

Ontological Foundations of the Consumer Society: Heidegger and Marcuse

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Abstract. This paper analyses the ontological foundations of the consumer society in Heidegger's thinking of positionality (Ge-stell), and compares that with Marcuse's exposition of the phenomenon of late capitalist society. The comparison shows a number of similarities: both attribute a totalitarian character to the mechanism of the consumer society, both believe such a society has a negative effect on man, and both find a solution in artistic experience. The presented analysis remains significant because it touches on contemporary ecological dilemmas.

Key Words: Martin Heidegger, Herbert Marcuse, consumer society, positionality, technology, productive apparatus, art

Ontološki temelji potrošniške družbe

Povzetek. Članek analizira ontološke temelje potrošniške družbe v Heideggrovem mišljenju razpoložljivosti (Ge-stell), ki ga primerja z Marcusejevo obravnavo pojava poznokapitalistične družbe. Primerjava pokaže več podobnosti: oba mehanizmu potrošniške družbe pripiseta totalitarni značaj, prepričana sta, da ima takšna družba slab vpliv na človeka, in poiščeta rešitev v umetniškem izkustvu. Pomen pričujoče analize je tudi v tem, da se dotakne sodobnih ekoloških dilem.

Ključne besede: Martin Heidegger, Herbert Marcuse, potrošniška družba, razpoložljivost, tehnika, proizvodna sredstva, umetnost

Introduction

The basic idea of the paper is an analysis of contemporary society understood as a contemporary technocratic affluent society. More precisely,

the paper aims to present its ontological foundations and their effects as they appear in contemporary society. Heidegger's thinking of positionality (*Ge-stell*) as the ontological foundation of contemporary consumer society is taken as the theoretical basis, which is followed by confronting Heidegger's interpretation with Marcuse's criticism of late capitalism. Since Marcuse was Heidegger's student, the paper will also investigate the extent to which Marcuse inherits Heidegger's thought process. Marcuse himself acknowledges Heidegger's influence only in his first work 'Contributions to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism' (re-published in Marcuse 2005, 1–33), which for him was an unsuccessful attempt to connect existential philosophy and Marxism. Under the influence of ideological opposition, Marcuse abandons Heidegger's existential philosophy, considering it only apparently concrete. He maintains that the concreteness of the existential analytic of the Being of being-there (the Being of *Dasein*; *Da-sein*: there-being) dissipates in the secondary transcendental philosophy in which existentials are neutralised and become abstractions, e.g. being-there (*Dasein*) is socially and sexually neutral, death which is an inexorable fact becomes an unsurpassable possibility, and historicity is not tied to a concrete material and cultural situation (pp. 163–167). He considers the late preoccupation with the question of technology as a possible exception to Heidegger's work, but the hermetic nature of the text thwarts its understanding. What is grasped he criticises for fatalism, because the acting forces are understood as self-acting agents, 'forces in-themselves' removed from the context of power relations in which they are constituted and which give them their function.

The paper focuses on contact points between Heidegger's and Marcuse's expositions of the foundations, causes and consequences of contemporary technocratic consumer society, which is interesting to examine because Marcuse himself denies Heidegger's influence on his work after 1932 and does not declare a similarity between his one-dimensional society and Heidegger's inauthenticity of existence (Marcuse 2005, 172). Marcuse's analysis of late capitalist society fruitfully complements Heidegger's thinking of technology as it provides a multitude of examples. Concreteness and political commitment distance Marcuse's discursive style from the generality of traditional philosophical exposition.¹

¹ For more on the nuanced relationship between Heidegger and Marcuse, see e.g.: Abromeit and Cobb (2004, 7–8), Abromeit (2004, 131, 137–143), Kellner (2001, 2–4), Brujjić (1968, 240, 261), Kellner, Pierce, and Lewis (2011, 5–7, 16, 49, 67), Feenberg (2004, 73),

Heidegger's Thinking of Technology

Heidegger confronts two endpoints of the possibility of constructing that which presences: traditional manufacturing production based on the Greek ποιμσις and (modern) serial automated production. Traditional production is bringing-forth (*Vor-her-bringen*),² which brings being into presence, while contemporary production is challenging (*Herausfordern*), which is a deformation of traditional production – deformation, because its production method understands that which presences exclusively as raw materials that can be extracted and stockpiled, which obscures the possibility of accessing Being. The blurring of the access to Being occurs because man never accesses that which presences as being in its Being but considers it only from the perspective of exploitation.

Traditional bringing-forth is an aspect of caring in which being-there (*Dasein*) makes a work using ready-to-hand equipment. The work is exemplary ready-to-hand because it bears in itself not only the reference of its usability but also the reference to the equipment and materials used in its making. Bearing in itself the reference to the equipment and materials, the work gathers in itself the whole of equipment of its making. In making the work, man discloses nature in the form of natural products through the reference to materials; he is referred to the natural being

'Heidegger and Marcuse: A Dialogue in Letters' (1998, 263–264), Kellner (1998, 35), and Brayford (2021, 611–613).

² Heidegger associates the essence of technology with the ancient Greek term ποιμσις, bringing-forth, instead of τέχνη, often translated as technique or technology. Furthermore, he insists that τέχνη means neither art (if it is not setting Being into work) nor artisanal craft production but is exclusively related to allowing something to appear as that which presences. As such, τέχνη is primarily theoretical knowledge, not unlike ἐπιστήμη. Therefore, it is not a consequence of a mere observation of present-at-hand beings but means the exact opposite – going beyond the immediately given present-at-hand, undertaking the effort of reaching so that Being appears in the individuality of beings (Heidegger 1983, 168). Thus, for Heidegger, modern technology separates itself from the ancient Greek τέχνη, which is a mode of ἀλήθεια that allows beings to be seen. Ποιμσις (bringing-forth, *Vor-her-bringen*) is for Heidegger also a form of bringing beings into presence, but since it is related to practical craft production, it is more suitable for describing modern technology. The distinction becomes unclear if one compares the German translations of the ancient Greek terms 'bringing-forth' (*Vor-her-bringen*), which is the translation of ποιμσις, and τέχνη, which translates to 'produce' (*Hervorbringen*). Likewise unclear is the transition from the theoretical understanding of τέχνη to the assertion that τέχνη is concealed in building production, whether it is the traditional tectonic element of architecture or engineering construction (Heidegger 2000, 160). Cf. Riis (2018, 161–164).

that needs processing. In this way, nature in the form of natural products which become materials in the making penetrates into the surrounding world of the caring being-there (*Dasein*). The essence of the revealing function of being-there's (*Dasein*) caring about the work is its disclosure of innerworldly beings in their Being, brought together in the references of the work (Heidegger 1967, 70–72; 1979, 260–262). Heidegger considers the above definition of bringing-forth to be correct but insufficient because it does not penetrate into the essence of technology. To get closer to thinking of the essence of technology, producing should be thought beyond causality in the form of the referential structure of the in-order-to and the instrumentality of equipment. To approach the essence of technology, Heidegger interprets the making of a work on the basis of the ancient Greek term *ἀτιον* (which translates as *Verschuld*, responsibility or guilt), which carries the meaning of *that which is responsible for something else or that to which something else is indebted*. In accordance with such an interpretation, Aristotle's four causes are presented as four ways of responsibility. The equipment maker gathers three ways of responsibility: the aspect (*causa formalis*, εἶδος), the matter (*causa materialis*, ὕλη) and the end (*causa finalis*, τέλος) (Aristotle 2018, 192a–195b). These ways are responsible for the lying at hand (*Vorliegen*) of the presence (*Anwesen*) of that which presences because they bring the produced into its presence. It follows from the above that the complete arrival (*vollendete Ankunft*) is the principal characteristic of responsibility, which is therefore an active letting (*Ver-an-lassen*), what actively lets that which is not presencing into presence.³

Plato tells us what this bringing is in a sentence from the *Symposium* (205b): 'Every occasion for whatever passes over and goes forward into presencing from that which is not presencing is *poiesis*, is bringing-forth [*Her-vor-bringen*].' [Heidegger 1977b, 10]⁴

This kind of bringing-forth, ποιμσις (*Her-vor-bringen*) goes beyond artisanal handcraft manufacture and concerns all aspects of artistic production but also the bringing-forth of nature, φύσις.⁵ Φύσις is the most

³ Cf. Feenberg (2005, 33–36) and Ihde (2010, 42–50).

⁴ Was dieses Bringen ist, sagt uns Platon in einem Satz des »Symposion« (205 b): »Jede Veranlassung für das, was immer aus dem Nicht-Anwesenden über- und vorgeht in das Anwesen, ist ποιμσις, ist Her-vor-bringen« (Heidegger 2000, 12).

⁵ Cf. Young (2002, 40), Feenberg (2005, 6–8, 30–31), Batovanja (2007, 107), Ihde (2010, 33, 62), and Glazebrook (2000, 199–205).

original bringing-forth because it is self-emerging and has its cause in itself. Bringing-forth is only that making which is revealing (*Entbergen*), bringing the concealed forth into unconcealment ($\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\acute{\iota}\theta\epsilon\iota\alpha$).⁶ It is revealing because it brings forth that which is not yet lying at hand and which becomes what it is made to be by gathering in advance its aspect, matter and end (Heidegger 2000, 16–21).

For Heidegger, the challenging of modern technology is also a form of revealing; however, revealing not directed towards positioning a new lying at hand but towards the unlocking, distributing and storing of energy.⁷ It challenges natural energy into positioning (*Stellen*) which extracts it by revealing and requisitioning (*bestellend*). In its challenging extraction, the positioning is regulation (*Steuerung*) and securement (*Sicherung*) that would secure the greatest possible efficiency. What is available for future use is accumulated in the standing-reserve (*Bestand*).⁸ Since what is usable is stored in it, the standing-reserve is causally motivated, directed towards predicting and conquering predetermined consequences, which are used to secure further consequences. Positioned in the standing-reserve are pieces (*Bestand-Stück*) of the same, which need to be distinguished from parts: parts make up a whole, e.g. equipment which makes up the whole of equipment in the traditional bringing-forth of a work, while pieces are isolated because they do not complement each other but rather multiply sameness. Interchangeable and equivalent pieces make up the inventory of the standing-reserve, each of which is waiting for an opportunity to be used. The equivalence of pieces in the standing-reserve leads to the disappearance of distance, because if everything is of equal value, there is no longer a need to distinguish between what is near and what is distant (Heidegger 1994, 26, 36–37). The mode of Being of pieces is interchangeability, in the sense of discarding each being after a single use in order to replace it with a seemingly improved

⁶ Cf. Pejović (1959, 160), Pejović (1979, 155), Feenberg (2005, 40–43), and Batovanja (2007, 107). For more on $\phi\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\iota\varsigma$ as ‘truth,’ see Glazebrook (2000, 165–179). Also see Riis (2018, 32–41).

⁷ See Young (2002, 38, 49–52), Holden (2009, 2–3), Feenberg (2005, 12, 72–73, 130–135), Batovanja (2007, 112), and Dreyfus and Wrathall (2005, 13).

⁸ Cf. Guigon (1993, 20), Achterhuis (2001, 7), and Batovanja (2007, 109). About this problem, see also: Richardson (2012, 331–335), Dreyfus (1993, 305), Young (2002, 46), Borgmann (2005, 429), Holden (2009, 4), Feenberg (2005, 2, 21–22, 38–40), Dreyfus and Wrathall (2002, xiii), Dreyfus (2002, 167), Riis (2018, 23–32), and Brayford (2021, 610–611).

one. One cannot talk about the constancy of objects⁹ because inventory pieces of the standing-reserve only have the constancy of availability – they are stored in the standing-reserve until included in the circulation of the requisitioning of the orderable. The consequence of such consumer behaviour is the atrophy of tradition because the *perpetuum mobile* of substitutability (*Ersetzbarkeit*) terminates the subsistence of that which is worth preserving. The absence of that which is valuable enough to pass on to the next generations leads to the disappearance of any tradition because the old is equated with the obsolete (Heidegger 1986, 366–370).

Even in the phenomenon of fashion, what is essential is no longer *embellishment* and *adornment* (fashion as embellishment has thus become just as anachronistic as mending), but instead the replaceability of models from season to season. [Heidegger 2012b, 62]¹⁰

Pieces accumulated in the standing-reserve defy traditional modes of representing or producing (*Herstellen*). The essential difference is that what is stored in the standing-reserve is forced into requisitioning, while what is represented in producing freely, concernfully approaches. The challenging of modern technology replaces the epoch of objectness, dominant at the beginning of the Modern Age, with the epoch of orderability. Through planning oriented towards exploitation, modern technology transforms objectness into standing-reserve in which it secures beings needed in the future. The requisitioning of the orderable reduces the relation to beings to the consumption of the inventory of the standing-reserve, the consequence of which is the disappearance of the objectness of objects. Hence, today there are no more objects but only beings ready to be consumed (*Verbrauchen*). Contemporary man does not understand innerworldly beings in their Being, nor in the Modern Age conceptual oppositeness of objects; for him, the totality of the subsisting is a commodity available for everyday consumption.¹¹

Yet an airliner that stands on the runway is surely an object. Certainly. We can represent the machine so. But then it conceals itself as to what and how it is. Revealed, it stands on the taxi strip only as

⁹ Heidegger uses two terms – *Gegenstand* and *Objekt* – that are properly translated into English as ‘object’. In this chapter, ‘object’ refers to the term *Gegenstand*.

¹⁰ Sogar im Phänomen der Mode sind nicht mehr *Putz* und *Zier* wesentlich (daher ist die Mode als *Putz* ebenso unzeitgemäß geworden wie die *Ausbesserung*), sondern von Saison zu Saison die *Ersetzbarkeit* der Modelle (Heidegger 1986, 369).

¹¹ In this context cf. Dahlstrom (2018, 47–51), Wrathall (2018, 16–22) and Resta (2021, 16–19).

standing-reserve, inasmuch as it is ordered to ensure the possibility of transportation. [Heidegger 1977b, 17]¹²

Requisitioning (*Bestellen*) positions and draws in pieces of the standing-reserve; they stand in it to be able to engage and participate in further requisitioning. The positioning of requisitioning is a challenging-forth that forces that which presences into a self-positioning which conscripts (*Gestellung*) it. Everything positioned is only available for future use and waits in the standing-reserve for its requisitioning. Thus, conscription anticipates future requisitioning, and accordingly plans and exploits individual positionings. The chain of orderability is a circulation of the positioned which only takes its place in the sequence of effects of requisitioning. It follows from the above that orderability does not create anything that would have independent constancy like an artisanal handcraft product; rather, the continuity of orderability is the only constancy of requisitioning. The order positions that which presences as constant, and this constant has the constancy of the pieces in the standing-reserve available for further orderability. As such, requisitioning has a universal character and tends to position the whole of what presences as standing-reserve. In its orders, it gathers all types of positionings and possibilities of linking individual positionings in the circulation of chains of orderability. Requisitioning also sucks in nature, which is no longer a limit to technology but a fundamental piece of the inventory of the standing-reserve, and as such has a certain constancy (Heidegger 1994, 28–32).

Positionality (*Ge-stell*) requisitions everything positioned in the standing-reserve as pieces of its inventory. It stands at the foundation of every requisitioning and thus determines the way in which every thing that presences, whether overtly or covertly, presences as a piece of standing-reserve. It is a self-gathering collection (*Versammlung*) of positioning from which all that is ordered receives its essence out of the standing-reserve. This means that the circulation of requisitioning is appropriated (*ereignen*) in positionality, and it is responsible for the presence of all which presences being understood as standing-reserve. Positionality constantly pulls that which can be ordered into the circulation or requi-

¹² Aber ein Verkehrsflugzeug, das auf der Startbahn steht, ist doch ein Gegenstand. Gewiß. Wir können die Maschine so vorstellen. Aber dann verbirgt sie sich in dem, was und wie sie ist. Entborgen steht sie auf der Rollbahn nur als Bestand, insofern sie bestellt ist, die Möglichkeit des Transports sicherzustellen (Heidegger 2000, 17).

sitioning and assigns it to standing-reserve.¹³ That is why, for Heidegger, positionality is plundering (*Gerafft*), in its positioning reaping all which presences into requisitioning; it is the gathering of reaping (*Raffen*). The positioning of positionality in requisitioning is the gathering of self-circulating impulse (*Trieb*).¹⁴ The essence of positionality is the plundering drive (*Getrieb*) that drives the continuous orderability of the whole of standing-reserve through self-circulation. The plundering of positionality amasses into the drive of the machine drive which imposes upon the whole of standing-reserve to persist only through the machine. The essence of the machine is determined from positionality because it positions and challenges forth the circulation of the machine on the basis of the circulation of drive that constitutes the essence of positionality. Positionality thus determined is the essence of technology, and it is responsible for the emergence of machines that produce energy. Therefore, positionality is responsible for the emergence of the first industrial revolution, which extracts energy from solid fuels for the steam engine, and the second, which uses electricity. Through the machine drive, positionality by ordering establishes a completely new type and regime of positioning, which has nothing in common with the tools and self-propelled mechanisms of traditional bringing-forth. The essential difference between manufactural powered tools and the machine is that the products of the machine are ready for a further conducting along and are not produced to subsist and be used (Heidegger 1994, 33–35).

Within the reign of positionality, man is challenged forth to participate in requisitioning; he is the executer (*Angestellte*) of requisitioning. In other words, the revealing of requisitioning can only happen if man is challenged to unlock natural energy. He is attributed to positionality and does not differ essentially from the other available pieces of the standing-

¹³ Cf. Pejović (1959, 161), Dreyfus (1993, 305–306), Young (2002, 37, 44–45), Godzinski (2005, [3]–[5]), Dreyfus and Wrathall (2002, xiii), Richardson (2012, 326–329), Guigon (1993, 20), Glazebrook (2000, 240–247), and Riis (2018, 11–22). See also: Davis (2018, 139–141) and Sommer (2021, 24–29).

¹⁴ By using the terms impulse (*Trieb*), drive (*Getrieb*) and instinct (*Instinkt*) in the analysis of positionality, Heidegger tries to emphasise the automatism of action and the human inability to control it. Positionality drives humans to certain actions, and its commanding power can be equated with the inevitability of the impulsivity of the instinctual. Man is thus deprived of freedom of will and subordinated to his animal nature. He is *animal rationale* in full sense, because in his actions he is guided by a hypertrophied calculating reason that tries to calculate the whole of the subsisting (Heidegger 2000, 82–83).

reserve's inventory. Man becomes human material imposed upon for the purpose of orderability, and so he belongs to the standing-reserve more originally than any other material. Although man is reduced to the orderer of the standing-reserve, and thus no more than human material equally subjugated to positionality, he imagines himself as the master of Earth (Heidegger 1994, 30).¹⁵

Man is influenced by the opinion that the whole world is his work, the result of his careful planning, mathematical calculation,¹⁶ automation and storing in the standing-reserve.¹⁷ Planning drives him to take a

¹⁵ Heidegger considers the philosophical origin for the Modern Age positioning of man as the ruler of nature in the text 'The Age of the World Picture.' He believes that the Cartesian positioning of man as the one who represents is at the basis of the positioning man as the master of Earth. For modern metaphysics, man is the measure of the Being of being because the Being of being is equated with representedness (Heidegger 1977a, 124–130). Heidegger returns to the definition of man as the representer in the text 'Why Poets?,' where he elaborates the idea that the Modern Age positions man as the representer before the world and thereby excludes him from the world. As the representer, man becomes the one to whom the entirety of the world is given as representation in consciousness. Two possibilities of representation are available to him: either it is a theoretical representation that ends with the representedness of being in consciousness, or it is a producing representation that produces the object from the represented. Heidegger labels the man who produces objects based on representations as the asserting producer (*durchsetzende Hersteller*) because he changes what is found subsisting in order to adapt it to his needs (pp. 388–394). In both texts, man is defined as superior to the whole of nature, which he exploits to the limit and which is completely subordinated to the command of his will. Cf. Glazebrook (2000, 112–117) and Brayford (2021, 610–611).

¹⁶ The demand for calculability dominant in technology also affects human natural language. Language takes the form of a formalised language which directs man to the technological-calculating. Under the influence of such language, speech is information which safeguards its procedure by means of information theories. Man gradually abandons natural language, understood by information theory as a lack of formalisation (Heidegger 1985, 251).

¹⁷ Heidegger elaborates man's delusion of being the ruler, and not the subject of positionality in the course of his university lectures *What is Called Thinking?* Positionality as the essence of technology rules man behind the scenes and its rule remains unfathomable to him. It is not unfathomable only to the man who is involved in the production process in one way or another. The essence of technology was likewise unfathomable to the thinking of previous generations of philosophers and the majority of the contemporary ones who are not able to learn to think. Even though their philosophies touch on the economic, political, social and moral aspects of technology and machine production, Hegel, and especially Marx, were not able to reach its essence. The reason for this is that, in their thinking, they had to move in the shadow of the essential nature of technology and did not achieve the freedom to grasp and adequately think this nature through. Since they are all philosophers of the metaphysical forgetting of Being (whether historical or con-

stand and become either the servant or the master of his plan. As soon as he accepts the world as his work, which takes shape according to his plan, he is no longer able to hear the claim of Being (Heidegger 2006, 42–43). That which presences is given to man only as the object of his calculations and orderability, and he does not reach the open of the unconcealment of the Being of being. The obstructed way into the open turns man away from the pure relation of Being, which is why he parts from the open. Positionality positions the essence of that which presences beyond its essential origin, beyond ἀλήθεια, and whether that which presences is given as unconcealment in relation to other which is concealed ceases to be important. Therefore, as the essence of Being it transposes Being outside the truth of its essence, so, in positionality, Being, ousted from the truth of its essence, is reduced to standing-reserve. The ousting of Being from the truth of its essence is the danger, because Being has banished itself by forgetting its essence (Heidegger 1994, 54–55).

Positionality is not the danger because it is the essence of technology and because threatening and dangerous effects can arise from technology. The danger is positionality, not as technology, but rather as beyng. What essences of danger is beyng¹⁸ itself insofar as it pursues the truth of its essence with the forgetting of this essence. [Heidegger 2012a, 59]¹⁹

Positionality is the extreme danger because in it man cannot reach the unconcealment of the Being of being. Within positionality, man is only a follower of positionality's commands, one of the pieces of the standing-reserve, which endangers the human essence. Man has become an obeyer

temporary), they lacked the fertile land for the thinking that Being provides (Heidegger 2002a, 20–27). Cf. Glazebrook (2000, 240–247).

¹⁸ Heidegger introduces the term Beyng (*Seyn*) to emphasise the need to distinguish the historical Being and Being in itself. The historical Being encompasses all historical embodiments of attempts to think Being. The beginning of the original appropriation of Being and man to each other happened in pre-Socratic thought, and occasionally the possibility of its continuation opens up in history. The possibilities of continuation are mostly missed because the history of philosophy is dominated by a metaphysical understanding of Being that suppresses the possibility of continuation of the original appropriation (Heidegger 2005, 16–20).

¹⁹ Das Ge-Stell ist nicht deshalb die Gefahr, weil es das Wesen der Technik ist und weil von der Technik bedrohliche und gefährliche Wirkungen ausgehen können. Die Gefahr ist das Ge-Stell nicht als Technik, sondern als das Seyn. Das Wesende der Gefahr ist das Seyn selbst, insofern es der Wahrheit seines Wesens mit der Vergessenheit dieses Wesens nachstellt (Heidegger 1994, 62).

of positionality's orderability and thereby lost his freedom and dignity. The unconcealment of the concealed has always by appeal (*Zuspruch*) driven man to revealing. Man is by appeal determined in his essence by destining (*Geschick*) which sends (*schicken*) him towards revealing. Man is free to decide whether he will respond to the appeal and listen to the nearness of unconcealment, or turn a deaf ear and contradict it. If man ignores the appeal and his destining, the Being of being is given to him only as the representedness of representation, which in contemporaneity takes the form of the requisitioning of the orderable of the standing-reserve. When man listens and responds, he freely moves toward the realm of appeal, in which the unconcealment of the Being of being dawns on him. In this way, he is freed from sinking into the requisitioning of the orderable of positionality and becomes free for a more original revealing. From such a more original revealing he perceives an alternative possibility of determining his own essence. He can be the one who in freedom ponders the concealing disclosing, and with such thinking is able to bring in the saving power in the midst of the danger. In the more original thinking, man reveals the saving power because he is able to perceive the highest dignity of his essence. Man perceives he ought to allow himself to be claimed (*Anspruch*) for bringing into nearness the unconcealment of the concealed (Heidegger 2000, 26–30, 32–34).²⁰

*But where danger is, grows
The saving power also.*

Let us think carefully about these words of Hölderlin.²¹ [...] But the

²⁰ With regards to this passage, cf. Young (2002, 50–55), Borgmann (2005, 429), Mitcham (1994, 53), Holden (2009, 4–5), Feenberg (2005, 14–15, 21–22, 135–140), and Batovanja (2007, 111–113). See also: Richardson (2012, 23, 324, 337–341, 350–358), Dreyfus (1993, 310), Dreyfus (2002, 171), Turnbull (2009, 12), Brockelman (2008, 38–44), and Campbell (2011, 11–17).

²¹ In his work, Heidegger extensively interprets Hölderlin's poetry. He devoted a monograph to the analysis of Hölderlin's poetry entitled *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry* (Heidegger 1981) and taught for three semesters on Hölderlin's hymns: 'Germania' and 'The Rhine' in 1934 (Heidegger 1999), 'Remembrance' in 1941 (Heidegger 1992) and 'The Ister' in 1942 (Heidegger 1993). His interpretation often develops into forming his own terminology based on Hölderlin's poetry, e.g. the terms of the holy, earth, sky, mortal, divine language and poetry. This is in accordance with Heidegger's position that poetry provides a precursor to thinking coming close to Being. The interpretation of Hölderlin is significant for the consideration of Heidegger's concept of technology because it gives an insight into the flip side of the world of technology. Namely, it is precisely the terminology that Heidegger abstracts from Hölderlin's poetry that provides a guideline for abandoning the

verb 'to save' says more. 'To save' is to fetch something home into its essence, in order to bring the essence for the first time into its genuine appearing. [Heidegger 1977b, 28]²²

In the work of art, being comes forth into unconcealment, which is possible only because (in the work) being opens up in its Being. Unconcealment is directed toward the work of art as a privileged kind of being that provides a prominent possibility of setting truth.²³ The work of art is best suited for setting truth into the open because it is inimitably unique. Its bringing-forth brings into presence being that was not before nor will be ever again. The setting of unconcealment in the work of art discloses being in its Being and brings forth the unconcealment of being as a whole. The unconcealment of the whole of being opens up the approach to the self-secluding Being. In the work of art, the beautiful is the happening through which the unconcealment of an individual being gives the unconcealment of being as a whole, in which the self-concealing Being is illuminated (Heidegger 1977a, 41–49).

Truth happens in van Gogh's painting. That does not mean that something present is correctly portrayed; it means, rather, that in the manifestation of the equipmental being of the shoe-equipment, that which is as a whole – world and earth in their counterplay – achieves unconcealment. [Heidegger 2002b, 32]²⁴

The createdness does not exhaust the reality of the work because the fullness of the reality of the work is realised only by preserving the work.

calculating-planning requisitioning of pieces of the standing-reserve. Unfortunately, the extensiveness of the material makes it impossible to present in this paper how Hölderlin's poetry offers an alternative to the world of technology.

²² »Wo aber Gefahr ist, wächst Das Rettende auch.« Bedenken wir das Wort Hölderlins sorgsam. [...] Aber »retten« sagt mehr. »Retten« ist: einholen ins Wesen, um so das Wesen erst zu seinem eigentlichen Scheinen zu bringen (Heidegger 2000, 29).

²³ It is necessary to highlight Heidegger's insistence on the definition of truth as 'unconcealment' (ἀληθῦναι) and the terminological preference for the latter. Namely, in order to clearly terminologically separate the traditionally dominant definition of truth as correctness (*Richtigkeit*), which consists in the accordance of a statement with a matter, and truth as the givenness of beings in the unconcealment of their Being, truth thought as unconcealment Heidegger most often addresses as unconcealment (Heidegger 1988, 1–9).

²⁴ Im Gemälde van Goghs geschieht die Wahrheit. Das meint nicht, hier werde etwas Vorhandenes richtig abgemalt, sondern im Offenbarwerden des Zeugseins des Schuhzeuges gelangt das Seiende im Ganzen, Welt und Erde in ihrem Widerspiel, in die Unverborgenheit (Heidegger 1977a, 43).

Man is the one to whom the work is entrusted for preservation, and only to him is the unconcealment – laid down in the character of the work – opened up in the work. In order to be able to grasp the unconcealment of being in the work, man has to step out of his everyday actions. He is helped by the particular nature of the work; it is a special kind of the produced that cannot be equated with ready-to-hand beings because it does not contain references for use. The astonishment provided by the work of art secures restraint from usual actions, which is a preparatory step for inabiding (*Innesteher*) in the openness of being. Preserving the work is inabiding in the openness of being which happens in the work. The work needs man because only he is able to grasp the unconcealment of being in its Being in the work, which leads to the self-secluding Being. The preserver of the work is only the man disposed to ecstatic self-involvement (*Sich-einlassen*) in the unconcealment of being. He has disclosedness (*Ent-schlossenheit*) at his disposal to move out of his captivity (*Befangenheit*) by being to the openness of Being. With his disclosedness, he exposes himself to the openness of beings placed in the work. His preservation of the work is the knowledge of wanting to abide in the truth of the work. The preserver tends to share his knowledge with others so they, too, would be drawn into belonging to the truth that happens in the work (Heidegger 1977a, 50–56).²⁵

If, however, a work does not – or does not immediately – find preservers who respond to the truth happening in the work, that does not mean that a work can be a work without preservers. If it is in other respects a work, it always remains tied to preservers [...]. [Heidegger 2002b, 41]²⁶

Poetry (*Dichtung*) encompasses the variety of artistic creations in turning away from everydayness. Such bracketing of the ‘at first and most often’ makes the usual present-at-hand and ready-to-hand beings non-beings. It creates a place of radical otherness in the midst of being which enables the advent of truth in the work because it facilitates access to the

²⁵ On this subject, see e.g.: Godzinski (2005, 7), Dreyfus and Wrathall (2005, 12), Dreyfus (2002, 171), Batovanja (2007, 112), Borgmann (2005, 424, 429), Dreyfus and Wrathall (2002, xii), and Riis (2018, 100–112).

²⁶ Wenn aber ein Werk die Bewahrenden nicht findet, nicht unmittelbar so findet, daß sie der im Werk geschehenden Wahrheit entsprechen, dann heißt dies keineswegs, das Werk sei auch Werk ohne die Bewahrenden. Es bleibt immer, wenn anders es ein Werk ist, auf die Bewahrenden bezogen [...] (Heidegger 1977a, 54).

unconcealment of being. Radical otherness is the opposite of everydayness, which has lost the power to disclose the truth of being and thus preserve Being.²⁷

Because it is the setting truth into the work, poetry is the most optimistic possibility of leaving the world of technology, in which the danger of the forgetfulness of Being reigns more expressly than ever before. The danger is at its highest level in the age of technology because man does not grasp beings as beings but always only disposes of them as pieces of the standing-reserve. Since the nearness of Being is attained by way of unconcealment of being, more precisely, unconcealment of Being of individual beings, if man lacks the relationship with beings, he is left without the possibility of accessing Being. In the age of technology, art, insofar as it is the setting the unconcealment of being into the work, is an oasis giving hope that man can be the one he needs to be – the listener of Being.²⁸

Marcuse: The Aporias of Advanced Industrial Society

Marcuse detects the foundation of the productive apparatus of advanced capitalism in ideology. The productive apparatus is the last stage of the realisation of the historical project of organisation and transformation of nature as the material of subjugation. This means that natural science projects nature in accordance with the needs of the productive apparatus, which equates nature with natural resources as the material of mastery and organisation. Since science retains its truth regardless of its technological application, and the machine is indifferent to its social use, society turns out to be responsible for the scientific-technological transformation of nature and the establishment of the scientific-technological totality of the historical world. In other words, neutral science projects a mere form that can be diverted to an arbitrary goal. Although essentially neutral, science does not take place in an ideological vacuum, and always provides explanations and calculations from a certain position in the world. In late capitalism, technology appears as a form of social control and domination that subjects science to the instrumentality of method. The application of natural science to optimise the productive process is a consequence of

²⁷ Cf. Riis (2018, 112–114) and Tan (2022, 15–17).

²⁸ For more on Heidegger's relationship to art, see e.g.: Pejović (1979, 156), Dreyfus and Wrathall (2002, xiv), Pejović (1959, 167–168), Richardson (2012, 354), Guigon (1993, 24–25), Borgmann (2005, 425, 429), Turnbull (2009, 26), Dreyfus and Wrathall (2005, 14), Mitcham (1994, 52), Dreyfus (2002, 168), and Tan (2022, 29–31, 58–62).

the social mode of production, which means the exploitation of nature and man is man's work, '[t]he technological *a priori* is a political *a priori*' (Marcuse 2007a, 157).

In order to emphasise the totalitarianism of the scientific-technological system, Marcuse uses the word 'technicity' that denotes the networking of a system of instrumentality, which depends on another system, a system of expediency of ends. The machine, the instrument, exists only within a technological totality, only as an element of technicity. As such, technicity should be distinguished from technology (Fr. *technique*), which denotes an individual activity or a certain sociohistorical form. In his exposition, Marcuse equates technicity with Heidegger's definition of the worldhood of the world in the sense of the disclosedness of the referential whole that connects equipment into a closed referential whole. The ontical non-thematic nature of the referential whole and the ultimate end of human well-being (Heidegger 1967, 64–66) is understood by Marcuse as the precedence of the project of an instrumental world to the creation of technologies which serve as instruments of the ensemble of technicity. He believes that the conceptual grasping of the technical ensemble should precede acting upon it, because only the transcendental grasping of the existential character of technicity discloses ultimate technological ends repressed by the social development of the technology of industrial society (Marcuse 2011, 136–137).

The productive apparatus shows a totalitarian character manifested in its tendency not to stop at the exploitation of nature but to proceed to the exploitation of the totality of society. Namely, the productive apparatus has outgrown the referentially interconnected ensemble of tools and instruments that can be separated at will, and has become a system of universal domination which determines in advance the final product, the tools used, the operations serving it and – together with them – the necessary occupations and skills. The absolute nature of the apparatus does not stop at determining the entirety of the productive process but also aims at determining the aspirations, attitudes and needs of the individual (Marcuse 2007a, 150–162).²⁹

The productive apparatus has the ability to influence the needs of individuals because human needs are historically conditioned. Only the basic animal needs of individual self-preservation and species reproduction are necessary, while all other human needs depend on the historical mo-

²⁹ Cf. Kellner, Pierce, and Lewis (2011, 57, 68–72).

ment. Historical conditioning means that throughout history, in accordance with the progress of civilisation, man constantly adds new needs to his survival. Man is in need of all the produced objects he has integrated into his survival, and he cannot do without them until he replaces them with their more advanced versions. A dependence on the newly produced object is established through use, while historical productivity does not make needs any less real and the necessity to satisfy them creates an equal compulsion on the individual. The flexibility of man's drive-apparatus, in which it is always possible to incorporate new needs, opens up space for manipulation, so ultimately social institutions and interest groups determine what will become a human need. Marcuse points out that it is incredibly important to be able to detect the false needs that perpetuate toil without their satisfaction raising the quality of human existence. The gratification that comes from satisfying them is not diminished by the fact that they are false needs. Therein lies the reason for their persistence, because man easily identifies with them and finds fulfilment in them. It is particularly problematic to determine who is meritorious to be the authority for assessing the legitimacy of needs, because only the requirement to satisfy vital needs is irreducible, while all other needs are historically conditioned (Marcuse 2007a, 5–10).³⁰

Free choice among a wide variety of goods and services does not signify freedom if these goods and services sustain social controls over a life of toil and fear—that is, if they sustain alienation. [Marcuse 2007a, 10]

Social control based on new needs is extremely efficient, and the survival of the existing situation depends on the uninterrupted continuation of production and consumption. In order to achieve the continuity of consumption, society has to systematically manipulate the human psyche; in its unconscious as well as its conscious dimensions. Advertising propaganda binds the merchandise the individual buys, the services he enjoys and the status symbols he carries to instinctual gratification (Marcuse 2009, 190–191). With its productivity, the system transforms the human surrounding world into a world filled with produced objects. Man identifies himself with the objects of satisfaction of new needs, and they thus become an extension of his mind and body. The filling of the

³⁰ More on this issue in e.g., Kellner, Pierce, and Lewis (2011, 67) and Brayford (2021, 612–614).

world with objects created for the sole purpose of providing man with a more comfortable existence eliminates any opposition to the existing system. Although man's existence in such a society is pleasant, he is not free. Marcuse calls the unfreedom in advanced capitalist society 'democratic unfreedom.' Democratic unfreedom is a comfortable unfreedom in which man does not suffer the discomfort of the denied satisfaction. Unfreedom instead manifests itself in the restraint of his individuality. Propaganda that imposes new needs leads to the identification of man with the consumption of objects of satisfaction, and he ultimately builds an image of himself through the consumption of products, products that become symbols of a certain identity. Unfreedom in the sense of subordination to the productive apparatus is perpetuated by comfort. If the system works for the general welfare, raising the quality of life of all social groups and interests, any resistance is irrational. A high quality of life indicates that non-conformism is useless because its consequence can only be a lowering standard of living and usurpation of the smooth functioning of the system. In this way, advanced capitalist society rationalises man's unfreedom as enslavement in the productive apparatus (Marcuse 2007a, 3–20).³¹

For in reality, neither the utilization of administrative rather than physical controls (hunger, personal dependence, force), nor the change in the character of heavy work, nor the assimilation of occupational classes, nor the equalization in the sphere of consumption compensate for the fact that the decisions over life and death, over personal and national security are made at places over which the individuals have no control. The slaves of developed industrial civilization are sublimated slaves, but they are slaves [...]. [Marcuse 2007a, 35–36]

Under the influence of Freud, Marcuse forms the performance principle, which he considers to be the historical version of the reality principle dominant in late capitalist society. Freud himself considers the pleasure principle as the discretion of the psychic apparatus to avoid pain and ensure pleasure, thus removing increased tension. The reality principle is the adaptation of the pleasure principle to the social context, because the pleasure principle itself does not tolerate delay of gratification and is therefore socially unacceptable. Unlike the pleasure principle, the

³¹ Cf. Kellner, Pierce, and Lewis (2011, 43, 62, 74) and Brujić (1968, 255–256).

reality principle achieves pleasure in a socially acceptable way by purposefully changing reality in accordance with the satisfaction of needs. Marcuse believes that in Freud's metapsychology, the transition to the reality principle is necessary due to the scarcity of means of satisfaction. Needs can only be satisfied with constant renunciation in toil, and therefore drives must be suspended by repression. Likewise, Marcuse believes that the scarcity of means is not a biological determinant but a consequence of political manipulation. The ruling institutions require excessive repression to maintain their dominance. Surplus-repression in late capitalist society is so extensive that it changes the very reality principle into the performance principle. Under the influence of the performance principle, Marcuse wants to emphasise, society stratifies according to the rival economic performances of its members (Marcuse 1955, 35–50).

Unlike contemporary consumer society, traditional society requires repression which leads to sublimation due to the polymorphism of libido. The polymorphism of libido is Freud's concept (Freud 1968, 89–91) by which he claims that at the beginning of human life, the whole body is an erogenous zone (the so-called polymorphous perversity), and that other erogenous zones (oral, anal and genital) separate during life. This possibility of substituting erogenous zones is a condition for man to find sexual satisfaction beyond bodily discharge. Sublimation (Freud 1955, 457) opens the way for man to satisfy his sexual drive in a socially useful way, in the form of artistic or intellectual production. Freud himself believes that society exploits man's possibility of sublimation, needlessly narrowing the patterns of socially acceptable sexual gratification and thus ensuring a sufficient amount of energy for building society. In *Eros and Civilization*, Marcuse still agrees with Freud and discusses the socially conditioned surplus-repression that needs to be gradually overcome (Marcuse 1955, 20, 37–40, 87–88). He abandons this view by introducing the concept of repressive institutionalised desublimation, which expresses the socially motivated increase in sexual freedom; 'sexuality turns into a vehicle for the bestsellers of oppression' (Marcuse 2007a, 81). The liberation of sexuality in socially useful forms is the basis for the alignment of individual satisfaction and social goals (pp. 75–85).

The reflex of reducing sublimation in late capitalist society is the conversion of higher into popular culture. The transformation takes place under the pretext of eliminating the traditional elitism of higher culture and increasing satisfaction. According to Marcuse, the availability of the artistic, which is included in everyday life as a decorative aspect of goods,

has a number of negative consequences for society. Widely available reproductions of works of art are so often encountered that seeing them has become completely automated, thus erasing the effect of amazement that leads the individual to questioning reality. Works of art should criticise and refute reality with their negative power, but the availability of art as a commodity disperses that power. In contrast to the consumer society, the fundamental function of art in traditional society was to transcend reality and depict possible worlds that provide an alternative to reality. The work of art provided a fulfilment of illusory fantasies in a form that did not pretend to be realised. Despite this, art creates a tension between possibility and reality because in the artistic form real circumstances are disclosed in their truth. Through building fictitious possible worlds, the disclosed artistic truth discloses the shortcomings of reality, and therefore artistic images carry in themselves the power of the negative that refutes the existing order (Marcuse 2007a, 57–69).

The presented mechanisms of the functioning of late capitalist society³² result in the emergence of a one-dimensional society. One-dimensionality manifests itself in the disappearance of the transcendent second dimension of unrealised possibilities. This is due to the system that eliminates all alternatives, the realisation of which requires a radical overturn of the existing. The political creators of one-dimensionality manipulate the members of society whom they have convinced that they live in ‘the best of all possible worlds’ (Voltaire 2006, 14–15, 22, 87–88) and that there is no need to overcome it. Efficient productive-economic coordination prevents the establishment of a significant opposition to the whole in advanced industrial society (Marcuse 2007a, 5–13).³³

³² In contrast to the man of the one-dimensional welfare society, the Modern Age individual, a member of the middle class established by the civil revolutions in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, agrees with a fundamentally different worldview and value system. He is the arbiter of his own standards and values, setting himself up as the measure of all things. The Modern Age citizen rejects external authorities because he believes that with his mind, as a rational being, he is capable of independently determining the values and moral laws to which he agrees. He had to break through the traditional Christian system of ideas and values and question the values he agrees to on the basis of his free ‘common sense.’ His questioning creates a permanent opposition in society and thus realises the two-dimensionality of society. Liberalist society is considered the most suitable for such new individualistic rationality. The fundamental task of society is to enable him to act in accordance with the newly acquired freedom of thought and to remove the restrictions on his reasonable actions (Marcuse 2004, 40–46).

³³ The problem of one-dimensionality in Marcuse is also discussed in e.g.: Marcuse (2011,

The incessant dynamic of technical progress has become permeated with political content, and the Logos of technics has been made into the Logos of continued servitude. [Marcuse 2007a, 163]

Although one cannot dispute the achievements of advanced society to reproduce and protect human life by organising man's struggle with nature and other men, such a society should be overcome. The continuous quantitative progress through which productive possibilities outgrew the system created a qualitative change. Marcuse declares a society that insists on continuing work when it has become an 'unnecessary necessity' as a sick society, because its fundamental institutions and structures do not allow the use of available material and intellectual resources for the most effective development and satisfaction of individual needs (Marcuse 2009, 188–189). Rationality is at the same time political irrationality because although it is rational to maintain a system of high productivity, such stabilisation by productivity is irrational when it becomes destructive to the free development of human needs and abilities.³⁴ When the automation of production frees man from the necessity of work by reducing work to marginal time, the need for the survival of advanced industrial society vanishes. Automation liberates individual energy to fill time with activities free from the necessity of work to satisfy needs. Over time, the discrepancy between the productive capabilities of the automated system of production and the political insistence on oppression would become apparent, which would call into question maintaining the repression of the consumer society. Therein lies the foundation for a new human freedom, one that cannot be defined in traditional terms because it includes entirely new liberties which can only be expressed negatively in traditional vocabulary: economically, as freedom from the daily struggle for existence; politically, as liberation from controlling policies; intellectually, as restoration of individual thought that is absorbed into mass communication and imposed views (Marcuse 2007a, 6–10).

Marcuse uses the concept of the dialectic of liberation to denote liberation from any bad, false system. It is necessary to demand the realisation of the transcendent project if it is in accordance with real possibilities and if it provides a superior perspective for existence. In the affluent so-

132–135), Marcuse (1955, 4), Kellner (1998, 5), Schutzbach (2022, 53–56), Feenberg (2005, x–xi, 17, 85–86), and Aronson (2014).

³⁴ Cf. Kellner, Pierce, and Lewis (2011, 37–38), Feenberg (2004, 74), Gandesha (2004, 196), and Brayford (2021, 611–612).

ciety, the problem is that even though the material basis for qualitative change exists, the subjective need is lacking. Change can only occur if a self-consciousness that transcends the existing conditions by converting the behaviour of man emerges in the unfree society. Marcuse detects the problem in a 'second nature' of man, produced by capitalism and the consumer economy, which binds man to the commodity form – possessing, consuming, renewing, buying, selling – and which has in a sense become a 'biological' need. Thus, the 'second nature' resists any revolutionary or qualitative change and abandoning dependence on the market and becomes the bearer of 'the counterrevolution'³⁵ anchored in the instinctual structure' (Marcuse 1969, 11).³⁶

The repressed instinctual impulse which he refers to is morality as a prerequisite for solidarity, humanity, will and faith. By establishing morality as the foundation, a new temperament and consciousness emerges which is guided by the drive for liberation and which is capable of exposing the ideological manipulation of the affluent society. The liberating forces within the existing society would retain the technological apparatus of capitalism, but introduce a qualitative change by organising production from the immediate producers. The new morally conscious individual changes the existing institutions, which also changes the interpersonal relations that abandon the aggressive competitive patterns (Marcuse 2007a, 24, 45).³⁷

Achieving the new freedom involves the sacrifice of lowering standards because maintaining excessive comfort requires control and domination. Work to satisfy vital needs cannot be eliminated, but it should be carried out in accordance with the new goals of satisfying only vital needs, thus reducing its scope. In order for members of society to agree to the restriction of satisfaction, a fundamental change in the relationship be-

³⁵ In his later works, Marcuse rejects the term 'revolution' (and 'counterrevolution'), considering it evokes negative connotations of the already achieved revolutionary changes that have only replaced one system of servitude by another. Also, the new society can be equated with socialism only if socialism is defined by taking life in itself as a social goal, which is shown in practice as the abolition of labour, the termination of the struggle for survival and the liberation of human sensibility. Such a new society shares nothing with the existing transitions from capitalism to socialism, reduced to the planned development of the productive forces and the rationalisation of natural resources (Marcuse 2016, 176–184).

³⁶ Cf. Brujić (1968, 252–254).

³⁷ Cf. Kellner, Pierce, and Lewis (2011, 14, 50, 59–61), Feenberg (2004, 79), and Brujić (1968, 251).

tween material and intellectual needs is necessary (Marcuse 2007a, 235–242, 252–256).

The emerging society is a society of pacified existence in harmony with nature because limiting production eliminates violence against nature. According to Marcuse, pacification denotes the disappearance of relating to nature and society based on scarcity and the struggle for survival. In a pacified society, instead of toil, the play of the productive imagination³⁸ reigns, which projects the possibilities of a free existence.³⁹ In such a society, production becomes a creative process based on imagination-driven free shaping of reflection. The liberation of imagination introduces a new

³⁸ Marcuse takes over the use of imagination as a mediating faculty between understanding and sensibility from Kant, who gives the imagination (*Einbildungskraft*) a central role in human reason. For Kant, according to Marcuse, placing the imagination at the centre is at the same time an act of freedom. Marcuse substantiates his position by asserting that in the first critique only the cognitive subject is free as a self-conscious transcendental apperception of the 'I think'. In the second critique, the moral subject is free, but the relationship between the freedom of the moral subject and natural necessity remains problematic. The shortcomings of the first and second critiques are overcome in the third, in which natural necessity and human freedom are reconciled in the aesthetic dimension. Marcuse finds in Kant's definition of the naturally beautiful the potential for forming itself in its freedom in an aesthetically meaningful way. According to Marcuse, this view can be equated with Marx's position that man forms the world in accordance with the laws of beauty. The need for the beautiful can be manifested as a drive for a peaceful, harmonious environment that makes it possible to fulfil the aesthetic-erotic need. Such an interpretation of Kant deviates considerably from the conventional understanding. Kant himself places freedom as the subject of the philosophy of morals, the practical legislation of reason that determines what ought to be. The moral subject with his power of the will (bracketing pleasure) makes a moral judgement based on an *a priori* maxim. In contrast to practical reason, the power of judgement is positioned as an intermediate member in the domain of pleasure and displeasure which connects the field of understanding's theoretical knowledge of nature with the reason's practical area of freedom. It is an intermediate member because it reduces the empirical diversity of nature to a transcendental principle, presenting a lawfulness for the purposiveness related to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure. Through the four moments of the judgement of taste, the power of judgement establishes the principles of subsumption of the sensuous, empirical under the transcendental principles of disinterested delight (*interesseloses Wohlgefallen*). Freedom is thematised by Kant only in relation to the freedom of activity of the imagination, which approaches play. In contrast to such aesthetic judging of the reason, in moral legislation the reason is required to be rigorous and to remove all purposiveness associated with pleasure (Marcuse 2007b, 153–154, 159–161; Kellner 2007, 35, 48; Kant 1986, 106–108, 180–184).

³⁹ See Kellner, Pierce, and Lewis (2011, 73–75), Brujić (1968, 256), and Feenberg (2004, 75–77).

aesthetic-erotic quality into society, which should be understood in terms of a sensuous desire for life that encourages non-repressive sublimation. Emphasising the new aesthetic-erotic quality does not imply abandoning rationality, but the productive imagination as a link between the theoretical and the practical harmonises reason and sensibility. The erotic moment permeates the emerging morality of solidarity but also transvalues the productive apparatus, which is now directed toward a free realisation of human possibilities. The aesthetic, which is a spiritual form of sensibility, becomes a mode of human existence as a form of beautiful living. Such a new free society that gives primacy to the activity of the productive imagination is capable of projecting a world that satisfies man's sensuous desire for life. The new *ethos* of society directs the consciousness of individuals towards aesthetic goals that manifest themselves in the forming of reality according to the principles of artistic production, but this does not mean that reality will become filled with decorated products. Instead, the artistic *ethos* for Marcuse stands for an orientation towards art (Marcuse 1969, 30–37).⁴⁰

Art would recapture some of its more primitive 'technical' connotations: as the art of preparing (cooking!), cultivating, growing things, giving them a form which neither violates their matter nor the sensitivity [...]. [Marcuse 1969, 32]

In a society created by art, the forms of reality are projected by the productive imagination that envisages unrealised possibilities of existence, which can become projects of the scientific-technological transformation of the world. Thus, in the new society, a harmonious relation of sensibility and rationality would take place in the complementary interweaving of technology and art, work and play; play as a non-repressive form of free time exercise which opens up space for exploring one's own preferences. See Kellner, Pierce, and Lewis (2011, 50, 63–64, 72) and Kellner (1998, 34). In this way, free time filled with intellectual content in accordance with non-repressive sublimation would enable the self-determination of the individual (Marcuse 2007b, 128, 147).

Conclusion

There are many links between Heidegger's thinking of the age of modern technology and Marcuse's exposition of mature capitalist society. Both set

⁴⁰ Cf. Schutzbach (2022, 6–9, 77–84).

forth similar analyses of the consumer worldview that dominates contemporary society, which is particularly interesting due to the authors' ideological opposition. What remains different is the methodology of approach, which shows itself as a confrontation between Heidegger's ontological orientation and Marcuse's sociological Marxism.

Heidegger believes that contemporary society is characterised by a relatedness that performs a planned management and securing of means for optimal efficiency. The secured means do not have constancy because they are accumulated as available for further consumption. If the constancy of objects is reduced to availability, there are only consumable goods that circulate in the cycle of the requisitioning of the orderable. Since it is all-encompassing, man, like everything else subsisting, is forced into its circulation. Man loses his freedom and dignity if reduced to a requisitioner. Positionality is the ontological basis of the requisitioning of the orderable that drives everything which presences into circulation and accumulates the secured in the standing-reserve. Positionality is the extreme danger for man because in it he cannot grasp the unconcealment of the Being of being. Heidegger questions the possibility of surpassing the dominance of positionality because it is the Being of the age of completion of metaphysics, which cannot be surpassed by individual efforts but only overcome, got over (*Verwinden*). Even the individual who has become aware of the restrictive nature of the network of socio-economic imperatives does not agree to abandon it, because it would mean rejecting progress in the sense of agreeing to the limitation of production and consumption (Heidegger 1986, 128). Heidegger assigns art a privileged place as the one that opens a gap of the nearness of Being in the reality of positionality's rule. The work of art has a privileged status because it discloses being in its Being, which leads to the nearness of Being. In order to disclose the unconcealment, the work of art needs man, because only he is capable of grasping the unconcealment of being in its Being, which leads to the self-secluding Being. The man who participates in such a disclosure has to be especially attuned to ecstatic self-involvement in unconcealment.

Marcuse approaches the exposition from a Marxist-social point of view, analysing the productive apparatus, which he sees as the historical project of organisation and transformation of nature as the material of subjugation. The productive apparatus, like Heidegger's positionality, has totalitarian tendencies; it tends to master and organise the whole of society. Also, just like in Heidegger, man is subordinated to the produc-

tive apparatus, which manipulates human needs at the behest of interest groups and social institutions in order to achieve the continuity of production and consumption. Marcuse mostly departs from Heidegger's analysis with his projection of an alternative reality of a pacified society. He believes that maintaining the existing system will prove to be politically irrational because highly automated production does not require oppression. The material foundations for freedom exist, but the subjective self-consciousness of the need for change is lacking. In order for liberation to be possible, a morally conscious individual who is capable of exposing ideological manipulation is needed. A conscious individual creates a new society by changing existing institutions and retaining the capitalist productive apparatus. In that society, production is reduced to the extent necessary for the satisfaction of primary needs. Thus, like Heidegger, he also concluded that change necessitates abandoning excessive production and consumption, and he observed the reluctance of individuals to accept the lowering of the standard of living caused by it. Furthermore, both of them think art plays a key role in stepping out of the consumer society, as Marcuse finds the essential determinant of the new society in the liberation of the imagination, which brings an aesthetic-erotic quality. In practice, the aesthetic-erotic quality means that the productive imagination represents the possibilities of existence that can become a project of transforming the world.

The topicality of their texts written in the second half of the last century is telling. Today, the negative consequences of consumer behaviour paradigms are obvious, ranging from the destruction of nature to the self-alienated individual. Individual solutions of green policies are proving to be insufficient because none of the measures have so far succeeded in slowing down the devastation of the Earth. A global solution requires sacrifices for which contemporary society is still not ready. Even though there is a certain level of self-awareness about the shortcomings of the consumer worldview, the contemporary individual is not willing to abandon the comfort of their empty existence in the name of a global solution.

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