A Marcuse Renaissance?

By Douglas Kellner

Since his death in 1979, Herbert Marcuse's influence has been steadily waning. The extent to which his work is ignored in progressive circles is curious, as Marcuse was one of the most influential radical theorists of the day during the 1960s and his work continued to be a topic of interest and controversy during the 1970s. While the waning of the revolutionary movements with which he was involved helps explain Marcuse's eclipse in popularity, the lack of new texts and publications has also contributed. For while there have been a large number of new translations of works by Benjamin, Adorno, and Habermas during the past decade, few new publications of untranslated or uncollected material by Marcuse have appeared, although there have been a steady stream of books on Marcuse.[1] In addition, while there has been great interest in the writings of Foucault, Derrida, Baudrillard, Lyotard, and other French "postmodern," or "poststructuralist," theorists, Marcuse did not fit into the fashionable debates concerning modern and postmodern thought.[2] Unlike Adorno, Marcuse did not anticipate the postmodern attacks on reason and his dialectics were not "negative." Rather he subscribed to the project of reconstructing reason and of positing utopian alternatives to the existing society -- a dialectical imagination that has fallen out of favor in an era that rejects totalizing thought and grand visions of liberation and social reconstruction.

The neglect of Marcuse may be altered through the publication of a wealth of material, much of it unpublished and unknown, that is found in the Herbert Marcuse archives in Frankfurt.[3] During the summers of 1989 and 1991, and the Fall of 1990, I went through the archival material and was astonished at the number of valuable unpublished texts. The Marcuse archive is a treasure house and plans are shaping up to publish many volumes of this material. In this essay, I shall call attention to some of the most important archival material, focusing on some extremely interesting manuscripts from the 1940s and some unpublished book manuscripts and articles from the 1960s and 1970s. My focus, in accord with the interests of this anthology, will be how this new material can contribute to a Marcuse renaissance. My argument is, first, that Marcuse addresses issues that continue to be of relevance to contemporary radical theory and politics and that the unpublished manuscripts contain much material pertinent to contemporary concerns which could provide the basis for a rebirth of interest in Marcuse's thought. Secondly, I argue that Marcuse provides comprehensive philosophical perspectives on domination and liberation, a powerful method and framework for analyzing contemporary society, and a vision of liberation that is richer than classical Marxism, other versions of Critical Theory, and current versions of postmodern theory.[4] Thus, I believe that

Marcuse overcomes the limitations of many current varieties of social theory and radical politics and that his writings provide a viable starting-point for theoretical and political concerns of the present age.

Philosophy and Politics: Unpublished Papers From the 1940s

Some of the richest manuscripts result from Marcuse's work during the 1940s when he was working for the U.S. government. The manuscripts include some fascinating studies of national socialism, a 1945 essay on art and politics in the totalitarian age, thirty-three theses on the contemporary era, which forecast the themes of One-Dimensional Man, and some manuscripts, co-authored with Franz Neumann, sketching out a book-length project on theories of social change.[5] These texts are important because they provide original analyses of the psychological, cultural, and technological conditions of totalitarian societies and the way that societies sell their citizens on the virtues of war. These topics are obviously relevant today during an era of increasing social administration in which U.S. military interventions like the Gulf War can be orchestrated to manipulate individuals to consent to lies and aggression.

The unpublished manuscripts also suggest a revision of the received history of the Critical Theory of the so-called Frankfurt School, and provide material that mitigates the wide-spread opinion that the group was turning away from social practice and political action in the 1940s.[6] It has been hitherto unknown that Marcuse was collaborating with Franz Neumann during this period on a project entitled "Theory of Social Change."[7] In the Marcuse Archive in Frankfurt, there are three manuscripts (#118.00, #118.01, #118.04) which indicate that Marcuse and Neumann were working together to produce a systematic treatise on theories of social change in the Western tradition of political and social thought. One set of notes contains a short description of the project and two drafts present overviews that indicate the scope, content, method and goals. The short precis of the project describes it as:

> A historical and theoretical approach to the development of a positive theory of social change for contemporary society.
>
> The major historical changes of social systems, and the theories associated with them will be discussed. Particular attention will be paid to such transitions as those from feudalism to capitalism, from laissez-faire to organized industrial society, from capitalism to socialism and communism.

A note in Marcuse's handwriting on the themes of the study indicates that he and Neumann intended to analyze conflicting tendencies toward social change and social cohesion; forces of freedom and necessity in social change; subjective and objective factors that produce social change; patterns of social change, such as evolution and revolution; and directions of social change, such as progress, regression, and cycles. The project would culminate in a "theory of social change for our society." A seventeen-page typed manuscript in the Marcuse Archive, entitled "A History of the

Doctrine of Social Change," opens:

> Since sociology as an independent science was not established before the 19th century, the theory of society up to that time was an integral part of philosophy or of those sciences (such as the economic or juristic) the conceptual structure of which was to a large extent based upon specific philosophical doctrines. This intrinsic connection between philosophy and the theory of society (a connection which will be explained in the text) formulates the pattern of all particular theories of social change occurring in the ancient world, in the middle ages, and in the commencement of modern times. One decisive result is the emphasis on the fact that social change cannot be interpreted within a particular social science, but must be understood within the social and natural totality of human life. This conception uses, to a large extent, psychological factors in the theories of social change. However, the derivation of social and political concepts from the "psyche" of man is not a psychological method in the modern sense but rather involves the negation of psychology as a special science. For the Greeks, psychological concepts were essentially ethical, social and political ones, to be integrated into the ultimate science of philosophy.[8]

This passage clearly reveals the typically Marcusean tendency -- shared by other members of the Frankfurt School -- to integrate philosophy, social theory, psychology, and politics. While standard academic practice tended to separate these fields, Marcuse and his colleagues perceived their interrelation. Thus Marcuse and Neumann read ancient philosophy as containing a theory of social change which was basically determined by a search for the conditions that would produce the highest fulfillment of the individual. This project begins, they claim, with the Sophists, for whom: "Social institutions are subject to the wants of the individuals for whose sake they have been established." The Sophists were thus prototypes of philosophers who protested against oppressive and congealed social conditions in the name of the interests of the individual. They did not, however, develop any systematic theories of social change, or theories of laws of social change. Rather, their "oppositional" model was that of individuals who, realizing their true interests, changed society accordingly.

For Plato, the corruptions of private property and lack of a proper education render individuals incapable of "discovering unaided the correct form of social and political relations." It is up to the philosopher, therefore, to discover the knowledge by virtue of which social and political life can be reordered to serve the true interests of the individual. Marcuse and Neumann read Plato, therefore, as elaborating "that form of social order which can best guarantee the development of human potentialities under the prevailing conditions." This involves, for Plato, conceptualization of the ideal forms of life by the philosopher and the reconstruction of society according to them: "The

radical change of the traditional city state into the platonic state of estates implies a reconstruction of the economy in such a manner that the economic no longer determines the faculties and powers of man, but is rather determined by them."

Note that already Marcuse is contrasting true and false interests and claiming that only the philosopher could discover those true forms of social life which will make possible the full realization of human potentialities. Later Marcuse would scandalize some on the Left by being sympathetic to the notion of the philosopher king who could see through the doxa and ideological confusion of everyday consciousness and perceive true needs, interests, and policies to reorder social life. This rather undemocratic political vision might be rooted early in his political thought and have its origins in his study of Plato.[9]

One notes also, the distinctly Marxian reading of Plato which stresses the negative impact of private property on human consciousness and values and the need to reorder the socio-economic system, as well as the state, to provide true happiness for humanity. There is also an emphasis in the section on Plato on the importance of restructuring the psyche and the equation of philosophy and psychology, reading psychology as "a kind of universal science and as such identical with philosophy," that previews Marcuse's later turn to Freud and his particular philosophical reading of Freud.

Aristotle, however, was, according to Marcuse and Neumann, "the first philosopher who attempted to elaborate a general theory of social and political development." Aristotle's political philosophy was grounded in his metaphysics, in his theory of movement as progression from lower to higher potentialities. Historical movement, as opposed to natural movement, was a "conscious development in the course of which something actually new is produced, whereas change in the world of nature merely means a cycle in which identical things keep recurring." The state, in this vision, is the highest form in which the potentialities of a rational human being can be realized. As with Plato, the state can be judged according to whether it does or does not fulfill human potentialities. Thus both Plato and Aristotle have critical standards against which they can measure, criticize, and seek to transform existing social and political conditions. Unlike Plato, however, Aristotle did not believe that degeneration of all forms of political life was inevitable, and instead argued that if "proportionate justice" in the state and society was maintained, social and political harmony could be preserved.

With the breakup of the Greek city states, "political theory incorporated the concept of the equality and universality of human nature as the highest standard of social and political organization." With the Stoics and later Greek, Roman, and medieval philosophy, theories of natural law emerged which provided criteria for oppositional theories to criticize existing social and political forms of organization. The Epicurean school renounced theories of social and political development and focused instead on the production of individual happiness as the higher good.

In a brief sketch of medieval theories of social change, Marcuse and Neumann emphasize "radical social opposition inherent in the theology of the Church fathers" and "heretical religious

doctrines," such as the teachings of Averoism which "received practical, political and social significance... in the struggle between the church and the secular powers, in the disputes within the church, and, finally, in the discussion within the secular society caused by the disputed realm of temporal and secular powers." The oppositional force of this doctrine is discerned by contrasting it with Thomistic social philosophy which attempts "to reconcile the natural law doctrine of the Stoics with the existing feudal, hierarchically organized estates." While Stoic natural law doctrines were often used against existing social formations, in Thomistic philosophy it is used to legitimate a hierarchical society.

Just as Marcuse and Neumann contrasted conservative and progressive medieval theories of social change, so too did they contrast modern theories, thus presenting theories of society as a contested terrain between opposing tendencies, rather than, say, as a monolithic bloc of domination. Generally, Marcuse and Neumann contrast critical, materialist, and progressivist theories with more idealist and conservative ones. After some comments on how Machiavelli helped produce a secularization of theories of social change in the modern era, Marcuse and Neumann discuss trends of rationalist, empiricist, and materialist theories. Dominant rationalist theories (Hobbes, Spinoza, and Leibniz) are characterized as "positivistic... insofar as the prevailing structure of society provides the final framework for the analysis of social change." Empiricist philosophies share this positivist trend,[10] though there is a distinction, Marcuse and Neumann claim, between optimistic and pessimistic trends. The former assume that humans are essentially good and therefore imply a theory of progress which asserts that human "potentialities can be fully developed in an orderly progress of society without revolution and retrogression (Grotius, Locke, Shaftesbury, Jefferson, and so on). Pessimistic theories reject the possibilities of a harmonious progress and repudiate "any kind of social change which might endanger the existing social order" (these include the religious doctrines of Luther and Calvin, as well as the counterrevolutionary theories of de Maistre, Mandeville, and Burke).

These trends are contrasted with a "strong non-conformist critical and predominantly materialist trend" which bases its criticism of society on the material needs of human beings. "To these, social change is equivalent to the complete transformation of society, particularly to a complete change of the system of private property. This materialistic criticism is the link unifying the philosophy of French enlightenment (Holbach, Helvetius, Morelly, Mably, Meslier, and Linguet) and is still operative in Rousseau's critique of the traditional society." The materialist critique achieves an "openly revolutionary character" in times of social disintegration (Munzer, the Anabaptists, and chiliastic trends in the Puritan revolution), though during the period in which the middle classes gained political and social power, materialist theories celebrated the existing capitalist economy which was said to be governed by a preestablished harmony (the Physiocrats and classical economists).

Marcuse and Neumann present Hegelian philosophy, much as Marcuse did in Reason and Revolution, as a critical rationalism which combined radical impulses with conservative ones. The dialectical method is praised "as an adequate theoretical structure capable of coping with the dynamic character of modern society. Social change is no longer a particular event within a rather

static reality, but the primary reality itself from which all stasis must be explained. The interpretation of social change becomes identical with the theory of society." Marx is presented as the theorist who best develops Hegel's dialectical method in conceptualizing contemporary social antagonisms. For Marx, "the problem of social change is not a problem within the prevailing form of society, but of the substitution of this society for a socialist one." This Marxian position would guide Marcuse's thinking until the end of his life, and Neumann presumably shared this perspective at that period of time.

Marcuse and Neumann thus propose a systematic examination of ancient, medieval, and modern theories of social change with a view toward developing a theory of social change for contemporary society. The distinctive feature of classical theories of social change for them is the interconnection of sociological, political, and psychological factors. "The true order of human life embraces all three realms" and "the laws ruling that order" are similar. They note that modern sociology "has severed the intrinsic connection between the theory of society and philosophy which is still operative in Marxism and has treated the problem of social change as a particular sociological question." They propose, by contrast, to integrate philosophy, sociology, and political theory in a theory of social change.

A larger, forty-seven page manuscript, titled "A Theory of Social Change,"[11] presents more a comprehensive analysis of some of the specific theories of social change that Marcuse and Neumann would analyze. The focus of this manuscript is on modern theories of social change and there is detailed analysis of Vico, Montesquieu, French and British Enlightenment theories, the counterrevolution, idealist theories, administrative theories (Saint-Simon, Comte, and Spencer), dialectical theories (Hegel, Marx, and socialist theory), and the end of philosophically-inspired theories of society and beginning of "scientific" sociological ones in Lester Ward. As in the shorter prospectus, the framework contrasts earlier classical theories that combine philosophical, sociological, and political reflections with later doctrines that eliminate the philosophical components and once again the dialectical and materialist perspectives of Marxism are privileged.[12]

This project is extremely interesting within the history of Critical Theory since it shows that in the 1940s there were two tendencies within Critical Theory: 1) the more pessimistic philosophical-cultural analysis of the trends of Western civilization being developed by Horkheimer and Adorno in Dialectic of Enlightenment; and 2) the more practical-political development of Critical Theory as a theory of social change anticipated by Marcuse and Neumann. For Marcuse and Neumann, Critical Theory was conceptualized as a theory of social change that would connect philosophy, social theory, and radical politics -- precisely the project of 1930s Critical Theory that Horkheimer and Adorno were abandoning in the early 1940s in their turn toward philosophical and cultural criticism divorced from social theory and radical politics. Marcuse and Neumann by contrast were focusing precisely on the issue that Horkheimer and Adorno had neglected: the theory of social change.[13]

War, Totalitarianism, and the Fate of Socialism

With their involvement in anti-fascist work for the U.S. government during the Second World War their work on the project was suspended, and there is no evidence that Marcuse and Neumann attempted to take it up again after the war. During his years of government service, Marcuse wrote some brilliant studies of fascism including "The New German Mentality,""Presentation of the Enemy," and "On Psychological Neutrality."[14] "The New German Mentality" is an extremely rich sixty-three page manuscript that analyzes the psychological components of the new fascist ideology and mentality and that dissects its linguistic components, while offering an interesting concept of "counter-propaganda."

During his years of government service -- from 1942 until the early 1950s -- Marcuse continued to develop his Critical Theory and the themes that would become central to One-Dimensional Man. Although the Marcuse/Neumann project was suspended, archive material shows a continual commitment to connecting social theory and practice. In a 1947 essay that contained thirty-three theses on the current world situation, Marcuse sketched what he saw as the major social and political tendencies of the present moment.[15] The text was prepared for a possible relaunching of the Institute for Social Research journal, Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung. The plan was for Marcuse, Horkheimer, Neumann, Adomo, and others to write articles on contemporary philosophy, art, social theory, politics, and so on, but this project also failed to come to fruition -- perhaps because of growing philosophical and political differences between the members of the Institute. The return of Horkheimer, Adomo, and Pollock to Germany to re-establish the Institut fur Sozialforschung in Frankfurt might also have undermined the republication of their journal.

Marcuse's "Theses," like his later One-Dimensional Man (1964), contain an Hegelian overview of the contemporary world situation that was deeply influenced by classical Marxism. It provides a sketch of the obstacles to social change that projects of radical social transformation, such as envisaged in his work with Neumann, would face. In the theses, Marcuse anticipates many of the key positions of One-Dimensional Man, including the integration of the proletariat, the stabilization of capitalism, the bureaucratization of socialism, the demise of the revolutionary left, and the absence of genuine forces of progressive social change. In the first thesis, Marcuse writes:

> After the military defeat of Hitler-fascism (which was a premature
> and isolated form of capitalistic reorganization) the world is
> dividing itself into a neo-fascist and a soviet camp. The still existing
> remains of democratic-liberal forms within both camps are being
> rubbed away, or are being absorbed by them. The states, in which
> the old ruling class has survived the war economically and
> politically, will become fascist in a foreseeable time, while the
> others will enter into the Soviet camp (Thesis 1).

Marcuse feared a resurgence of fascism and even a war between neo-fascist capitalist countries and the Soviet Union. Anticipating One-Dimensional Man, he presented both blocs as being essentially anti-revolutionary forms of domination and "hostile to a socialist development." Following a position which he had argued in essays in the 1930s and in Reason and Revolution

(1941), Marcuse claimed that liberal-democratic forms were being destroyed or absorbed into systems of domination. Anticipating his later analyses of the militarization of the capitalist and socialist blocs, he suggested that war between the Cold War antagonists was probable.

Producing his first written critique of Soviet Marxism,[16] Marcuse criticized the failure to create an emancipatory socialism in the Soviet Union and urged the defense of orthodox Marxist teaching against all compromises and deformations (thesis number 3). Previewing the analysis of the integration of the working class in One-Dimensional Man, Marcuse argued that the working class was becoming ever more integrated into capitalist society and there were no apparent forces of revolutionary opposition to the system. With the development of new war technologies, it is hopeless to project armed struggle against forces with powerful weapons at their disposal (thesis number 6). The Verburgerlichung of the working class corresponds to deep structural changes in the capitalist economy and needs to be comprehensively theorized (theses number 11 and 12) -- a task that Marcuse would undertake in succeeding years.

Despite the difficulties in envisaging concrete revolutionary tendencies or movements, Marcuse continued to insist that the construction of socialism was a key goal for contemporary radical politics (thesis 21) and he himself holds onto the revolutionary tradition of Marxian theory, as he would indeed continue to do for the rest of his life. He conceived of the socialization of the means of production and their administration by the "immediate producers" as the key task of constructing socialism (thesis number 25) and although he envisages economic democracy and the development of a classless society as part of his conception of socialism (thesis number 26), he does not sketch out an adequate model of a democratic socialism -- an omission that represents a deficit in his thought as a whole. Marcuse concludes with a view that only a revitalization of the revolutionary heritage of communist parties could reinvigorate revolutionary theory and practice and that this appears impossible:

> The political task consists in restoring the revolutionary theory in the communist parties and producing the corresponding revolutionary practice for them. This task appears impossible today. But perhaps the relative autonomy from the Soviet dictatorship, which this task requires, is given as a possibility in the communist parties of Western Europe and West Germany (thesis number 33).

Thus the "33 Theses" concretize in their contemporary era the revolutionary perspectives of Reason and Revolution and the project of "theories of social change," but in a rather pessimistic vein that anticipates One-Dimensional Man. Wiggershaus claims that Horkheimer never responded to Marcuse's theses,[17] and one imagines that the theoretical and political differences between them were now unbridgeable. And, in fact, the Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung was never again to be relaunched, and Horkheimer and Adorno were soon to return to Germany to resurrect the Institute for Social Research, while Marcuse would remain in the United States.

I wish to conclude this section with a couple of remarks indicating how Marcuse perceived social change in the 1940s. As a Marxist, he conceived social change as a transition from capitalism to socialism and tended to downplay the importance of democracy, of constituting a democratic society as an essential feature of social change. He seemed to assume that there can be no true democracy in a capitalist society and that socialism thus provides the necessary conditions for the democratization of society. Consequently, the theory of the transition to socialism is the fulcrum of his perspectives on social change. Indeed, Marcuse hardly mentions democracy in his major texts of the period and thus never develops a theory of democracy, a problem that remains a deficiency of his theory and of the first generation of the Frankfurt School.

The texts of the period also indicate that he believed mistakenly that capitalism would eventually lead to fascism if there were no socialist revolution to produce a socialist society. This is clear in "33 Theses" and would reappear in many later studies, including the unpublished manuscript "Dilemmas of Bourgeois Democracy" where he analyzed how the election of Nixon in 1972 produced the preconditions for a new fascism. It is perhaps this fear that democracy could easily produce fascism -- rooted in his experiences in 1920s Weimar Germany -- that led Marcuse to be distrustful of democracy as a panacea for all social and political problems. Yet we must decide today if radical democracy, socialism, a combination of the two, or new political perspectives are necessary to solve the problems of the present age -- a topic that I shall bring up in the conclusion to this study.

Domination and Liberation: The Marcusean Vision

In retrospect, the Marcusean vision perceives forces of domination and oppression, while envisaging forms of liberation and alternatives to the existing society. Marcuse's vision of liberation was most compellingly sketched out in Eros and Civilization (1955), and some essays from the archives concretize the vision. An important 1945 essay, "Some Remarks on Aragon: Art and Politics in the Totalitarian Era," articulates his belief that love and erotic happiness are central to an emancipated existence. The essay contains some of his most detailed readings of literary texts and some fascinating philosophical reflections on art and liberation.[18] The aesthetic dimension was always an integral part of Marcuse's vision of liberation and he always believed that great art inspired the quest for a better life, projecting visions of a freer and happier existence. The aesthetic dimension thus animated the "great refusal" of oppressive social conditions.

It is One-Dimensional Man (hereafter ODM) that contains Marcuse's most in-depth analysis of the forces of domination, and the archives contain many unpublished manuscripts that highlight the key ideas and the genesis of his most important analysis of contemporary society. A folder titled "Paris Lectures" from the early 1960s (Herbert Marcuse Archive #336) holds a rather complete and systematic French version of ODM. Some of the material was published in French articles during the period and some of the text went into ODM itself, but the Paris lectures provide a rather systematic and compelling articulation of Marcuse's vision of contemporary forces of domination in a more concentrated form than the later book manuscript. The text, which Marcuse used as material for a series of lectures in Paris, provides a good example of Marcuse as a lecturer

who illustrated his ideas with clear and compelling examples. Indeed, a large collection of lectures from the archives provides extremely concrete and lucid illustrations of some of his most complex ideas. These lectures often deal with topics, like ecology, or concrete political events like the Vietnam war, which Marcuse never dealt with comprehensively in his published books and thus provide valuable illustrations of some of his key ideas, or important supplements to his major texts.

ODM provides a frame-work for analyzing contemporary society that was extremely useful during the Reagan and Bush years, in which a one-dimensional conservativism and rampant capitalism were hegemonic.[19] Yet there are obvious problems with the model of ODM that led Marcuse himself to overcome its overly totalizing view of social domination and failure to articulate forces of social change. A 1968 lecture given at UCLA, "Beyond One-Dimensional Man," provides one of the first expressions of his search for new theoretical perspectives in the 1960s. The text points to growing contradictions in contemporary capitalist societies and new forms of social opposition, especially the New Left and the anti-war movement.

Marcuse sketched out his new perspectives on society and social change in the 1969 text An Essay on Liberation (hereafter EL). One of the real finds in the archive includes an untitled manuscript from the period immediately following EL of about ninety-five typescript pages (Herbert Marcuse Archive #406). This manuscript was found in a folder with the title "Cultural Revolution" and someone had edited the manuscript. In retrospect, this can be seen as the first version of Counterrevolution and Revolt (1972), though hardly any of this text actually appeared in the book. The manuscript is of interest because the philosophical-political vision of liberation is more fully developed than in EL. The work is both more explicitly grounded in Marxism than his other works of the period, while being in many respects more systematically critical and reconstructive.

Marcuse opens "Cultural Revolution" with a list of the "deviations" from classical Marxian theory in the contemporary movements and developments, and also criticizes Marxism for neglecting the body, sensibility, nature, and the role of culture in the struggle for liberation. He offers an original reading of Marx's 1844 manuscripts and some reflections on the concepts of needs, cultural revolution, bourgeois culture, subjectivity, and aesthetics. Some of the ideas appeared in essays of the period and some passages went into Counterrevolution and Revolt, but much of it is new and provides an interesting expression of his attempt to provide new perspectives on liberation. In fact, Marcuse never really successfully completed developing his perspectives on liberation, but they find integral articulation in this manuscript, which argues that cultural revolution is a central part of the process of emancipatory social transformation.

Another manuscript titled "Historical Fate of Bourgeois Democracy," written around 1972-1973 (after the 1972 presidential victory of Richard Nixon over George McGovern), provides Marcuse's most detailed analysis of a specific historical conjuncture (Herbert Marcuse Archive #522). It is filled with sharp and passionate moral and political critique, criticizing the processes of bourgeois democracy that allowed Richard Nixon, who Marcuse perceived as a neo-fascist demagogue, to be re-elected to the Presidency. He wrote: "The spectacle of the re-election of Nixon

stands as the nightmarish epitome of the period in which the self-transformation of a bourgeois democracy into neo-fascism takes place -- the highest stage so far of monopolistic state capitalism."[20]

Marcuse's manuscript was written before the Watergate Hearings and Nixon's resignation partly validated his negative judgment of Nixon, but also suggested that Marcuse exaggerated the threats to U.S. democracy.[21] In any case, Marcuse's text can be read as an attempt to revive the radical movements of the '60s at a time when they faced demoralization and disintegration. Obviously, Marcuse was horrified by the re-election of Nixon and provided a robust and often moving attack on the bourgeois democracy which could re-elect such a sordid character. The manuscript contains much more detailed political analysis than was usual in Marcuse's published works, as well as some interesting theoretical analyses, such as his use of earlier Institute analyses of the sado-masochistic character, of aggression, of the need for radical transformation of dominant personality-structures, and of a new strategy for the Left in this situation. As in the previous manuscript and his published manuscripts of the era, Marcuse's political strategizing strikes one in retrospect as the weakest part of the text -- perhaps explaining why he didn't publish it. Indeed, the text poignantly articulates the dilemma of the radical intellectual who wants to relate theory to practice at a time when the bearers of the revolutionary hopes are in disarray and defeat. Obviously, nothing that anyone writes can solve the problem. Yet Marcuse tried repeatedly during this period to articulate a new politics and new revolutionary strategy.

Marcuse, Radical Ecology, and New Social Movements

Many other articles in the archives sketch Marcuse's attempts in the 1970s to relate his work to the struggles of the day. There are several articles relating his work to feminism, continued reflection on the fate of the New Left, and thoughts on the so-called new social movements, especially the peace and environmental movements to which Marcuse was deeply attracted. These works constitute a revision of his early rather orthodox Marxian view of social change that centered the fulcrum of social change in the transition from capitalism to socialism, rooted in the revolutionary struggles of the working class. Marcuse was an early theorist of the integration of the working class and had been seeking out new agents of social change for decades. Consequently, he turned attention in the 1960s to the New Left as a vehicle of radical social change and analyzed the potential of the so-called "new social movements" throughout the 1970s.

Marcuse's late 1970s essay "Ecology and the Critique of Modern Society," written shortly before his death, articulates his vision of liberation and sense of the importance of the ecological movement for the radical project.[22] The essay argues that genuine ecology requires a transformation of human nature, as well as the preservation and protection of external nature from capitalist and state communist pollution and destruction. Rooting his vision of human liberation in the Frankfurt School notion of the embeddedness of human beings in nature, Marcuse believed that until aggression and violence within human beings were diminished, there would necessarily be continued destruction of nature, as well as violence against other human beings. Consequently, Marcuse stressed the importance of radical psychology and transforming inner nature, both to preserve

external nature and to diminish violence in society.

Marcuse's ecological vision is rooted in his reflections on the early Marx. The author of one of the first reviews of Marx's Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844, Marcuse rooted his philosophy in the early Marx's philosophical naturalism and humanism.[23] In Marx's anthropology, taken up and developed by Marcuse, the human being is a natural being, part and parcel of nature. Capitalism, on this view, produced an alienation of human beings by alienating individuals from many-sided activity and by forcing upon them a specialized and one-sided capitalist division of labor. Under capitalism, life is organized around labor, around the production of commodities for private profit, and individuals are forced to engage in external, coercive, and one-sided activity. For Marx, by contrast, humans are many-sided, with a wealth of needs and potentialities which are suppressed under capitalism. The human being is both an individual and social being in Marx's view and capitalism neither allows for the full development of individuality, nor for the possibility of diverse, social and cooperative relationships. Instead, it promotes greed, predation, and anti-social behavior.

Marcuse followed this early Marxian critique of capitalism throughout his life, focusing analysis on how contemporary capitalism produced false needs and repressed both individuality and sociality. He also followed the early Marx's concept of human beings as desiring beings, conceptualizing desire as part of nature, exemplified both in erotic desire for other human beings and instinctive needs for freedom and happiness. During the late 1940s and 1950s, Marcuse radicalized his anthropology, incorporating the Freudian instinct theory into his Marxist view of human nature, producing a version of Freudo-Marxism that he stuck with until the end. This is evident in "Ecology and the Critique of Modern Society" which uses the Freudian instinct theory to criticize contemporary forms of ecological destruction.

Marcuse sympathized, though not uncritically, with the environmental movement since the early 1970s. In a symposium on "Ecology and Revolution" in Paris in 1972, parts of which were translated in the September 1972 issue of Liberation, Marcuse argued that the most militant groups of the period were fighting "against the war crimes being committed against the Vietnamese people."[24] Yet he saw ecology as an important component of that struggle, arguing that "the violation of the earth is a vital aspect of the counterrevolution."[25] For Marcuse, the U.S. intervention in Vietnam was waging "ecocide" against the environment, as well as genocide against the people: "It is no longer enough to do away with people living now; life must also be denied to those who aren't even born yet by burning and poisoning the earth, defoliating the forests, blowing up the dikes. This bloody insanity will not alter the ultimate course of the war but it is a very clear expression of where contemporary capitalism is at: the cruel waste of productive resources in the imperialist homeland goes hand in hand with the cruel waste of destructive forces and consumption of commodities of death manufactured by the war industry."[26]

In his major writings, Marcuse loyally followed the early Frankfurt School emphasis on reconciliation with nature as an important element of human liberation, and also stressed the importance of peace and harmony among human beings as the goal of an emancipated society.

Marcuse frequently called for a new concept of socialism that made peace, joy, happiness, freedom, and oneness with nature primary components of an alternative society. Producing new institutions, social relations, and culture would make possible, in his liberatory vision, the sort of non-alienated labor, erotic relations, and harmonious community envisaged by Fourier and the utopian socialists. A radical ecology, then, which relentlessly criticized environmental destruction, as well as the destruction of human beings, and that struggled for a society without violence, destruction, and pollution were integral to Marcuse's vision of liberation.

Conclusion

The relevance of Marcuse's argument should also be apparent in the aftermath of the ecocide and genocide of the Persian Gulf war.[27] Indeed, the high-tech massacre in the Gulf region reveals the insanity of the Western project of the domination of nature, in which a military machine sees the economic and military infrastructure and people of Iraq as objects to dominate and even destroy. The human and ecological holocaust discloses the importance of Marcuse's argument that individuals must change their very sensibilities and instinctual structure so that they can no longer commit or tolerate such atrocities against nature and other people.

We must work to create a society in which individuals refuse to commit such wanton acts of aggression and in which the general population refuses to tolerate such crimes. The euphoria in destruction and wide-spread support of U.S. gulf war crimes in the general population shows the extent of societal regression during the conservative hegemony of the last years and the need for re-education and humanization of the population. "Postmodern" cynicism and nihilism will not help us deal with such problems. Thus, we must return to the classical thinkers of the emancipatory tradition to guide us in the struggles ahead.

For this task, the works of Herbert Marcuse are especially relevant. Marcuse continually reconstructed radical social theory and politics according to the needs and developments of the moment. He provided dimensions missing within classical Marxism -- psychology, anthropology, philosophy, culture, individual emancipation -- and brought into his version of Marxism ideas from Freud, Nietzsche, Schiller, Baudelaire, and others whom he believed were relevant to the projects of liberation and social transformation. Marcuse was always open to new currents of radical thought and ready to modify his theory in the light of historical experience and new theoretical or political developments. Marxism was always a dialectical theory for him, which meant a historical theory, always subject to revision and improvement. While his theory of society and vision of social change affirmed many theses of classical Marxism, Marcuse was always open to new social movements and new impulses for radical social critique and societal transformation.

Yet his writings on new social movements in the 1970s rarely discussed the theme of democracy or the democratization of society. Indeed, Marcuse continued to be skeptical as to whether democracy really existed in the United States and other advanced technological societies. Although he supported Tom Hayden's candidacy for the Senate in 1976, he cynically remarked: "We might ask: what is he doing running in the Democratic Party? Doesn't he know that democracy

doesn't work anymore?"[28] Thus, Critical Theory today should place a stronger emphasis on democracy and on multi-culturalism than is present in Marcuse's theory.

Still, Herbert Marcuse provides an extremely valuable legacy for contemporary radical social theory and politics and a return to Marcuse could help vitalize the radical project in a time of new hopes, tempered by new problems and dangers. Marcuse is one of the first on the left who both developed a sharp critique of Soviet Marxism and yet foresaw the liberalizing trends in the Soviet Union.[29] After the uprisings in Poland and Hungary in 1956 were ruthlessly suppressed, many speculated that Khrushchev would have to roll back his program of de-Stalinization and crack down further. Marcuse, however, differed, writing in 1958: "The Eastern European events were likely to slow down and perhaps even reverse de-Stalinization in some fields; particularly in international strategy, a considerable 'hardening' has been apparent. However, if our analysis is correct, the fundamental trend will continue and reassert itself throughout such reversals. With respect to internal Soviet developments, this means at present continuation of 'collective leadership,' decline in the power of the secret police, decentralization, legal reforms, relaxation in censorship, liberalization in cultural life."[30]

In part as a response to the collapse of Communism and in part as a result of new technological and economic conditions, the capitalist system has been undergoing disorganization and reorganization. Marcuse's loyalty to Marxism always led him to analyze new conditions within capitalist societies that had emerged since Marx. Social theory today can thus build on this Marcusean tradition in developing critical theories of contemporary society. For Marcuse, social theory was integrally historical and must conceptualize the salient phenomena of the present age and changes from previous social formations. While the postmodern theories of Baudrillard and Lyotard claim to postulate a rupture in history, they fail to analyze the key constituents of the changes going on, with Baudrillard even declaring the "end of political economy."[31] Marcuse, by contrast, always attempted to analyze the changing configurations of capitalism and to relate social and cultural changes to changes in the economy.

Moreover, Marcuse always paid special attention to the important role of technology in organizing contemporary societies and with the emergence of new technologies in our time the Marcusean emphasis on the relationship between technology and the economy is especially important. Marcuse also paid attention to new forms of culture and the ways that culture provided both instruments of manipulation and liberation. The proliferation of new media technologies and cultural forms in recent years also demands a Marcusean perspective to capture both their potentialities for progressive social change and the possibilities of more stream-lined forms of social domination. While postmodern theories also describe new technologies, Marcuse always related economy to technology and saw both emancipatory and dominating potentials in technology, while theorists like Baudrillard are one-dimensional, often falling prey to technological determinism.

Finally, while versions of postmodern theory, like Baudrillard, have renounced radical politics, Marcuse always attempted to link his critical theory with the most radical political movements of the day and to thus politicize his Critical Theory. Thus I am suggesting that

Marcuse's thought continues to provide important resources and stimulus for radical theory and politics in the present age. Marcuse himself was open to new theoretical and political currents, yet remained loyal to those theories which he believed provided inspiration and substance for the tasks of the present age. Consequently, as we confront the theoretical and political problems of the day, I believe that the works of Herbert Marcuse provide important resources for our current situation and that a Marcusean renaissance could help inspire new theories and politics for the contemporary era. The Marcuse archives can contribute to a rebirth in Marcusean thought because its treasure-house of unpublished material demonstrates the richness of his theory, its relevance to contemporary concerns, and the broad theoretical and political vision that informs his work. As the contributions to this book document, Marcuse continues to be a living force today and a Marcuse renaissance can only enrich contemporary social theory and radical politics.[32]

Notes

1. Significant texts on Marcuse during the past decade, include Douglas Kellner, Herbert Marcuse and the Crisis of Marxism (London and Berkeley: Macmillan Press and University of California Press, 1984); C. Fred Alford, Science and the Revenge of Nature: Marcuse and Habermas (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1985); Timothy J. Lukes, The Flight Into Inwardness: An Exposition and Critique of Herbert Marcuse's Theory of Liberative Aesthetics (Cranbury, N.J., London, and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1986); Alain Martineau, Herbert Marcuse's Utopia (Montreal: Harvest House, 1986); Hauke Brunkhorst and Gertrud Koch, Herbert Marcuse zur Einfuhrung (Hamburg: Junius Verlag, 1987); Herbert Marcuse, Text + Kritik 98 (April 1988); Robert Pippin, et al, editors, Marcuse: Critical Theory and the Promise of Utopia (South Hadley, Mass.: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, 1988); Faut-il Oublier Marcuse?, Archives de Philosophie, Tome 52, Cahier 3 (Juillet-Septembre 1989); Politik und Asthetik am Ende der Industriegesellschaft. Zur Aktualitat von Herbert Marcuse, Tüte, Sonderheft (September 1989); Peter-Erwin Jansen, editor, Befreiung denken--Ein politischer Imperative (Offenbach: Verlag 2000, 1990); Bernard Gorlich, Die Wette mit Freud. Drei Studien zu Herbert Marcuse (Frankfurt: Nexus, 1991); and Institut für Sozialforschung, Kritik und Utopie im Werk von Herbert Marcuse (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1992).

2. In the Marcuse archive, I found an ad for one of Derrida's books with a contemptuous scrawl over it in Marcuse's handwriting "This is what passes for philosophy today!" There are no references that I have found in Marcuse's texts, letters, or other manuscripts to the major French theorists who I just noted. Although Marcuse spent some years in France, which he frequently visited, and kept up with many currents of French thought, he seemed to have no interest in the trends identified with poststructuralist or postmodern theory.

3. Generally speaking, one could categorize the most important texts from the Marcuse Nachlass in the following manner: unpublished book manuscripts and articles; lecture and conference papers; letters, notes and fragments; excerpt collections; and lecture notes. At least six volumes of this material will be published in the United States during the coming years under my editorship.

Negotiations are underway with several U.S. publishers to bring out new editions of Marcuse's unpublished and uncollected writings and with Suhrkamp press to publish a German edition.

4. I am capitalizing "Critical Theory" to denote the theoretical project of the so-called Frankfurt school and to distinguish their project from other forms of "critical theory." See my book Critical Theory, Marxism, and Modernity (Cambridge and Baltimore: Polity Press and Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988). On postmodern theory, see my books Jean Baudrillard: From Marxism to Postmodernism and Beyond (Cambridge and Stanford: Polity Press and Stanford University Press, 1988) and (with Steven Best) Postmodern Theory: Critical Interrogations (London and New York: Macmillan Press and Guilford Press, 1991).

5. I plan to publish this material under the rubric Technology, War, and Fascism: The Unknown Marcuse.

6. Claims that the Frankfurt School was abandoning radical politics in the 1940s are made in Martin Jay's, The Dialectical Imagination (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1973) and most other standard accounts of the Institute for Social Research.

7. Herbert Marcuse and Franz Neumann, "Theory of Social Change"; unpublished text in the Marcuse Archive; no date. The Marcuse Archive opened in Frankfurt in the Stadtsbibliothek in October of 1990; I shall refer to the number of the manuscript according to the bibliographical system established in the archive.

8. Herbert Marcuse and Franz Neumann, "A History of the Doctrine of Social Change"; unpublished text in Marcuse Archive; no date.

9. Obviously, Marcuse's attraction to the Lukàcs of History and Class Consciousness and his celebration of the party and dictatorship of the proletariat as the subject/object of history also influenced his proclivities to support a philosophical dictatorship, as did his belief in the failures of bourgeois democracy which I shall discuss below.

10. Marcuse and Neumann are employing the term "positivist" as Marcuse used it in Reason and Revolution (1941) to denote social theories that were "positive" toward existing society, as opposed to "negative" and critical social theories.

11. Herbert Marcuse and Franz Neumann, "A Theory of Social Change," Marcuse Archive #118.04, forty-seven page unpublished manuscript, no date.

12. Anticipating the standard Institute for Social Research line, Marcuse constantly emphasized the importance of philosophy for social theory. In an article "On the Critique of Sociology," Marcuse reviewed a 1929 book on sociology by Siegfried Landshut and argued that: "The essential characteristics, laws, and forms of social being as a fundamental mode of human being

can be probed only by philosophy." The article was originally published in 1931 and was translated by Annette Kuhlmann and David Smith, <u>Mid-American Review of Sociology</u>, 1992, Vol. XVI, no. 2: p. 19.

13. In <u>The Origins of Negative Dialectics</u> (New York: The Free Press, 1977), Susan Buck-Morss argues that in the 1930s there were two distinct tendencies of Critical Theory: the attempt by Marcuse, Horkheimer, and others to develop a Critical Theory of contemporary society and the attempts to develop a radical cultural criticism by T.W. Adorno and Walter Benjamin. The discovery of the manuscripts by Marcuse and Neumann on theories of social change suggest that there were also two distinct tendencies within Critical Theory in the 1940s.

14. Herbert Marcuse, "The New German Mentality," (Marcuse Archive #119.00) "Presentation of the Enemy," (Marcuse Archive #129.00) and "On Psychological Neutrality" (Marcuse Archive #129.01).

15. Herbert Marcuse, unpublished manuscript with no title, dated February 1947, in the Marcuse Archives. For a discussion of the manuscript's history, see Rolf Wiggershaus, <u>Die Frankfurter Schule</u> (München: Hanser, 1986), pp. 429ff.

16. Herbert Marcuse, <u>Soviet Marxism. A Critical Analysis</u> (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985; new paperback edition with Introduction by Douglas Kellner). This critique is interesting because, as Helmut Dubiel argues in <u>Theory and Politics</u> (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1985), the Institute had previously eschewed criticizing the Soviet Union. Thus Marcuse presents here the first sustained critical analysis of the Soviet Union from the perspective of Critical Theory.

17. Rolf Wiggershaus, <u>Die Frankfurter Schule</u>, op. cit., pp. 436ff.

18. This article will be published in 1993 in <u>Theory, Culture and Society</u>.

19. The text was conceived and partly written during a conservative period in the 1950s, though the upheavals of the 1960s caused Marcuse to modify some of his theses. For detailed analysis of the genesis and reception of the book, and Marcuse's later modification of some of its theses, see my book <u>Herbert Marcuse and the Crisis of Marxism.</u> For an analysis of the relevance of Marcuse's ODM during the past epoch of conservative rule, see my "Introduction to the Second Edition" of <u>One-Dimensional Man</u>, pp. xi-xxxix.

20. Marcuse, "Historical Fate of Bourgeois Democracy," manuscript #522 in Herbert Marcuse archives, p. 16.

21. The Watergate affair, however, is still contested with some interpreting the event as evidence that U.S. democracy was still functional, while others argue that the degree of Nixon's

violation of the democratic rules of the game shows the fragility of democracy in the United States. Still others claim that Nixon was subject to a coup from the right, orchestrated by conservative Republicans for whom Nixon was an embarrassment and other rightwingers who strongly disagreed with some of his policies.

22. This article was published in Capitalism, Nature, Socialism, Vol. 3, No. 3 (Sept. 1992) with commentaries by myself, Andrew Feenberg, and Joel Kovel.

23. See Marcuse's "The Foundations of Historical Materialism," in Studies in Critical Philosophy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973; originally published in 1932), pp. 1-48. I discuss this essay and other elements of Marcuse's theory in Herbert Marcuse, pp. 77ff.

24. Marcuse, "Ecology and Revolution," p. 10.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. See my book The Persian Gulf TV War (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1992).

28. Quoted in Newsweek, June 7, 1976.

29. See the 1985 edition of Soviet Marxism, to which I contribute an Introduction (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985). In the light of the collapse of Soviet Communism, Marcuse's book should be appreciated as one of the few that saw the depth of the liberalizing trends in the country, though he did not predict its collapse (who did?).

30. Marcuse, Soviet Marxism, p. 174.

31. See the discussion in Kellner, Jean Baudrillard.

32. For helpful remarks on earlier versions of this text, I would like to thank Helmut Dubiel, Jurgen Habermas, and other members of the 1989 Marcuse conference held at the Institut fur Sozialforschung in Frankfurt. For helpful remarks and editing of this version, I am thankful to Stephen Bronner, Timothy Lukes, Danny Postol, and Renan Rapallo.