
 - ◆ "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." (pg. 95)
 - ◇ "**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.**" (pg. 96)

- "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**" (pg. 97)
 - "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." (pg. 98-99)
- "All genuine philosophy contains idealism as well as positivism." (pg. 99)
- Chapter 2 - Psychoanalytic Interventions (pg. 101)
 - See text
- Chapter 3 - From Ontology to Technology (pg. 132)
 - "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'" (pg. 132)
 - "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" (pg. 134)
 - "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 pre-technical 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**" (pg. 135-136)
 - "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.**" (pg. 138)
 - "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: (1) Control of nature: rational exploitation of natural resources, etc. (2) Control of man: rational exploitation of natural resources, etc." (pg. 139)
 - "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.**" (pg. 139)
- Chapter 4 - Philosophical Reflections on Science and Technology (pg. 141)
 - "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.**" (pg. 142)
 - "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." (pg. 144)

- **"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!)." (pg. 145)
- Chapter 5 - Philosophy in the Contemporary World (pg. 160)
 - "...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." (pg. 161-162)
 - **"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." (pg. 162)
 - "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" (pg. 162-163)
 - **"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." (pg. 164)
 - **"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.**" (pg. 177)
 - **"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.**" (pg. 182)
 - "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.**" (pg. 183)
 - "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." (pg. 185)
 - **"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" (pg. 185)
- Chapter 7 - Late Philosophical / Political Reflections (pg. 206)
 - **"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**" (pg. 207)

- "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." (pg. 208)
 - ◆ "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" (pg. 208-209)
 - ◇ "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" (pg. 209-210)
- "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." (pg. 211)
 - "**...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, clown to their very instinctual structure. Men and women can be computerized into robots, yes - but they can also refuse." (pg. 213)

d. Further Readings:

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