**LIVING IN AN WORLD OF NATION-STATES**

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**ONE DIMENSIONAL MAN, ONE DIMENSIONAL SOCIETY**

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Once upon a time rebellious University students in Western Europe carried red flags with three Ms, where first M stands for Karl Marx, second – for Mao, and the third – for Herbert Marcuse. As M. Jay wrote, “… [Marcuse] has himself become something of a commodity. No article on the New Left is complete without a ritual mention of his name; no discussion of the 'counter culture' dares ignore his message of liberation'. Jay, 1970: 342). After fifty years, K. Marx remains more or less unquestionable, in a way deprived from the nimbus of a revolutionary prophet, Mao is no more global revolution’s instigator, and applicants for Marcuse’s place are countless. His name today is known only to narrow academic circles. In the decades since the New Left dwindled so dramatically, so happened with the stature of Herbert Marcuse Herbert Marcuse (19 July 1898-29 July 1979)[[1]](#footnote-1).

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Society, especially after the Industrial revolution, is ever accelerating its development, and it is quite natural that even the most excellent social theory is doomed to become obsolete, soon or later. K. Marx’s enormous design still in his lifetime elevated on a pedestal right after, or even above, the Bible, begun flaunting shortages, slipping details, emerging unanswered questions. Even while Karl Marx was still alive, many of his prospective adherents regarded Marxism as a compilation of mechanical reductions of his ideas, setting up a variety of obdurate biased groups. They begrudged mutually, and in the very end of his life in 1883, Marx wrote a letter to Jules Guesde and Paul Lafargue, who both used to claim to represent “Marxist” principles. Marx accused them in what he called “revolutionary phrase-mongering”, and spreading doctrines, concepts and ideas that were completely adverse to and incompatible with the critical spirit of Marx’s self designed “Marxism,” which disapproved sectarianism, dogmatism, and reductionism. This argument was actually the source of Marx's avowal, reported by his close friend Friedrich Engels: “*ce qu'il y a de certain c'est que moi, je ne suis pas marxiste*” (“what is certain is that [if they are Marxists], [then] I myself am not a Marxist”)[[2]](#footnote-2).

Before the end 19th of century expired, more and more of his followers appreciated that history was not moving in the direction predicted by Marx. While they still adhered to his followers, they were aware, that being a great scholar, he was short of being a prophet. His essential insights of great for the study of economics and of society, regardless of enormous efforts and immense activism, failed to be converted into desperately needed guidance for changing unfair society into Earthly Paradise. Close aide, follower, and a devoted family friend of K. Marx, Eduard Bernstein, edited vigorously the unpublished papers, manuscripts, letters of Marx after his death. More and more reticent, he wrote in 1898, that his intention is not to refute Marx, but rather to improve and adjust his theory in light of the current developments (Laqueur, 2013). Bernstein saw clearly that, for example, pauperization – the process of spreading poverty of the working class that was critical in Marxian system – was not happening – or, at least, not in such pace as expected. Same about another central variable: the concentration of capital in the hands of few, deemed by Marx as a predetermined source of the collapse of capitalism. Karl Marx, too, failed to anticipate the emergence of the welfare state, the ‘Middle Class’. As a matter of fact, indeed, there were intermittent crises of overproduction, but they were not matching what Marx estimated – devastating capitalism. The industrial working class of the world did not grow, but reduced in size. And, even more important – never united, but was further divided on various disruptive lines – as of sectors, level of qualification, ethnicity, etc. As a result of technological advancement, the working class’ composition altered extensively. Deep cleavages – white vs non-white, local vs migrants, qualified vs unqualified, and so on, that yield conflicting interests – categorically prevent their reuniting and joint activity. For instance, in Europe and in the USA, while it absorbed a flow of immigrants for whom religion was more important than class-consciousness, the resident working class recurrently, increasingly and steady diverted to the right – sometimes even to the extremely right, and profoundly conservative takes. 20th century saw, indeed, a lot of revolutions, in some countries, like Russia, China, and Cuba bringing communist regimes to power. But they never were successful in the most developed capitalist countries that Marx saw as the spawning ground for revolution. They occurred in less developed nations, and all delivered in this way revolutionary societies were too dissimilar to what Marx had imagined.

Almost 150 years after the death of Karl Marx he is still the most confident symbol on the red flag of the numerous left-wing movements, parties and groups, but also of the not less theoretical trends, often fiercely criticizing each other, but fervently keeping Marx’s name (with prefixes like neo- or post-). One of the most important proponents of Neo-Marxism was the Frankfurt school, which grew out of the University of Frankfurt’s Institute of Social Research. This early form of Neo-Marxism is also acknowledged as critical theory where class divisions under capitalism were still considered more eminent than gender/sex divisions, or issues of race and ethnicity. Neo Marxism encompasses a set of viewpoints reunited by rejection of economic and class determinism as well as acceptance of at least the social sphere’s semi-autonomy. The Neo-Marxists, after grasping that the working class revolutions in Western Europe after the World War I has been abortive, opted for such segments of Marx's thought that, as they supposed, might explicate social conditions, non-existent while Marx himself was alive. They added or modified what they perceived to be omissions, oversights, or gaps in Marxism with ideas from other schools of thought.

H. Marcuse was for a while one of the brightest star among the neo-Marxists, and in addition – a rare example of a scholar who inspired a quasi revolutionary global undertaking. His writings influenced individuals like Abbie Hoffman[[3]](#footnote-3) and Jerry Rubin, the most prominent of the New Left activist leaders of the ’Chicago Seven’, who attempted to provoke riots at the 1968 Democratic Convention, Angela Davis – an American political activist, academic, and author, a prominent counterculture activist in the 1960s working both with the Communist Party USA, and with the Black Panthers during the Civil Rights Movement – up to the contemporary famous persons of the Left thinking like Noam Chomsky[[4]](#footnote-4), Immanuel Wallerstein, and Slavoj Žižek. There are, however, just opposite opinions: “Marcuse did not have much influence on the New Left and may well have been influenced by them to take more activist positions. In the end, the Frankfurt School as a whole and Marcuse in particular had far more direct influence on the leftist culture of the academic world in the period after the 1960s than on the leftist culture of 1960s protests.” (Wheatland, 2009: 334). Reflecting on Marcuse's role in the New Left after his death, Ronald Aronson – Marcuse’s fellow, thinker, professor in history of ideas, and activist, wrote:

'In the 1960's Marcuse legitimized us. As we broke with the conventional authorities – the parents – all around us, no matter how minimally we understood his words, we found a message of confirmation from this caring but severe figure. One-Dimensional Man expressed how negative, how oppressive was this society that seemed so positive. It broke with the American end-of-ideology smugness intellectually as the Civil Rights movement broke with it politically. Marcuse gave philosophical and historical validation to our inarticulate yet explosive demand for a totally different vision. He made available to us a genuinely alternative intellectual culture, style of thought, and reservoir of ideas and writings' (Aronson, 1979: 10).

In his essay “Marcuse Today”, Aronson claimed: “Fifty years later, One-Dimensional Man looks more prescient than its author could have imagined” (Aronson, 2014). Marxism and its transmutations failed to magnetize industrial working class masses (Lenin, a great follower and revisionist of Marx, spoke repeatedly about ‘induction’ – even by coercion – of the ‘Great Teachings’ into the ignorant masses[[5]](#footnote-5)). As D. Kurten and Niall McCrae wrote:

“The working classes in Western nations had failed to act as expected by Marx and Engels, refusing to stage Bolshevik-style uprisings, but while Stalin was enslaving and eradicating millions of peasants, kulaks and priests, the critical theorists of the Frankfurt School were adapting Marxism from its original economic determinism to a radical onslaught on the prevailing culture. The ultimate goal was the same, but for revolution to succeed, the traditional values and institutions of society outside of state control must be overcome. Illustrating this shift, left-wing student protestors in 1968 drew inspiration from Chairman Mao, who unleashed the Cultural Revolution. The main targets of cultural Marxism are family and faith, which are seen as power structures that deter a rational Utopia of social justice (Kurten, McCrae, 2019)[[6]](#footnote-6).

Marcuse himself was truly disappointed by the students, whom he considered to be the main revolutionary force, but who abandoned him as they earlier adored him. This allegedly resurgence of Marx, indeed, has little to do with the genuine legacy of Marx, proved futile. All these poststructuralists, postmodernists, existentialism, feminism, gender, culture and identity scholars seem only vaguely familiar which exactly associates them with Marxism and even less – with Marx himself, continually proclaimed renaissance of Marx, though restricted to selected Western universities with tiny relationship to the present day industrial working class. What is probably their main feature is continuing reductionism – i.e., core elements of the revolutionary Marxism were removed, and certain details – exaggerated. Or, like Laqueur puts it “The answer, it seems, is that “Marx” has become something like a shortcut or a symbol indicating a predilection for radical change in a wide variety of fields [which] has little or nothing to do with what Marxism was really all about.” (Laqueur, op. cit.).

H. Marcuse once was called, soon after his death, “the father (or also the grandfather of the New Left” (Bourne, 1979). During the 1960s and 1970s, he was frequently welcomed invitations to speak at the protests or rallies, organized by students idealists, for whom this senior Marxist was a living icon (quite curiously, he cantankerously rejected this label. To be sure, his reputation has not faded into utter oblivion. An International Herbert Marcuse Society still holds biennial conferences, and anthologies and monographs on his work continue to appear. But in no way they may be considered central to academic discourse and tend to be reviewed only in dedicated publications. In 1987, when social reviewer Russell Jacoby traced the US intelligentsia’s vitality and scope downward trajectory in his *The Last Intellectuals*, Marcuse was there barely mentioned. Few years later, *One-Dimensional Man* was lacking from *The Times Literary Supplement* list of the one hundred most influential books published since the end of the Second World War. Moreover, none of Marcuse’s other works – not even what he regarded as the “most important book”, *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry Into Freud* (1955), which presumably has annoyed Pope Paul VI. His major works are scarcely read recently in philosophy or sociology departments in North America, where, if first-generation Frankfurt School critical theory is on the curriculum, it is most often represented by the works of Walter Benjamin, Erich Fromm, Theodor W. Adorno, not of Marcuse (Walsh, 2008, Whitfield, 2014). Nevertheless, nearly half a century after appearance of H. Marcuse’s *One Dimensional Man* this book still instigate debates and occasionally – an inspiration. Here we find an opportunity to find out whether the modern 21st century individual has turned out to be even more one-dimensional, or, on the contrary – multidimensional. Further, we’ll think about whether a society may be one- or multidimensional.

***One-dimensionality – a metaphor, abstraction, assumption, or an oversimplification?*** “One-dimensional thought is systematically promoted by the makers of politics and their purveyors of mass information. Their universe of discourse is populated by self-validating hypotheses which, incessantly and monopolistically repeated, become hyponotic definitions of dictations.” – wrote H. Marcuse (Marcuse, 1964: 16). Ostensibly, there are much more grounds that point at the former, Marcusian, perspective: by large, consumerism is prevailing, cultural dimension is restricted to a leisure option like tourists visiting attractions, mass media dominates private lives and cast doubt on the very chance for privacy, while introduction of brand new gadgets such as newest mobile phones, tablets, new and faster means of transportation, global internet has fundamentally altered lives of greater part of human beings. Moreover, ideological boundaries between left and right, liberal and conservative has faded, while gap between rich and poor – strata, countries, regions – has deepened, government is today even more far-off the people, and environmental damage reaches the point of irreversibility.

However, if we take another angle, things appear very different. Each sociology undergraduate would say that there is no such thing as one-dimensional personality existing in natural world. Each person, with the exemption probably of the few utmost ignorant, illiterate, heavy mentally retarded, or grown up in animal herd, is multidimensional – he or she is, first of all, male or female of particular age, with certain profession/vocation, or learning, then husband/spouse (with various forms that emerge in contemporary society), parent, grand parent, one that partakes numerous roles even within the span of one day only – a driver, a passenger, person with hobby (-ies), doing small repairs at home or on his/her car, and many more. And, after all, each person is free to add more dimensions his/herself. One-dimensionality is, indeed, no more than a metaphor, abstraction, assumption. But when a theory leaves aside too much, like the mathematician downgrades complex equation to single or series of simple ones, then it becomes meagre and poor. “’One-dimensionality’ also did not foresee that social movements, already beginning in the early 1960s, might have a transformative effect on the flat, gray American society many of us grew up in. These movements made all capitalist societies more diverse, more racially equal, more tolerant, multicultural, and feminist – in key ways, more liveable for almost everyone. When women become CEOs of major corporations, same-sex marriage rites become common, government agencies use Spanish, and an African American family occupies the White House, the watchword of our times is no longer “conformity” but “individual freedom.” Marcuse didn’t look for unexpected places where the system’s contradictions might break out. He seemed to have too much faith in domination and too little in resistance, too much respect for the rulers and too little for the ruled.” (Aronson, 2014). H. Marcuse focuses on the mid-20th century capitalism, and laments for the 19th century clear-cut early capitalist society, but isn’t this another generalizing statement, since the 20th century brought many new, modified forms of industrial and governmental relations? Together with other ‘neo-marxists’ of the second half of 20th and beginning of 21st century, he is completely silent about the existing and spreading then so called socialist/communist society. Many authors, indeed, deny and even categorize it as an extreme form of state capitalism – this is the main reason of the mutual animosity between these authors, and the bureaucratized ‘socialism’ especially of Soviet type. As Raymond Williams wrote, “It's as if socialism were some unchanging entity, a perfected and timeless system handed down by its pioneers, and now, look, it has gone wrong and must be abandoned. … But socialism, in spite of some of its propagandists, has never really been of this kind. It has been a movement of many different kinds of people, in very different historical situations. It has repeatedly overlapped with other movements: of democratic advance, of social welfare, of national liberation. Its most distinctive vision has been of a society in which people are free to identify and relate, in their places, beyond the rule of capital and its agents. Yet both analysis and vision have occurred under definite historical pressures and within clear social and historical limits” (Williams, 1989: 288). And this is a prevailing pattern, despite some occasional flirting between some neo-Marxists and certain communist regimes like Yugoslavia, China, Cuba. Isn't it just the ideal form where exists the one-dimensional man – obedient to the party-state directives, with prescribed way of life, uniformity, and compulsory single ‘choice’? Especially in its most extreme shapes, such as Mao’s China, E. Hoxha’s Albania, Red Khmers’ Kampuchea, and Kim’s North Korea, it even fulfils the prerequisites for a genuine one-dimensional society – which may be furthermore accomplished only in a dreadful robots-ruled society from an anti-utopia. As for consumerism, paradoxically, self-proclaimed ‘socialist’ society of a Soviet type with the chronic deficits nurtured even more excessive consumer mentality – where a glossy old issue of an Italian magazine, Tobleron chocolate, or a regular Japanese transistor radio might be a source of pride and envy[[7]](#footnote-7)…

***The genuine one-dimensional man is the left-wing professional revolutionary***

He (all professional revolutionaries, especially Great Leaders, Comandantes, Chairman Maos, as proved in history, used to be males – there is no place for Joan of Arcs in this contested domain – R. Luxemburg and Rozalia Zemlyachka were a great exception) is tenaciously devoted to one and only goal, changing society for better (in his only understanding, indeed)[[8]](#footnote-8). All other is either void, or subjugated – from basic subsisting conditions (food, sleep, reproduction as human being) to sophisticated human activities, as education, work, creativity – volumes of mastermind books, articles, speeches, self-effacingly called great contribution and continuation of Marxism, are deeds of anonymous teams – are part of the great effort to mould a true Superman.

In his book, published in 1964, *One-Dimensional Man*, Marcuse studied both the rise of advanced capitalism and bureaucratic-repressive Soviet type of communism, as well as the decline of revolutionary potential in the West. He argued that advanced industrial society has created false needs, which has incorporated individuals – by the means of mass media, advertising, industrial management, and contemporary modes of thinking – into an amalgam of production and consumption, creating a one-dimensional individual. In contrast to this he advocated a ’great refusal’, championing the non-integrated forces of minorities, outsiders, and radical intelligentsia, in order to nourish oppositional thought and behaviour through radical thought and opposition.

Marcuse and other thinkers from the left spectrum lament, actually, for one specific ‘dimension’ of the contemporary people – lack of revolutionary zeal, of masses’ willingness to follow ‘The Leader’ – no matter if he is in a clandestine housing, in the deep woods or mountains, or in their academic workplace. It is the same great frustration which Che Guevara – one that still inspires huge masses, but none of them goes further than shouting anti-governmental slogans or throwing stones – has felt in the Bolivian Andes when poor peasants has obviously rejected his urges to rebel. It is, indeed, a real rational choice situation, in many cases (when complete information is unavailable, or the person facing two or more options to chose between is simply ignorant, like the farmworkers from La Quebrada del Churo/Yuro), in fact, an *intuitive* choice, downgraded to one between the ghastly, but predictable life, and the uncertainty of the turmoil, havoc and mayhem.

Marcuse did greatly scruple in his approaching specific ways and means of society that have certainly to replace ever-decaying capitalism. In various places in his works, he seemingly approves the Leninist “dictatorship of the proletariat” as a transitional phase on the way to a free society (see e.g. 1969a: 149f; 139: 146, 1947: thesis 16), while in other works he is in supports the anarchistic option about an abrupt transition into the realm of freedom, as the strategy of the New Left is a concept of socialism that from the very beginning cease the continuum of dependence (Marcuse 1972: 14). Rebuffing state socialism, which falls short of profoundly terminating the capitalist structure of production and social needs, and upholds the basics of class society; hence, transition into a free society and abolition of the classes would require eradication of state socialism (Marcuse 1947: 137) as simply another form of the repugnant capitalism. Nevertheless, some authors see advantages in Marcuse’s approach, since he “offers a richer and more insightful conception of the utopian because he insists that changing “the system” requires deeply changing people. The subjective factor – the instinct for freedom – is neither residual nor epiphenomenal; it’s part of the historical material (Gordon, 2016: 13).

Marcuse maintains that “totalitarianism can be imposed without terror”, it is far easier such way. But the most totalitarian, i.e., ultimate one-dimensional forms of society and individual are possible ***only*** with terror, omnipresent control and restrictions on free speech, free movement, and assembly. Those poured with hypocrisy and double-thinking – where people need to be happy and keep smiling, while Party is cheating, depriving and loading with even more work – such as ‘voluntary’ unpaid assistance in the agriculture, or when voting 99% “Yes” in the mockery called elections. Nevertheless, seemingly eternal communist regimes proved to be rather unfeasible.

*Academic and non-academic attitudes on Marcuse – erstwhile and later*. First studies on Marcuse from the late 1960s – early 1970s, such as the articles collected in J. Habermas’ Answers to Herbert Marcuse (Habermas, 1968); see also Holz, 1968; and Fry, 1974), as well as most of the early articles on Marcuse – focused on One-Dimensional Man or his defence of revolutionary violence just when Marcuse was altering his perspectives on advanced capitalism and social change. Considered as the best studies of Marcuse have focused on his relation to Freud and include S. Lipshires’ Herbert Marcuse: From Marx to Freud and Beyond (Lipshires, 1974) and that of Gad Horowitz, Repression. Basic and Surplus Repression in Psychoanalytic Theory: Freud, Reich and Marcuse (Horowitz, 1977).

Most critics are certainly stern, short of labelling him “a reactionary”. Thus, the ethicist Alasdair MacIntyre called Marcuse a 'pre-Marxist' thinker, Morton Schoolman claims that 'Max Weber has certainly made the greatest single contribution to Marcuse's effort', claiming that Weber's works, and not Marx, were the decisive theoretical influence on Marcuse (Schoolman, 1980: 137 and 179ff). Earlier MacIntyre has asserted that almost all of Marcuse’s key positions are false and that his generalisations were based upon the total absence of any account of contemporary social structure (MacIntyre, 1969, 1970). Mike Featherstone dismisses his critiques of consumerism as ‘simplistic’ (Featherstone, 1983: 5). And Paul Gottfried, who knew Marcuse, wrote ’Like other members of the Frankfurt School – most notably Theodor Adorno, with whom he had been associated since the early 1930s – Marcuse claimed to detest bourgeois civilization and supposedly wished to see it destroyed’ (Gottfried, 2009). L. Kołakowski, who presumably discerned all ‘splendour’ of the ‘worker’s paradise of the real socialism’, is even more repulsive: he concluded that Marcuse’s ideal society ’is to be ruled despotically by an enlightened group [who] have realized in themselves the unity of Logos and Eros, and thrown off the vexatious authority of logic, mathematics, and the empirical sciences’. Kołakowski spotted in Marcuse “the prophet of the most irrational form of semi-romantic anarchism”, and even (sic!) “an inheritance of the theocrats of the Middle Ages” (1978: 1119, 1122; 1981).

Various liberal or right wing academics like Maurice Cranston, or even Marxists, as Hans Heinz Holz and Robert Steigerwald, critics of the Soviet type of socialism, and others call Marcuse 'anti-Marxist' or 'anarchist' (Steigerwald, 1969, 1974; Cranston, 1969; and Holz, 1968). Leaving ideological biases and spices aside, such works reveal sour disappointment of researchers and academics from Marcuse’s social divulging.

German Marxist and member of the Moscow-leaning German Communist Party R. Steigerwald titleds a chapter in his main work on Marcuse 'The book against Soviet Marxism' and claimed that Marcuse's interpretation is a form of anti-Soviet cold war propaganda that serves the interests of Western capitalistic-imperialism (Steigerwald, 1969). In the Soviet Union itself, and its closest satellites, like Bulgaria, Communist party censorship has imposed in 1960-70s ban even on mentioning name of H. Marcuse, its works could be find only in restricted library sections with limited access under special permission. That is why it is intriguing to see opinion of a Polish Marxist sociologist Jerzy Wiatr, who published an article, Herbert Marcuse: Philosopher of a Lost Radicalism, in the Party theoretical journal *Nowe Drogi* (New Roads). Wiatr assumed that

“the course of his [Marcuse’s] life did not lead him to Marxism-Leninism, to the working-class movement, but in the opposite direction. His radicalism was shunted into the blind alley of anti-communism; it ceased to be an intellectual weapon of the forces that are changing the world and it became an instrument of ideological diversion against communism. We should not be misled by some Marxist terminology and ultra-radical phrases. Marcuse's philosophy is shunting into the blind alley of the new anarchism radical groups of student youth and intellectuals who under other circumstances could have been valuable members of the organized structure of socialist forces. This makes it a dangerous means of ideological diversion, which is all the more dangerous because it operates among people who honestly believe that they are authentic revolutionaries” (Wiatr, 1968: 330).

Marcuse, in his 1961 Vintage Preface to his “*Soviet Marxism: A Critical Analysis*”, answered to his Soviet critics 'In the Soviet Union, critics accused me of endeavouring “to depreciate and distort communist morality”, to consider “capitalist society as the triumph of individual freedom” and to repeat “the old bourgeois lie about socialism being a rigorous totalitarian system based on universal oppression"' (Marcuse, 1958: v).

***Beyond the Nation State***. In the Marxist tradition as a whole, national-states concept was conventionally considered as something insignificant, irrelevant and ‘bourgeois’. K. Marx coined the core slogan of the movement – “Workers of the world, unite!”, thus completely ignoring borders between states since the working class’ masses all over the world were meaningful, and all the rest had no value for the Great Revolution. V. Lenin was even more blatant: “We would delete the national issue from the program. This could be done if there were people without national characteristics. But there are no such people, and otherwise we cannot build a socialist society... We are adversaries... [of] national distinction. We are international ones, internationalists. We seek close unification and full integration of workers and peasants of all nations of the world into a single world-wide Soviet republic” (Lenin, 1956: 485)

Canadian social anthropologist Ronald Niezen summarizes ‘the New Neo-Marxism’s’ perception of the nation-state this way:

“Whether or not we agree that nation-states are withering away through the rise of transnational games and competing powers, it should be clear that in general cultural boundaries are being sharply defined, often together with invigorated territorial attachments. How are human differences to be accommodated in a new global society? If nationalism is an insidious, persistent form of “false consciousness” or an unenlightened attachment to the secondary powers of Empire, then what force or event could possibly make it disappear? How is the free-flowing multitude to be reconciled with existing and emergent ethnic identities? How is the free-flowing multitude to be reconciled with existing and emergent ethnic identities? World integration, or at least the process of delocalization associated with it, has made the question “who are we?” more salient, more important for the expression of selfhood than it was for those who were once relatively unaffected by colonial or cultural domination. The pride of individuals is more than ever being resolved and expressed through the pride of peoples. Only a complete surrender to utopian fantasy could lead one to make so little of the power of identity, of the persistent attachments people hold to local cultures, traditions, communities, tribes, peoples, nations, languages, and lifestyles – the various attachments that in one form or another influence political aspirations and behavior everywhere in the world. Even if (as seems entirely unlikely) nation-states were to completely lose their power and legitimacy, could such persistent local identities ever be fully accommodated within a boundaryless paradise? (Niezen, 2004: 140-1).

Thus, nation-state remained, definitely, of little or even no importance for the neo-Marxists, especially the adherents of the Frankfurt school, and H. Marcuse, in particular. He wrote about state apparatus as a tool for coercion and collaborator of the ruling class, about fascism and totalitarian state, but this all stuff was seemingly outside of his mainstream interest, being a philosopher and not a sociologist or political scientist. For him and his colleagues and followers, nation-state was nothing but an annoying obstacle to the world-wide revolution, so their paroxysm is persistently turned to the global working class – which we mentioned earlier, is only an abstract construct, being extremely heterogeneous and torn by internal cleavages – and much more tangible supranational structures like the EU, though still too far from the alleged ‘world government’ from the conspiracy theories, and, indeed, the trans-national corporations. Along these lines, while quite accurately suggest that nation-state is already an obsolete historical category, they simplify it, referring to it the same way as Marx, as a single and consistent, sovereignty-bond, biased and instrumental in the ‘class struggle’. As sociologist W. Robinson points, “Classical Marxist paradigms are better positioned in regard to paradigmatic reconceptualization insofar as they posit social classes and capital accumulation as the key unit of analysis, rather than the nation-state and the state system per se, at least at the level of theoretical abstraction, Tensions in the state system are derivative of class tensions and the contradictions of capitalism within and between nations, and uneven national development is a consequence of the law of uneven capital accumulation. Scholars in the classical Marxist tradition have thus argued, taking their cue from Lenin and Bukharin (…), that the dynamics of international relations are explained by “competing national capitals” and that the dynamics of unequal development are explained by the uneven accumulation of capital across national boundaries.” (Robinson, 1998: 570-1).

Actually, national-state and general state theory, as well as the whole political sphere, is the narrow domain mainly of such thinkers as A. Gramsci and his followers, occasionally called neo-Gramscists, which stay atypical and distinct vis-à-vis the neo-Marxism altogether. Drawing mostly on Gramsci’s legacy, Nikos Poulantzas, Theda Skocpol, Immanuel Wallerstein – to mention only few of the the brightest names, who all follow their own trend and agenda – argue that as economic activity has become increasingly organized at the global level, so too has the state escaped its national confines and become trans-nationalized, performing the same role that it did in the post-war period, though now organizing capitalists and capital accumulation at the transnational level. (Major, 2013: 30). In summary, both neo-Marxist and neo-Weberian theories of the state distinguish the form of the state from its territorial configuration, which would supposedly provide an analytical escape from the trap of global-national. “No longer confined to a national, territorial boundary, the structures of the state are allowed to expand and flow along with the globalization of other social institutions and social relationships. In neo-Marxist theories, the structure of the state follows the evolving structure of class relationships, particularly the trans-nationalization of the capitalist class. (…) both neo-Marxist and neo-Weberian theories of the transnational state suffer from theoretical reductionism. In neo-Marxist accounts the state is reduced to a “condensation of class forces,” the function of which is to support the necessary conditions for capital accumulation. The state loses much of its autonomy and analytical specificity as the transformation of the state is read through the study of social class dynamics (Ibidem: 33). He concludes that “Classical Marxism has not provided an adequate explanation for which dominant classes by some unexplained fiat are nation-state based, whereas subordinate classes are organically internationalist.” (Ibidem: 33, footnote).

***Conclusion.*** At the end of the *One Dimensional Man* Marcuse saw only one chance of revolutionary protest, and that was “nothing but a chance.”, wrote Alasdair MacIntyre in 1969. The chance was that “the substratum of the outcasts and outsiders, the exploited and persecuted of other races and other colours, the unemployed and unemployable” (Marcuse, 1964: 256) might turn to radical action. This would involve a meeting of “the most advanced consciousness of humanity and its most exploited force.” But the “critical theory” of society expounded by Marcuse can give us no grounds for predicting that this will happen; indeed it is of the essence of his critical theory that it cannot predict. That’s all for Marcuse in 1964, concludes MacIntyre (MacIntyre, 1969).

In *An Essay on Liberation* (Marcuse, 1969b) tried to develop further the ideas of *Eros and Civilization* and of *One Dimensional Man*, and changed his perspective. His vision was still utopian, rooted in the technology of the advanced societies[[9]](#footnote-9). Not just forms of political organization are the impediment. Rational reorganization of society and the establishment of genuine collective control by the working class would not abolish domination. Political dictum of the communism’s utopia, “To each according to his needs” seems ever more unattainable. These needs must undergo a “qualitative change” if men are to be liberated. Marcuse now aspires to provide a biological basis for his theory. His biology is in fact as speculative as his metaphysics, and Marcuse explicitly disavows any scientific basis for his speculations. This does not however lead him to be less than dogmatic in his mode of assertion:

Once a specific morality is firmly established as a norm of social behaviour, it is not only introjected – it also operates as a norm of “organic” behaviour; the organism receives and reacts to certain stimuli and “ignores” and repels others in accord with the introjected morality, which is thus promoting or impeding the function of the organism as a living cell in the respective society.

This view is used as the basis for a political theory in which the implied elitism of One Dimensional Man is made fully explicit. Human nature is infinitely malleable. The human nature of those who inhabit advanced industrial societies has been so mould that their very needs and aspirations have become conformist – except for a minority, which includes Marcuse. The majority cannot voice their true needs, for they cannot perceive or feel them. The minority must therefore voice their needs for them; this active minority must rescue the necessarily passive majority. This passive majority includes the working class, even the new technically skilled working class. “This ‘new working class,’ by virtue of its position, could disrupt, reorganize, and redirect the mode and relationships of production. However, they have neither the interest nor the vital need to do so: they are well integrated and well rewarded.” (Marcuse, 1969b: 55).

As P. Walsh argues, H. Marcuse's vision of liberation from the ‘affluent society’ constitutes one of the most significant interventions into public life of any philosopher in the last half of the 20th century. Some of Marcuse's theories, he insists, are still relevant and applicable to even the most recent developments within sociology, and particularly to the “growing and influential critical literature within the sociology of consumption, in which ideas that originate in first-generation Frankfurt School theory are clearly operative, but rarely acknowledged.” Identified are three of Marcuse's most influential theoretical claims: (1) the ‘performance principle’ as a primary determining factor in shaping the economic, social and cultural systems of advanced industrial societies; (2) the process of ‘repressive desublimation’ which forbears the general developmental tendencies of these societies through containing and weakening them; and (3) The human activity of play, understood as a distinct field of free (i.e., non-alienated) human activity, is threatened by the ascendancy of instrumental rationality (Walsh, 2008: 250-1). Author evaluates these claims in terms of their applicability to the problem of self-experience and the risks to individuality, a principal feature of contemporary consumer capitalism. [De]sublimation is a psychoanalytic concept which refers to a defence-mechanism used to deal with a desire which has been repressed, and so is unconscious. Often, it resurfaces in apparently ‘higher’ forms, providing a basis for cultural creativity. In Freud, this might mean for instance, that a person with an oral fixation would become a skilled orator or singer. For Marcuse, such repression can also affect political desires: the desire for liberation which cannot find conscious form (either as socially taboo or because of a lack of an appropriate language) can find indirect expression in fields such as art… Marcuse argues that the peculiarly contemporary process of satisfying particular desires in consumer society through systemically recognised means leads to the elimination of sublimation: desires are ‘desublimated’, they can find social expression, but only in a repressive way which eliminates what is in the particular demand more than itself, the broader aspiration for liberation (Whitfield, 2014). Thus, as it appears, it is *Eros and Civilization*, not the *One Dimensional Man*, that traces the consequent developments in the colourful field of the neo-Marxism, which further abandoned the class paradigm, replacing it with such private ones like sexuality.

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1. H. Marcuse was born in Berlin in a family of well integrated in German society Jewish parents, Gertrud Kreslawsky, and the upper-middle class businessman Carl Marcuse. Recruited in 1916 into the army, he only stayed in the deep rear toiling the stables. After the Great European War, he was involved with communism: became a member of the Soldier’s Council, which participated in the Spartacus League Uprising that involved Rosa Luxemburg’s Communist Party. Later he returned to education, and after completing his PhD at the University of Freiburg (1922), he was bookseller in Berlin, before continuing his studies at Freiburg under E. Husserl, the founder of phenomenology, and Martin Heidegger. In his Habilitation thesis, initially, he sought to synthesise Heidegger’s ontology with Marxism, but Heidegger’s support for the National Socialists thwarted him. He completed his dissertation, *Hegel’s Ontology and the Theory of Historicity*, in 1932. Next year, marked by the Nazi seizure of power, Marcuse followed the Institute for Social Research – known later as the Frankfurt School – in the new location in Geneva. In 1934 he followed the Institute to the prominent Columbia University, New York. During the 1930s Marcuse published several excellent philosophical essays in the Institute’s journal, *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* (Journal for Social Research) – among them a second major study of Hegel, *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Modern Social Theory* (1941), one year after becoming a naturalized U.S. citizen in 1940. Then he served as an intelligence analyst for the U.S. Office of Strategic Services, the CIA predecessor, from 1941 to 1944, to supervise the Central European Section of the Office of Intelligence Research. From 1951 to 1954 he taught at Columbia and Harvard universities, Brandeis University (1954-65), and the University of California, San Diego (1965-76), where, after his retirement, he was honorary emeritus professor of philosophy until his death. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This Marx's famous remark, quoted by Engels in a letter to Eduard Bernstein, can be found in Marx and Engels, (1882, Werke: 35; MECW: 363) First published in full in Marx-Engels Archives, Moscow, 1924. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. A. Hoffman was a narcissistic sociopath, chronically suffering by maniacal depressiveness, who was grown in juvenile delinquent facility. His experience at ’rumbling with the gangs’ and stealing as a youth was sublimated into social revolt. Hoffman’s best-selling *Steal this Book* is a manual for urban guerrilla warfare, and was later detained on drug charges, but he skipped sentence, undertook plastic surgery to modify his guise, lived in hiding until 1980, when he finally surrendered to the authorities. Between 1984-1986, he reunited up with J. Rubin to divert audiences with Yippie vs Yuppied debates, charging $5000 per appearance. Finally, in 1989 he committed suicide. Rubin, on the contrary, an Yippie, later became a Wall Street businessman, was an early investor in Apple Computers and, by the 1980s had become a multimillionaire (Forgetting… 2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Noam Chomsky knew and liked , “but thought very little of his work.” (Barsky, 1997: 134). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Lenin assigned a large role to the so called subjective factor. He argued that socialist consciousness does not arise by itself from the economic situation of the proletariat, thus require theoreticians’ activity based on broader foundations, and that this consciousness must be brought into the working class from the outside. Lenin developed and put into practice the party’s, as the leading part of the class, doctrine, pointed to the role of subjective components in the revolution, which themselves do not arise immediately from the revolutionary situation. In connection with these provisions, some interpreters began to talk about Lenin's significant contribution to Marxist theory, while others – about his voluntarism (Althusser, 1972: 2). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Curiously enough, D. Cohn-Bendit, one of the leaders in the 1968 French student movement, is quite skeptical about the Marcuse’s impact on them: “Some people try to foist Marcuse upon us as a mentor. This is a joke. None of us have read Marcuse. Some people have read Marx, perhaps Bakunin and when it comes to modern authors – Althusser, Mao, Guevara, Lefebvre. Almost all the rebels have read Sartre” (quoted in Batalov, 1977: 52. French professor J.-M. Palmier contests this, maintaining that many had read Marcuse and that there has been a real surge of interest in his writings during and after the May events – see Palmier's book *On* *Marcuse* (Palmier, 1968) and his article ‘Marcuse. This Unknown’ (Palmier, 1969). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. All communist countries, torn by supply shortages and empty stores’ shelves, established a particular brand of limited access stores, where duty free items, from candies and chocolates, up to Western makes of cars, were sold for hard currency. Ordinary citizens were prevented from stepping in, since formally they were intended for diplomats and foreign tourists, though two privileged and narrow segments of the local population also enjoyed admittance: those employed abroad (these, who were, indeed, carefully selected according to the criteria like party affiliation and loyalty to the regime – diplomats, physicians, geologists, opera singers etc., were not only obliged to re-assign major share of their foreign currency paid personal incomes, but even the remainder was often given them not as real money, but as substituting papers, called bonds or certificates. All other means of acquiring foreign currency were deemed illegal, and those found to possess even few USD or Deutsch Marks, were gravely prosecuted, incl. with jail. Main, but unspoken, reason for all this policy was filling state’s hard currency reserves. This malevolent approach reached climax with the introduction by Raul Castro in Cuba a parallel currency, the so called Cuban Convertible Peso (CUC), formally used in the tourism industry and the currency travelers. Exchange rate for CUC is stuck to the US Dollar, i.e., one CUC equals one USD, while the official, heavily deflated Cuban Peso (CUP)’s exchange rate fluctuates, typically around 25-30 CUP per one USD. It should be noted that all these seemingly incompatible with principles of socialism establishments have benefited unduly the Communist nomenclature. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Private lives of the leaders were strictly confidential from the ordinary party followers. Instead of the ascetic personalities, almost saints alike, according to K. Marx’ famous quote, nothing human was alien to them – actually, a replica of the Roman author Terence line from his play *Heauton Timorumenos*, or The Self-Tormentor) that reads: “*Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto*” (I am human, and I think nothing human is alien to me). Marx himself was too far from the model communist, as well as Lenin, Stalin, Mao, and many more minor leaders like Tito, Castro, Kims, and Che Guevara. Even if the Great Leader officially had one official wife, there have been many mistresses aside. Officially blamed and subject of severe prosecution in all communist countries, homosexuality was also habitual part of the high life communist circles. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Marcuse’s concept of technology is dual one: on the one hand, he presumes it as a tool exploited by capitalism for further coercion and powerlessness. But, Marcuse adds, specific technologies could be implemented to minimize compulsory chore, and to permit more individual freedom and autonomy – i.e., an “existence in free time on the basis of fulfilled vital needs” (Marcuse 1964: 231). Same contradiction is inherited in the modern sociology of technology: on the one hand there are too optimistic views arguing that the new technologies unleash global affluence and freedom – though, in another, distant and vague future society, which “would open up qualitatively different relationships between human beings and between humans and nature (1964: 235).” . On the other hand there are very pessimistic argumentations, typical for the radical- or eco-feminism, which see modern technology as inherently patriarchal, in-humane, racist and even fascist. Hence it is argued that we should return to a simpler type of society that relies on subsistence production. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)