MARCUSE'S UNDERSTANDING OF FREUD

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ABSTRACT

In his *Eros and Civilization* Marcuse seeks assurance in Freud of the possibility of a non-repressive society. He finds such assurance, this paper argues, only by misinterpreting the Freudian concepts of "reality" and "repression." By reducing reality simply to the perversity of nature and the consequent need to work, Marcuse ignores the essential social aspect of Freud's "reality," and the primarily sexual and interpersonal repression resulting from it. Marcuse sees such repression as unnecessary, mainly because he sees as its only source the unnatural organization of necessary repression, i.e., that unpleasure resulting from the need to work. The social organization necessitated by the exercise of sexual prerogative, which Freud emphasizes, Marcuse ignores. Given Marcuse's non-Freudian emphasis on nature, a non-repressive society seems possible, but at the same time history, that total, cultural milieu of man permeated by unnatural, "surplus" repression, becomes completely contingent and unintelligible.
Marcuse's Understanding of Freud

In this paper I propose to consider, within Marcuse's interpretation of Freud, a small misunderstanding on Marcuse's part about certain aspects of Freud's theories, but a misunderstanding which, I hope to show, has important political, social and philosophical consequences. At first I will speak in general terms about the relation between Marcuse and Freud, both in its positive and negative aspects. Then I will indicate a difficulty in Marcuse's understanding and criticism of Freud which turns on his interpretation of Freud's notion of "reality" and of its relation to "repression." Finally, I will indicate briefly the significance of this misunderstanding for Marcuse's social and political theory, or for social theory in general.

I.

Marcuse is primarily a Marxist who seeks in Freudianism both a biological foundation for social criticism, and also the biological possibility of a non-repressive society. He is thus in a rather ambivalent relation to Freud: On the one hand he wants a foundation for a more thoroughgoing and scientific critique of modern society which cannot really be found in Marx. The unequal distribution of wealth in capitalistic countries, for example, cannot convincingly be explained by reference to capitalistic "greed," or by invoking any other morally pejorative term, nor by a reliance on literary exhortations against money and avarice. Freud, however, in his analysis of anal eroticism offers a more "scientific," and therefore presumably less "valuative," explanation of the fascination with wealth.¹ But on the other hand, once

Marcuse has enlisted Freudianism as a biological and "scientific" foundation for his critique of repressive societies, he is then forced to overcome Freudian "biological necessity" which suggests that all societies are by nature (human nature) repressive. Marcuse seeks, then, on this side, a re-evaluation of Freud which will reveal a gap in this necessity, and hence the biological possibility of a non-repressive society.

Specifically, the case that Marcuse wants to make is that society (or, more precisely, those forms of society which history has so far manifested to us) is the primary and most significant source of repression. (EC, 96) In other words, the major source of repression is neither organic nor psychological. Repression is merely a contingent historical phenomenon which, almost coincidentally, has never been lacking in any advanced civilized society. According to Marcuse, the fact that we have never found an advanced civilization which was not repressive does not mean that one is not possible.

But this initial account of Marcuse's position is somewhat oversimplified and misleading, for it suggests that his criticism of Freud is at best empirical and at worst an

pp. 27 ff. and 202 ff. I do not mean to suggest by this remark that Marxism has no foundation or that an economic foundation for a critique of capitalism is not relevant. Rather, since capitalistic economics itself has ultimately come to be seen as a somewhat variable appendage of a greater political whole, and, by Marcuse and others, of an even greater social, cultural and ideological whole, a defense of Marxism is not simply a question of economics. What Marcuse must show in defense of Marxism is that, politically and culturally speaking, Marxism is not opposed to human nature, but rather as much in accord therewith as political capitalism. What he must offer in opposition to capitalism is an understanding of human nature (one salvaged from the prevailing ideology) whereby political and cultural capitalism is shown to be unnatural, or abnormal in a scientific and not simply moral sense. Thus the question is not simply one of economics, but of psychology and anthropology as well.

See Herbert Marcuse, Eros and Civilization (New York: Vintage, 1955), pp. 118-119. Hereafter this text will be referred to as EC, and page references will appear in the body of the paper itself.
argument ad ignorantium. Further, it suggests that Marcuse attributes all repression to the effects of society. However, Marcuse's criticism of Freud is not simply fallacious, nor is it an empirical one. It is rather a critique of Freud's understanding of certain biological, psychical and social facts. Marcuse is not concerned with a denial of facts, but with a critique of their interpretation.³ Further, Marcuse is concerned to show not that all repression is fathered by society, but that, although there is something that might legitimately be termed "biologically necessary repression," nevertheless some of the repression supposedly demanded of the individual by Freud's "reality" is in fact socially conditioned and not biologically necessary. To come to terms with Marcuse's criticism one must first gain an understanding of what Freud means by "reality," and how this reality is related to psychical repression.

II.

In Civilization and Its Discontents⁴ Freud elaborates the social implications of the conflict between the pleasure principle and reality. The pleasure principle is the "program" of organic existence (CD, 23); all organic existence (and man is no exception) strives for pleasure. Yet because the ego is not alone in the world and because it does not merely have to do with itself, its striving for pleasure is resisted by what is other than the ego. What resists the ego's striving for pleasure is reality.⁵ Freud finds three

³This type of criticism is quite appropriate to a study of Freud, for, as Marcuse is well aware, Freud's theories are not really open to standard empirical criticism. See in this regard the discussion of "vision" in Stephen Strasser, Phenomenology and the Human Sciences (Pittsburgh: Duquesne, 1963), and Paul Ricoeur, Freud and Philosophy, tr. Denis Savage (New Haven: Yale, 1970), pp. 344-375.

⁴Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, tr. J. Strachey (New York: Norton, 1961). Hereafter this text will be referred to as CD, and page references will appear in the body of the paper itself.

⁵A general statement about the pleasure principle and its relation to the reality principle can be found in "Two Principles of Mental Functioning," in Freud, General Psychological Theory (hereafter, GPT), ed. Philip Rieff (New York:
aspects of reality, which he calls "three sources of un­
pleasure": (1) the world, or more specifically the perver­
sity of nature; (2) one's own body which is prone to sick­
ness and condemned to death; and (3) "our relations to other
men." (CD, 24) It is because of the resistances of these
three aspects of reality that the program for achieving
happiness or pleasure can never be fulfilled. (CD, 30)

But while pleasure cannot achieve direct and complete
fulfillment because of the resistance of reality, neverthe­
less the pleasure principle tries to circumvent reality and
to achieve a substitute satisfaction in certain activities
which are less prone to the influence of reality--specifi­
cally, activities of "phantasy-making." These activities
include dreams, daydreams and illusions, but also ultimately
result in art, religion and science--"the more interesting
methods of averting suffering." (CD, 25) The libidinous
drive for pleasure substitutes for its natural objects cer­
tain unnatural ones which are more easily achievable. This
instinctual drive for pleasure is redirected and achieves a
substitute satisfaction, but often at the expense of the
stability of psychic life; for an instinct is never wholly
or successfully sublimated or repressed. Reality thus re­
quires the repression and/or redirection of the instinctual
drives in order that they might achieve some satisfaction.

But we must consider here what it is which requires this
repression and redirection. Marcuse contends that Freud's
"reality" consists of natural scarcity (of food, land, etc.)
and of the consequent need to work, the need to undergo a
certain amount of displeasure for the sake of life. But,
Marcuse says, Freud does not clearly distinguish between the
repression resulting from scarcity and the need to work, and
that repression which results from the specific organization
of society. The former Marcuse calls "basic repression,"
and he admits that a degree of this type of displeasure is
necessary. The latter he calls "surplus repression" which
is "the restrictions necessitated by social domination."
(EC, 32-33) Surplus repression is contingent on the "logic
of domination" which, so far, has been prevalent in the
history of civilization. But this type of repression, he

Colliers, 1963), pp. 21-28. See also CD, pp. 23, 30, 75,
and 81-83.

Also, CD, p. 27.
contends, is neither psychically necessary nor necessitated by natural scarcity. Surplus repression results only from the particular ways of organizing that natural scarcity which always exists.

Marcuse's approach to Freudian repression and its sources can, I think, be reduced to three major claims: (1) The need to work, which results from natural scarcity, is the main impetus of communal unity. (EC, 74; 114) (2) This need to work is also the main impetus of communal organization. (EC, 32, 33; 140) (3) The communal organization inspired by the need to work introduces more organizational repression than is necessary to alleviate natural scarcity and its effects. (EC, 74-76). Without this surplus organizational repression, the individual would be faced only with the displeasure resulting from the actual need to work. (EC, 178)

This first claim would only be questionable with regard to the rudimentary "community," the family: Although the family serves to fight more efficiently than any one individual against natural scarcity, it is unlikely that the need to work, or the desire to work in common, was the main impetus of familial unity. (see CD, 46) However, beyond the family, the primary impetus of communal unity was likely the "interest of work in common," (CD, 59; also 46) since direct sexual interests are not only missing in the communal unity but actually, from a familial point of view, quite in opposition to this communal bond. (CD, 50-51; 55-56)

However, that communal organization and its repressiveness are primarily inspired by the need to work is less defensible from a Freudian point of view: Social organization does restrict instinctual fulfillment, but this in two different areas: The most significant repression of instinctual fulfillment comes from the repression and redirection of the individual's instinct towards aggression; this instinct must be, for the good of society, not merely curtailed, but redirected toward the individual himself in the form of guilt—guilt for those very desires and wishes for aggression against his fellow men. (CD, 69; 74) However, even if we assume that man is not naturally or fundamentally aggressive (EC, 118 ff.), and that a desire for communal unity and organization is or could be inspired by a purely rational "interest of work in common," (CD, 59; EC, 177-179) nevertheless organizational repression of the sexual instinct is required for effective communal unity, and this in two senses: (1) If men are going to gather for work purposes, there must be rules to regulate and restrict their sexual inclinations. (CD, 50-52; 55; 56; see EC, 44-47) (2) Further, communal unity, even if inspired by rational considerations, cannot be established on such a basis. A certain amount of the
sexual instinct must become, if not actually repressed, at least aim-inhibited so as to achieve in the individual a non-sexual love for the community and an affection for its members. This affection strengthens the individual's willingness to renounce certain sexual objects and opportunities in accordance with the community's laws. (CD, 49-51; EC, 75)

Thus, the very unity of the community requires a siphoning off of a certain portion of the sexual libido to become the individual's affection for the community, its members and its regulations. This unity is not able to be established on the basis of the work interest, but requires such restrictions on the sexual instincts of the community's members to achieve a unity of the community. Further, natural scarcity and the interest of working in common are not what directly necessitates communal organization. The need for organization arises from an effect of the community's unity, namely, the proximity of men and the conflicts of their sexual desires. As Freud puts it: "if we do away with personal rights over material wealth," or, in Marcuse's version, if we eliminate for all practical purposes natural scarcity, hence the need for the organization of wealth, "there still remains prerogative in the field of sexual relationships, which is bound to become the source of the strongest dislike and the most violent hostility among men who are in other respects on an equal footing." (CD, 60, 61)

However, Marcuse's misunderstanding of the source of Freudian repression (whether basic or surplus) is more fundamental than a mere misreading of some Freudian texts. His mistake is in his understanding of what Freud means by "reality," specifically the pervasive human quality of this reality. Marcuse would like to reduce reality to natural forces external to interpersonal, social existence; however, once such a reduction takes place, the reality in question is no longer Freud's. Reality, which necessitates repression also consists of relations with other men, and is not

7 The need for such non-individually-oriented affection was recognized by Plato when he has his Socrates insist in the Republic (462a-465c) that the community of guardians be established on the grounds of familial relations so as to reap the benefits of unity, affection, respect and shame. The difference seems to be that Plato thought familial affection directly transferable to communal unity and relations, or, more likely, that it was only really available in the communal sphere if the community could be modeled on the family.
limited to what Marcuse (but not Freud) is eager to call "nature."

But (Marcuse contends) Freud himself gives us grounds for the distinction between the natural and cultural forces at work in the human sphere, namely, in his distinction between the biological level of his analyses and the sociological one. (EC, 51, 52; 96, 97; 120, 121) And this distinction, Marcuse claims, is able to ground his own distinction between "basic" and "surplus" repression; this latter distinction, according to Marcuse, Freud himself might have made, since the more fundamental distinction was already there. (EC, 120, 121) And his distinction, like Freud's, Marcuse says, is able to be made "within history," since for Freud, as he rightly says, instincts are themselves historical, that is, the biological within Freud's context is always already sociological. (EC, 120)

But Marcuse seems to appreciate what Freud means by "historical" as little as he appreciates what he means by "reality." For he belies the pervasiveness of the historical in Freud's biological/sociological distinction by characterizing the biological level as the "phylogenetic biological level, the development of animal man in the struggle with nature." (EC, 120) By means of such a characterization (on a Darwinian model but not a Freudian one) Marcuse already

See also in this regard Freud's "Repression" in GPT, pp. 104-115. Ultimately it must and will be claimed not only that some repression is caused by what might be called "non-natural" means ("nature" used in Marcuse's sense), but that no repression is caused by "nature," that is, by natural scarcity and the resultant need to work.

Marcuse refers the reader to Freud's Beyond the Pleasure Principle, but Freud offers a clearer discussion in "Instincts and Their Vicissitudes" in GPT, pp. 87-91. Note, however, that with regard to the historicity of the instincts (a) only the object or aim of the instincts is the proper study of psychology, not their "impulses" or somatic "source" (GPT, 87, 88), and (b) sexuality is not on a level with the other instincts. Freud's account of this distinction is admittedly questionable at this point (GPT, 89, 90), but, as will be seen below, the distinction is clearly justified in light of what Freud means by "repression."

establishes the biological level as a pre-human level, as pre-social and pre-historical. He ignores the sexual aspect of man which, construed in Freud's broad sense, is the truly human aspect—social, cultural and interpersonal. Only in the narrowest of senses can human sexuality be classified as just another instinct serving in man's "struggle with nature." What Marcuse ignores in his characterization of Freudian "reality" in a merely biological, pre-social and pre-historical sense is that aspect of reality which is located in the midst of human sociality and sexuality: man's relations with other men.

I would contend not only that this interpersonal aspect of reality is the most fundamental one, but that in a sense it is the only aspect of reality, especially within the context of Freud's treatment of repression. Further, it is only in ignoring this aspect of Freud's reality that Marcuse is purportedly able to separate the biological from the sociological, animal man from social man, and thereby what he calls "basic repression" from "surplus repression." So central is this interpersonal aspect of reality that it takes up and humanizes the other aspects, and prohibits the division between nature and culture except as a very problematic distinction within culture itself. The necessary dominance of the interpersonal aspect of reality becomes obvious when one considers what Freud (though not Marcuse) means by repression, and the nature of its primary source.

theory has little to do with the beginnings of instinctual life and with the psychical and social results of the vicissitudes of the instincts. Essentially Marcuse confuses the somatic source or impulse of instincts (to which evolutionary theory might apply) with the manifestation of the beginnings of these instincts in psychical and social life. See "Instincts and Their Vicissitudes" in GPT, pp. 86-90; and footnote 9. above. Note also Freud's playful move from Darwin to Plato's Aristophanes when accounting for human sexuality in Beyond the Pleasure Principle, pp. 100 ff., and especially the significance of his phrase "a need to restore an earlier state of things." The turn of this phrase indicates the difference between the "archaic" and the "pre-historical," between the "archaic" and, to use Marcuse's phrase, the phylogenetic-biological beginnings of animal man.

11 Note in this regard Marcuse's understanding of the orientation of psychoanalysis in EC, p. 198.
Repression in Freud's sense never arises simply either due to natural scarcity (the perversity of nature) or the fragility of one's own body. These two aspects of reality admittedly resist one's striving for pleasure, but repression is out of the question. One does not, as a result of such opposition, repress one's hunger or one's desire for health. It is the third aspect of reality (man's relations with other men) which is the occasion for repression. It is not the desire for food which becomes repressed or sublimated; it is rather sexual desire of one form or another which is frustrated by other men in the world. However, sexuality for Freud is always more than a merely organic drive; and it is clearly the sexual aspect of man, the necessarily interpersonal aspect, which is susceptible, beyond simple frustration, to repression, sublimation, and to the phantastical elaborations consequent on the lack of real instinctual satisfaction. If sexuality were merely an organic drive like hunger, it could be frustrated but it could not be repressed and sublimated.

12 Freud, "Repression" in GPT, p. 105.
14 "Reality" in Freud's sense always refers primarily to human relations, overtly sexual or hiddenly so. For example, in Beyond the Pleasure Principle, pp. 42, 43, "reality" includes infidelity on the part of the child's love object, loss of love and frustration of pleasure. And in "The Loss of Reality in Neurosis and Psychosis" in GPT, pp. 202-206, adult reality includes the person's love for another. Reality even includes the human community itself in CD, p. 27, footnote 1.

Further, in Freud, "Splitting of the Ego in the Defensive Process," Collected Papers, ed. J. Strachey (London: Hogarth, 1950), Vol. V, p. 374, the threat of castration is considered part of reality, which indicates generally that interpersonal reality is further enhanced or infected by an "archaic heritage" which renders those intersubjectively meaningful aspects of reality "symbolically" meaningful. See also in this regard Freud, An Outline of Psychoanalysis, tr. and ed. J. Strachey (New York: Norton, 1949), p. 112; and "The Loss of Reality in Neurosis and Psychosis" in GPT, p. 206. Also Freud, The Problem of Anxiety, tr. H. A. Bunker (New York: Norton, 1936), pp. 20, 21. In no case is reality ever presented simply as physical nature, or scarcity of food, etc. See also Freud, Group Psychology and
The other two aspects of reality, the perversity of nature and the fragility of one's own body, although not themselves productive of repression and sublimation, are taken up within the social-sexual life as goals or aims of sublimated sexuality. Science, for example, does not arise somehow from the desire to alleviate scarcity or to make nature more tame; it is not a roundabout way of satisfying hunger or the desire for immortality. Rather, like art, science is a sublimation of sexuality. It is important to realize that Freud does not consider the practical results of science to be psychologically interesting, but only its creative and inherently sexual results—and this in spite of the fact that science does alleviate the perversity of nature and the fragility of one's own body, both aspects of reality. (CD, 24)

From a human point of view we must understand "creative" work as more fundamental than "practical" work. Differently


15 Compare "Two Principles of Mental Functioning" in GPT, pp. 25-27, with the account of science in CD, pp. 26-28. In the former science seems merely to be an extension of the reality principle or program, aimed at the useful; while in the other, later work science is, like art, clearly an escape from reality. It must be noted, however, that in "Two Principles" what Freud calls "intellectual pleasure" is also the result of science (GPT, 26), and that the reality principle is clearly (and he emphasizes this) in the service of the pleasure principle, and not vice-versa. (GPT, 25, 26) In CD Freud emphasizes these two point exclusively by designating the utility of science as psychologically uninteresting, and by dropping the term "reality ego" which seemed in the earlier work to be on a par with the fundamental pleasure ego. This emphasis on the psychical results of science, however, was already prefigured in the earlier work by Freud's inclusion under "reality" of the dissatisfactions and productions of the artist. (GPT, 27) If reality is not merely physical nature then science's orientation need not be merely utilitarian. Rejection of one or the other of these works on the grounds of incompatibility can only be justified on the assumption (which Marcuse does make) that reality consists merely of physical nature and man's struggle with this external world, and that the reality principle is simply oriented toward the conquest of physical nature. (EC, pp. 13, 31 ff. and 117.)
stated, the practical is the accidental result of the creative within the human context. This is not at all to say that creative work is prior in time to practical work, but merely to deny that such a temporal relation is an issue here at all. Marcuse himself insists on the conjunction of practicality and creativity, but he does so by insisting that the basic striving for the necessities of life can be creative. (EC, 77) His procedure, however, is from below rather than from above: Practicality is more basic, while creativity is secondary and derivative. Marcuse does not seem really to understand in what, for Freud, the creativity of certain cultural activities consists. He is unwilling to admit that the work which is creative, and which is of most interest to Freud and psychology, is work analogous to the "dreamwork," which indifferently may or may not further the attempt to eliminate scarcity. Such work would have at best only a contingent relationship to the "work" Marcuse has in mind, and to the practical product of that work; for the work which Freud finds psychically significant has a symbolic or representational product and not a practical one.

Psychologically speaking, then, creative work is more fundamental than practical work, just as the social and cultural aspects of human life--essentially products of creative work--are more fundamental than the biological aspects. (CD, p. 27, 982b7-28; 983a10, 11; and Politics 1252b27-1253a32.)

Consider analogously Aristotle, Metaphysics, 982b7-28; 983a10, 11; and Politics 1252b27-1253a32.

See Ricoeur, pp. 159 ff.

An introduction of the Freudian notion of "creative" but non-practical "work" would present difficulties for Marcuse's attempt to establish (in spite of basic repression) an enjoyment of necessary but necessarily non-creative work--which Marcuse considers a decisive criticism of the reality principle. (EC, 198-200) Further, it would introduce problems for a smooth and simple move from the biological to the social, or from the practical to the creative. Marcuse achieves the separation between nature and culture by ignoring their necessary proximity in Freud, and by characterizing "nature" as simply biological in contrast to culture. He now achieves the passage from nature to culture by ignoring the symbolic nature of culture which Freud insists on. A clear indication of this is his characterization of creativity as contingent on that practical labor expended in man's struggle against nature.
footnote 1; EC, 77) Whenever one is oriented toward nature in Freud's sense, culture (sexuality and creativity) is one's milieu. The consequence of this is that for Freud one cannot simply separate the natural from the cultural, as Marcuse attempts to do. One cannot say that man is first natural and then cultural, for what is merely natural is not man. It is the cultural (human sexuality and its possibilities) which takes up the natural, which redefines the natural and makes it human.

III.

And yet Marcuse insists that man may be so divided, into the natural and the cultural; a "society," he insists, may exist merely for the purpose of eliminating scarcity and seeing to man's needs. (EC, 197, 198) It was this healthy social consequence which Marcuse had in mind when he established the distinction between biology and sociology, between, essentially, the historical and the pre-social or pre-human. Further, this society which merely sees to man's needs may somehow, according to Marcuse, become perverse; more sublimation or repression may be introduced than is required for the fight against natural scarcity. This is the advent of the realm of history or society (as these are usually understood), which is, from Marcuse's perspective, a perversion of man's pre-social nature. By some enigmatic means basic repression is taken up and molded or structured into surplus repression.

The source of this surplus repression in Marcuse's scheme remains problematic. It is not the individual, for then all repression would be biologically or psychically necessitated. Surplus repression is, as Marcuse puts it, "exogenous," that is, "not inherent in the 'nature' of the instincts," but a result of "the specific historical conditions under which the instincts develop." (EC, 120) However, it is difficult to see how a "social" grouping of individuals, oriented solely toward the elimination of natural scarcity—which orientation need not itself produce excessive or repressive organization--, could itself produce such unnatural and unnecessary repression of instinctual life. Civilization itself, beyond man's unperverted pre-social nature, would have somehow to be purposeful and not amenable to this human nature; for surplus repression arises apparently unbidden out of what is quite different (even opposite) from itself.

17Socrates makes a similar assumption in his creation of what is later called a "city of pigs" at Republic 369a ff.
Marcuse gives no real explanation of this phenomenon, but suggests merely that surplus repression is somehow bound up with the rational structuralization of the social functions. (e.g. EC, 101; 129; 204) History is the progressive, and thus far self-perpetuating, organization of the instincts.\textsuperscript{18} Minimally, it is clear that surplus repression, as Marcuse sees it, has no foundation in nature, or in anything except the particular and contingent form of a society which makes "unnatural" demands on the individuals in that society.

Likewise the endurance of surplus repression remains enigmatic. Surplus repression is ungrounded; it is somehow superfluous, and yet it exists even in the most affluent of societies. This is the central paradox for Marcuse: We have reached that point in history and in technological development at which it is at least conceivable that all scarcity (and thus, also, any possibility of justifying a specific organization of scarcity) might be overcome; and yet domination and surplus repression persist. Marcuse attempts to explain the lack of demise of surplus repression as the "inertia" of domination: The rational structuralization of the instincts, and of the available wealth and the human and non-human means of production, comes to have a self-perpetuating nature of its own, even though it is both unnecessary and, from the point of view of natural scarcity, no longer valuable.\textsuperscript{19} But such an explanation, as Roszak points out, is for the most part a confession of dumbfoundedness on Marcuse's part.\textsuperscript{20}

I would like to offer in conclusion not an explanation of this enigma, but a possible explanation of why this is an enigma for Marcuse, and a presentation of its consequences. The question of the elimination of domination is as problematic for Marcuse as the introduction of domination and

\textsuperscript{18} See EC, 12-17; 97; 98; 101; 110; 114; 120; 199; 204. The source of this organization is totally obscure. Marcuse even insists at one point that "non-repressive sublimation" (which, he claims, is a real and truly "normal" possibility) is actually incompatible with those institutions which represent the rational structuralization of basic repression and which result in surplus repression. (EC, 199) But that and why such excessive structuralization and surplus repression come about he does not explain. (see EC, 101)

\textsuperscript{19} See EC, 101; 199; 203; and especially 120; 125.

surplus repression into "society." If "society" is somehow basically non-repressive—that is, if both a non-repressive society is biologically possible and a primitive non-repressive society was once, and is again in a "mature" form (EC, 137; 198), able to be an historical fact--, and if it was organized only for the purpose of overcoming natural scarcity, how then did domination and surplus repression enter? I propose that Marcuse's inability to explain the advent of domination is bound up with his inability to account for the fact that it has not yet been eliminated, and that both of these problems are consequent on his understanding of the relation between nature and culture, or on his misunderstanding that "reality" for Freud is primarily cultural and only derivatively natural.

In suggesting that the beginning of "society" is to be found merely in the attempt to solve the problem of natural scarcity (that single aspect of Freud's "reality" emphasized by Marcuse) (EC, 74), or, differently stated, in placing the biological, defined as the "phylogenetic-biological level, the development of animal man in the struggle with nature" (EC, 120), on a level purportedly more fundamental than the social or cultural level, Marcuse has already precluded in advance the possibility of moving beyond the satisfaction of "basic" needs. In other words, the entrance of domination (an "unnatural" need or desire if we may even call it that: EC, 121) into this "natural society" is irrational and inexplicable. It is inexplicable because Marcuse begins with the pre-human, with a "natural" organization of some sort which is not yet a human society. Because he separates (or supposes separate) the natural from the cultural, the movement from the natural to the cultural (the "fall" of natural man) is irrational. And once he has moved (by fiat) from nature to culture, the maintenance of scarcity and the repressive organization thereof, when scarcity can be technologically overcome, is irrational. (EC, 91)

Once "society" is defined as an organization to overcome scarcity, then the beginning (the hypothetical beginning of

21 Once Socrates has established the practical or "natural" "city of pigs" in the Republic (369a-372d), the movement to the "luxurious city" (372e ff.) can only be accomplished by dialogical fiat—Glaucon's demand for couches, relishes and, by implication, all other luxuries. The transition from the first "healthy" city to the second "feverish" one is otherwise inexplicable; for a city was supposed to be based on "need" or "necessity" (369b-d), but there are a multitude of unnecessary things in the second city (373a-c), not the least of which is war and repression. (373e ff.)
society as non-repressive) and the end (the technological and "mature" non-repressive society) are both quite reasonable and intelligible. (see EC, 137, 138) It is what comes in between them, namely history, which becomes as a result irrational and unintelligible. History is the "progress of domination" and, in such a view of "society," domination must itself remain irrational.

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