

Eros and Civilization, by H. Marcuse

a. People / Organizations: [file:///C:/Users/Dennis%20Binseel/Downloads/dokumen.pub_eros-and-civilization-routledge-classics-1nbsped-9781032533902-9781032533728-9781003411819-1032533900%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/Dennis%20Binseel/Downloads/dokumen.pub_eros-and-civilization-routledge-classics-1nbsped-9781032533902-9781032533728-9781003411819-1032533900%20(1).pdf)

b. Quotes:

- "As early as the preschool level, gangs, radio, and television set the pattern for conformity and rebellion; deviations from the pattern are punished not so much within the family as outside and against the family. The experts of the mass media transmit the required values; they offer the perfect training in efficiency, toughness, personality, dream, and romance. With this education, the family can no longer compete" - Author (pg. 72)
- "...philosophy survives as a special (and not very vital) function in the academic establishment. The new principles of thought develop outside this establishment: they are qualitatively novel and committed to a different form of reason, to a different reality principle." - Author (pg. 89)
- **"To forget is also to forgive what should not be forgiven if justice and freedom are to prevail.** Such forgiveness reproduces the conditions which reproduce injustice and enslavement: to forget past suffering is to forgive the forces that caused it—without defeating these forces. The wounds that heal in time are also the wounds that contain the poison. Against this surrender to time, the restoration of remembrance to its rights, as a vehicle of liberation, is one of the noblest tasks of thought." - Author (pg. 178)
 - "Time loses its power when remembrance redeems the past" - Author (pg. 179)

c. General Notes:

- Forward, by D. Kellner (pg. ix)
 - "The forces of domination and repression continue to confront forces of eros and emancipation in continuous global struggles between the forces of eros and hope contrasted to the forces of destruction and death" (pg. ix)
 - **"...Marcuse reconstructs Freudian and Marxian theories** in order to develop a critical theory of contemporary society, combined with visions of a non-repressive society which draws on Marx, Freud, utopian socialism, German idealism, and various poets and philosophers. In this text, Marcuse's project went well beyond classical Marxism to envisage new possibilities for liberation in an era when revolutionary action and even critical thinking were threatened by oppressive social forces and conformist ideologies. In his resolutely utopian work, Marcuse articulates the vision of human emancipation that was to distinguish his version of critical theory. Whereas Adorno, Horkheimer, and most other Institute members were reluctant to develop any detailed utopian concepts, or outlines, of an alternative society, **Marcuse attempted to sketch out utopian alternatives to the present way of life.** The addition of eros, art, and emancipation to his Hegelian Marxist theory provided new substance to Marcuse's thought and eventually was to attract a large audience for his critical theory" (pg. x)
 - **"EC is arguably the seminal work of Marcuse's critical theory**, which establishes the foundation for much of his later writings" (pg. x)
 - **"For Freud, progress in civilization requires imposed labor and instinctual repression.** Freud argues that unimpeded sexual gratification is incompatible with the discipline necessary in the struggle for existence, and that renunciation and delay in satisfaction are prerequisites for progress. Happiness and sexual pleasure, Freud claims, have no cultural value and are to be subordinated to work, monogamous reproduction, moral rectitude, and social restraint. In Freud's theory, culture is thus a methodical sacrifice of pleasure and is the social equivalent to repression. Freud's analysis implies that a non-repressive civilization is impossible both because the fact of scarcity requires highly disciplined hard labor to ensure survival, and because human nature requires coercive law and order to keep aggressive and destructive impulses in line. To counter Freud, Marcuse argues that Freud's own theory shows that socialization and repression are historically specific and subject to social transformation. Then Marcuse argues that a reading of the "hidden trend of psychoanalysis," in conjunction with reflection on the technical-economic potential of the current society, shows that a non-repressive civilization is possible. In this encounter with Freud, Marcuse both uses Freud against Freud and reconstructs some of Freud's ideas to develop his own anthropology and critical theory. Marcuse thus reconstructs Freud's theory in order to provide an account of how society comes to dominate the individual, how social control is internalized, and how conformity ensues." (pg. xi)
 - "EC appeared during a decade when pessimistic cultural philosophies were widespread in intellectual circles, and when social scientists declared the "end of ideology" – which meant the end of utopian-revolutionary projects of social reconstruction." (xiv)
 - **"...Marcuse defends erotic energies as the very principle of life and creativity"** (pg. xiv)
 - "Marcuse's work in EC responds to the crisis of revolutionary possibility in the depths of the Cold War period. American capitalism was experiencing an era of expansion described by phrases like the "affluent society" (J.K. Galbraith), the "end of ideology" (Daniel Bell), "the great American celebration" (C. Wright Mills), and "the consumer society." **The dominant social theories were both "positivistic," limiting themselves for the most part to describing the "facts," and "affirmative," celebrating and legitimating the existing social order"** (pg. xv)
 - "Looking at EC as a whole, Marcuse uses Marx, Freud, and critical theory in the first half of the book to analyze obstacles to liberation and to show the price paid in human happiness for the "benefits" of contemporary civilization. It is as if only by confronting without illusion the forces of domination and repression does the necessity for liberation and radical social change, which is the focus of the second half of EC, emerge. Freud is especially useful for this project for not only does he point to the depths of pain and suffering in human existence, but he reveals as well the deep-rooted psychic and somatic possibilities for liberation. It is as if in the depths of suffering, Marcuse finds new hope for overcoming pain and misery through creating new forms of happiness and freedom" (pg. xv)
 - "In retrospect, **Eros and Civilization is Marcuse's most optimistic, engaging, and challenging work"** (pg. xv)
- Preface (pg. xviii)
 - **"Psychological problems therefore turn into political problems:** private disorder reflects more directly than before the disorder of the whole, and the cure of personal disorder depends more directly than before on the cure of the general disorder" (pg. xviii)
 - **"The era tends to be totalitarian even where it has not produced totalitarian states"** (pg. xviii)
 - "...if the individual has neither the ability nor the possibility to be for himself, the terms of psychology become the terms of the societal forces which define the psyche." (pg. xviii)
- Introduction (pg. 1)
 - **"Sigmund Freud's proposition that civilization is based on the permanent subjugation of the human instincts has been taken for granted."** (pg. 1)
 - **"Free gratification of man's instinctual needs is incompatible with civilized society:** renunciation and delay in satisfaction are the prerequisites of progress. "Happiness," said Freud, "is no cultural value." Happiness must be subordinated to the discipline of work as fulltime occupation, to the discipline of monogamic reproduction, to the established system of law and order. The methodical sacrifice of libido, its rigidly enforced deflection to socially useful activities and expressions, is culture" (pg. 1)
 - "However, intensified progress seems to be bound up with intensified unfreedom. **Throughout the world of industrial civilization, the domination of man by man is growing in scope and efficiency.**" (pg. 2)
 - "...repressiveness is perhaps the more vigorously maintained the more unnecessary it becomes" (pg. 2)
 - **"But Freud's own theory provides reasons for rejecting his identification of civilization with repression"** (pg. 2)

- The notion of a non-repressive civilization will be discussed not as an abstract and utopian speculation. We believe that the discussion is justified on two concrete and realistic grounds: first, Freud's theoretical conception itself seems to refute his consistent denial of the historical possibility of a non-repressive civilization, and, second, the very achievements of repressive civilization seem to create the preconditions for the gradual abolition of repression" (pg. 2-3)
 - "In contrast to the revisionists, I believe that Freud's theory is in its very substance "sociological," and that no new cultural or sociological orientation is needed to reveal this substance. Freud's "biologism" is social theory in a depth dimension that has been consistently flattened out by the Neo-Freudian schools" (pg. 3)
- Chapter 1 - The Hidden Trend in Psychoanalysis (pg. 9)
 - "The concept of man that emerges from Freudian theory is the most irrefutable indictment of Western civilization—and at the same time the most unshakable defense of this civilization. **According to Freud, the history of man is the history of his repression.** Culture constrains not only his societal but also his biological existence, not only parts of the human being but his instinctual structure itself. However, such constraint is the very precondition of progress. Left free to pursue their natural objectives, the basic instincts of man would be incompatible with all lasting association and preservation: they would destroy even where they unite. The uncontrolled Eros is just as fatal as his deadly counterpart, the death instinct. Their destructive force derives from the fact that they strive for a gratification which culture cannot grant: gratification as such and as an end in itself, at any moment. The instincts must therefore be deflected from their goal, inhibited in their aim. **Civilization begins when the primary objective—namely, integral satisfaction of needs—is effectively renounced.**" (pg. 9-10)
 - "All psychoanalytic concepts (sublimation, identification, projection, repression, introjection) connote the mutability of the instincts. But the reality which shapes the instincts as well as their needs and satisfaction is a socio-historical world. The animal man becomes a human being only through a fundamental transformation of his nature, affecting not only the instinctual aims but also the instinctual "values"—that is, the principles that govern the attainment of the aims." (pg. 10)
 - "Freud described this change as the transformation of the pleasure principle into the reality principle" (pg. 10)
 - ◆ "The reality principle supersedes the pleasure principle: man learns to give up momentary, uncertain, and destructive pleasure for delayed, restrained, but "assured" pleasure" (pg. 11)
 - ◇ "The adjustment of pleasure to the reality principle implies the subjugation and diversion of the destructive force of instinctual gratification, of its incompatibility with the established societal norms and relations, and, by that token, implies the transubstantiation of pleasure itself" (pg. 11)
 - ◇ "Under the reality principle, the human being develops the function of reason: it learns to "test" the reality, to distinguish between good and bad, true and false, useful and harmful. Man acquires the faculties of attention, memory, and judgment. He becomes a conscious, thinking subject, geared to a rationality which is imposed upon him from outside" (pg. 11)
 - "The replacement of the pleasure principle by the reality principle is the great traumatic event in the development of man—in the development of the genus (phylogenesis) as well as of the individual (ontogenesis). According to Freud, this event is not unique but recurs throughout the history of mankind and of every individual." (pg. 12)
 - ◆ "The reality principle materializes in a system of institutions. And the individual, growing up within such a system, learns the requirements of the reality principle as those of law and order, and transmits them to the next generation." (pg. 12)
 - "In the Freudian conception, civilization does not once and for all terminate a "state of nature." What civilization masters and represses—the claim of the pleasure principle—continues to exist in civilization itself. The unconscious retains the objectives of the defeated pleasure principle. Turned back by the external reality or even unable to reach it, the full force of the pleasure principle not only survives in the unconscious but also affects in manifold ways the very reality which has superseded the pleasure principle. **The return of the repressed makes up the tabooed and subterranean history of civilization"** (pg. 12-13)
 - "Freud's individual psychology is in its very essence social psychology. Repression is a historical phenomenon. The effective subjugation of the instincts to repressive controls is imposed not by nature but by man. The primal father, as the archetype of domination, initiates the chain reaction of enslavement, rebellion, and reinforced domination which marks the history of civilization." (pg. 13)
 - "The struggle against freedom reproduces itself in the psyche of man, as the self-repression of the repressed individual, and his self-repression in turn sustains his masters and their institutions. It is this mental dynamic which Freud unfolds as the dynamic of civilization" (pg. 13)
 - "Scarcity (Lebensnot, Ananke) teaches men that they cannot freely gratify their instinctual impulses, that they cannot live under the pleasure principle" (pg. 13)
 - "Freud considers the "primordial struggle for existence" as "eternal" and therefore believes that the pleasure principle and the reality principle are "eternally" antagonistic. **The notion that a non-repressive civilization is impossible is a cornerstone of Freudian theory.**" (pg. 13)
 - "Freud's metapsychology is an ever-renewed attempt to uncover, and to question, the terrible necessity of the inner connection between civilization and barbarism, progress and suffering, freedom and unhappiness—a connection which reveals itself ultimately as that between Eros and Thanatos. Freud questions culture not from a romanticist or utopian point of view, but on the ground of the suffering and misery which its implementation involves. Cultural freedom thus appears in the light of unfreedom, and cultural progress in the light of constraint. Culture is not thereby refuted: unfreedom and constraint are the price that must be paid" (pg. 14)
 - "...[Freud] upholds the tabooed aspirations of humanity: the claim for a state where freedom and necessity coincide. Whatever liberty exists in the realm of the developed consciousness, and in the world it has created, is only derivative, compromised freedom, gained at the expense of the full satisfaction of needs. **And in so far as the full satisfaction of needs is happiness, freedom in civilization is essentially antagonistic to happiness: it involves the repressive modification (sublimation) of happiness.** Conversely, the unconscious, the deepest and oldest layer of the mental personality, is the drive for integral gratification, which is absence of want and repression. As such it is the immediate identity of necessity and freedom. According to Freud's conception the equation of freedom and happiness tabooed by the conscious is upheld by the unconscious. Its truth, although repelled by consciousness, continues to haunt the mind; it preserves the memory of past stages of individual development at which integral gratification is obtained. And the past continues to claim the future: it generates the wish that the paradise be re-created on the basis of the achievements of civilization." (pg. 14)
 - "Freud's analysis of the development of the repressive mental apparatus proceeds on two levels: (a) Ontogenetic: the growth of the repressed individual from early infancy to his conscious societal existence. (b) Phylogenetic: the growth of repressive civilization from the primal horde to the fully constituted civilized state. The two levels are continually interrelated. This interrelation is epitomized in Freud's notion of the return of the repressed in history: the individual re-experiences and re-enacts the great traumatic events in the development of the genus, and the instinctual dynamic reflects throughout the conflict between individual and genus (between particular and universal) as well as the various solutions of this conflict." (pg. 15-16)
- Chapter 2 - The Origin of the Repressed Individual (pg. 17)
 - "Freud traces the development of repression in the instinctual structure of the individual. The fate of human freedom and happiness is fought out and decided in the struggle of the instincts—literally a struggle of life and death—in which soma and psyche, nature and civilization participate." (pg. 17)

- "Throughout the various stages of Freud's theory, the mental apparatus appears as a dynamic union of opposites of the unconscious and the conscious structures; of primary and secondary processes; of inherited, "constitutionally fixed" and acquired forces; of soma- psyche and the external reality. This dualistic construction continues to prevail even in the later tripartite topology of id, ego, and superego; the intermediary and "overlapping" elements tend toward the two poles. They find their most striking expression in the two ultimate principles which govern the mental apparatus: pleasure principle and reality principle" (pg. 18)
 - **"At the earliest stage of its development, Freud's theory is built around the antagonism between sex (libidinous) and ego (self-preservation) instincts; at the latest stage, it is centered on the conflict between the life instincts (Eros) and the death instinct"** (pg. 18)
 - "In the final formulation of the theory of instincts, the self-preservation instincts—the cherished sanctuary of the individual and his justification in the "struggle for existence"—are dissolved..." (pg. 19)
 - "Psychoanalysts have correctly emphasized that Freud's last metapsychology is based on an essentially new concept of instinct: the instincts are defined no longer in terms of their origin and their organic function, but in terms of a determining force which gives the life processes a definite "direction" (Richtung), in terms of "life-principles." The notions instinct, principle, regulation are being assimilated" (pg. 21)
- "The main "layers" of the mental structure are now designated as id, ego, and superego. The fundamental, oldest, and largest layer is the id, the domain of the unconscious, of the primary instincts. The id is free from the forms and principles which constitute the conscious, social individual. It is neither affected by time nor troubled by contradictions; it knows "no values, no good and evil, no morality." It does not aim at self-preservation: all it strives for is satisfaction of its instinctual needs, in accordance with the pleasure principle." (pg. 22-23)
 - "Under the influence of the external world (the environment), a part of the id, which is equipped with the organs for the reception of and the protection from stimuli, gradually developed into the ego. It is the "mediator" between the id and the external world" (pg. 23)
 - "...the ego preserves its existence, observing and testing the reality, taking and preserving a "true picture" of it, adjusting itself to the reality, and altering the latter in its own interest. Thus the ego has the task of 'representing the external world for the id, and so of saving it; for the id, blindly striving to gratify its instincts in complete disregard of the superior strength of outside forces, could not otherwise escape annihilation'. In fulfilling this task, the chief function of the ego is that of co-ordinating, altering, organizing, and controlling the instinctual impulses of the id so as to minimize conflicts with the reality: to repress impulses that are incompatible with the reality, to "reconcile" others with the reality by changing their object, delaying or diverting their gratification, transforming their mode of gratification, amalgamating them with other impulses, and so on. In this way, the ego 'dethrones the pleasure-principle, which exerts undisputed sway over the processes in the id, and substitutes for it the reality-principle, which promises greater security and greater success'" (pg. 23)
 - ◆ "...the ego retains its birthmark as an "outgrowth" of the id. In relation to the id, the processes of the ego remain secondary processes." (pg. 23)
 - **"The memory of gratification is at the origin of all thinking, and the impulse to recapture past gratification is the hidden driving power behind the process of thought.** Because the reality principle makes this process an unending series of "detours," the ego experiences reality as predominantly hostile, and the ego's attitude is predominantly one of "defense." But, on the other hand, since reality, via these detours, provides gratification (although only "modified" gratification), the ego has to reject those impulses which would, if gratified, destroy its life. The ego's defense is thus a two-front struggle." (pg. 24)
 - "In the course of the development of the ego another mental "entity" arises: the superego" (pg. 24)
 - "The external world faced by the growing ego is at any stage a specific socio-historical organization of reality, affecting the mental structure through specific societal agencies or agents" (pg. 25)
 - "Presently we shall introduce two such terms: (a) **Surplus-repression:** the restrictions necessitated by social domination. This is distinguished from (basic) repression: the "modifications" of the instincts necessary for the perpetuation of the human race in civilization. (b) **Performance principle:** the prevailing historical form of the reality principle." (pg. 26)
 - "Behind the reality principle lies the fundamental fact of Ananke or scarcity (Lebensnot), which means that the struggle for existence takes place in a world too poor for the satisfaction of human needs without constant restraint, renunciation, delay. In other words, whatever satisfaction is possible necessitates work, more or less painful arrangements and undertakings for the procurement of the means for satisfying needs. And since the basic instincts strive for the prevalence of pleasure and for the absence of pain, the pleasure principle is incompatible with reality, and the instincts have to undergo a repressive regimentation" (pg. 26)
 - "The sex instincts bear the brunt of the reality principle." (pg. 30)
 - "Freud shows that this repressive system does not really solve the conflict. **Civilization plunges into a destructive dialectic:** the perpetual restrictions on Eros ultimately weaken the life instincts and thus strengthen and release the very forces against which they were "called up"—those of destruction. This dialectic, which constitutes the still unexplored and even tabooed core of Freud's metapsychology, will be explored later on; here, we shall use Freud's antagonistic conception of Eros for elucidating the specific historical mode of repressiveness imposed by the established reality principle." (pg. 32)
 - "Men do not live their own lives but perform pre-established functions. While they work, they do not fulfill their own needs and faculties but work in alienation" (pg. 33)
 - "For left to itself, and supported by a free intelligence aware of the potentialities of liberation from the reality of repression, the libidinal energy generated by the id would thrust against its ever more extraneous limitations and strive to engulf an ever larger field of existential relations, thereby exploding the reality ego and its repressive performances" (pg. 35)
 - "...the superego builds up and protects the unity of the ego, secures its development under the reality principle, and thus works in the service of Eros. However, the superego attains these objectives by directing the ego against its id, turning part of the destruction instincts against a part of the personality—by destroying, "splitting" the unity of the personality as a whole; thus it works in the service of the antagonist of the life instinct. This inner-directed destructiveness, moreover, constitutes the moral core of the mature personality. Conscience, the most cherished moral agency of the civilized individual, emerges as permeated with the death instinct; the categorical imperative that the superego enforces remains an imperative of self-destruction while it constructs the social existence of the personality. The work of repression pertains to the death instinct as well as the life instinct. Normally, their fusion is a healthy one, but the sustained severity of the superego constantly threatens this healthy balance" (pg. 38-39)
 - "It is in this context that Freud's metapsychology comes face to face with **the fatal dialectic of civilization: the very progress of civilization leads to the release of increasingly destructive forces**" (pg. 39)
 - Chapter 3 - The Origin of Repressive Civilization (pg. 42)
 - "As psychology tears the ideological veil and traces the construction of the personality, it is led to dissolve the individual: his autonomous personality appears as the frozen manifestation of the general repression of mankind. Self-consciousness and reason, which have conquered and shaped the historical world, have done so in the image of repression, internal and external. They have worked as the agents of domination; the liberties which they have brought (and these are considerable) grew in the soil of enslavement and have retained the mark of their birth. These are the disturbing implications of Freud's theory of the personality. By "dissolving" the idea of the ego-personality into its primary components, psychology now bares the sub-individual and pre-individual factors which (largely unconscious to the ego) actually make the individual: it reveals the power of the universal

- in and over the individuals. This disclosure undermines one of the strongest ideological fortifications of modern culture—namely, the notion of the autonomous individual. Freud's theory here joins the great critical efforts to dissolve ossified sociological concepts into their historical content. His psychology does not focus on the concrete and complete personality as it exists in its private and public environment, because this existence conceals rather than reveals the essence and nature of the personality. It is the end result of long historical processes which are congealed in the network of human and institutional entities making up society, and these processes define the personality and its relationships. Consequently, to understand them for what they really are, psychology must unfreeze them by tracing their hidden origins. In doing so, psychology discovers that the determining childhood experiences are linked with the experiences of the species—that **the individual lives the universal fate of mankind. The past defines the present because mankind has not yet mastered its own history**" (pg. 43-44)
- "No part of Freud's theory has been more strongly rejected than the idea of the survival of the archaic heritage—his reconstruction of the prehistory of mankind from the primal horde through patricide to civilization" (pg. 45)
 - Chapter 4 - The Dialectic of Civilization (pg. 59)
 - "Freud attributes to the sense of guilt a decisive role in the development of civilization; moreover, he establishes a correlation between progress and increasing guilt feeling" (pg. 59)
 - "repression is largely unconscious and automatic, while its degree is measurable only in the light of consciousness" (pg. 66)
 - "Freud's theory is focused on the recurrent cycle 'domination-rebellion-domination'. But the second domination is not simply a repetition of the first one; the cyclical movement is progress in domination" (pg. 66)
 - "The culture of industrial civilization has turned the human organism into an ever more sensitive, differentiated, exchangeable instrument, and has created a social wealth sufficiently great to transform this instrument into an end in itself." (pg. 69)
 - "If society cannot use its growing productivity for reducing repression (because such usage would upset the hierarchy of the status quo), productivity must be turned against the individuals; it becomes itself an instrument of universal control. Totalitarianism spreads over late industrial civilization wherever the interests of domination prevail upon productivity, arresting and diverting its potentialities. The people have to be kept in a state of permanent mobilization, internal and external. The rationality of domination has progressed to the point where it threatens to invalidate its foundations; therefore it must be reaffirmed more effectively than ever before." (pg. 70)
 - "The manipulation of consciousness which has occurred throughout the orbit of contemporary industrial civilization has been described in the various interpretations of totalitarian and "popular cultures": co-ordination of the private and public existence, of spontaneous and required reactions. The promotion of thoughtless leisure activities, the triumph of anti-intellectual ideologies, exemplify the trend" (pg. 70)
 - "**The destructiveness of the present stage reveals its full significance only if the present is measured, not in terms of past stages, but in terms of its own potentialities**" (pg. 76)
 - "...happiness is not in the mere feeling of satisfaction but in the reality of freedom and satisfaction. **Happiness involves knowledge**: it is the prerogative of the animal rationale. With the decline in consciousness, with the control of information, with the absorption of individual into mass communication, knowledge is administered and confined. The individual does not really know what is going on; the overpowering machine of education and entertainment unites him with all the others in a state of anaesthesia from which all detrimental ideas tend to be excluded. And since knowledge of the whole truth is hardly conducive to happiness, such general anaesthesia makes individuals happy. If anxiety is more than a general malaise, if it is an existential condition, then this so-called "age of anxiety" is distinguished by the extent to which anxiety has disappeared from expression." (pg. 77)
 - Chapter 5 - Philosophical Interlude (pg. 80)
 - "Freud's theory of civilization grows out of his psychological theory: its insights into the historical process are derived from the analysis of the mental apparatus of the individuals who are the living substance of history. This approach penetrates the protective ideology in so far as it views the cultural institutions in terms of what they have made of the individuals through whom they function" (pg. 80)
 - "Freud's theory contains certain assumptions on the structure of the principal modes of being: it contains ontological implications. This chapter attempts to show that these implications are more than formal—that they pertain to the basic context of Western philosophy" (pg. 81)
 - "According to Freud, **civilization begins with the methodical inhibition of the primary instincts. Two chief modes of instinctual organization may be distinguished**: (a) the inhibition of sexuality, ensuing in durable and expanding group relations, and (b) the inhibition of the destructive instincts, leading to the mastery of man and nature, to individual and social morality. As the combination of these two forces sustains ever more effectively the life of ever larger groups, Eros gains over his adversary: social utilization presses the death instinct into the service of the life instincts. But the very progress of civilization increases the scope of sublimation and of controlled aggression; on both accounts, Eros is weakened and destructiveness is released. This would suggest that progress remains committed to a regressive trend in the instinctual structure (in the last analysis, to the death instinct), that the growth of civilization is counteracted by the persistent (though repressed) impulse to come to rest in final gratification. Domination, and the enhancement of power and productivity, proceed through destruction beyond rational necessity. The quest for liberation is darkened by the quest for Nirvana. The sinister hypothesis that culture, via the socially utilized impulses, stands under the rule of the Nirvana principle has often haunted psychoanalysis. **Progress "contains" regression.**" (pg. 81-82)
 - "**Eros creates culture in his struggle against the death instinct**: he strives to preserve being on an ever larger and richer scale in order to satisfy the life instincts, to protect them from the threat of non-fulfillment, extinction. It is the failure of Eros, lack of fulfillment in life, which enhances the instinctual value of death. The manifold forms of regression are unconscious protest against the insufficiency of civilization: against the prevalence of toil over pleasure, performance over gratification. An innermost tendency in the organism militates against the principle which has governed civilization and insists on return from alienation. The derivatives of the death instinct join the neurotic and perverted manifestations of Eros in this rebellion. Time and again, Freud's theory of civilization points up these countertrends. Destructive as they appear in the light of the established culture, they testify to the destructiveness of what they strive to destroy: repression. They aim not only against the reality principle, at non-being, but also beyond the reality principle—at another mode of being. They betoken the historical character of the reality principle, the limits of its validity and necessity. At this point, Freud's metapsychology meets a mainstream of Western philosophy" (pg. 82)
 - "The ego which undertook the rational transformation of the human and natural environment revealed itself as an essentially aggressive, offensive subject, whose thoughts and actions were designed for mastering objects. It was a subject against an object. This a priori antagonistic experience defined the ego cogitans as well as the ego agens. Nature (its own as well as the external world) were "given" to the ego as something that had to be fought, conquered, and even violated—such was the precondition for self-preservation and self-development. **The struggle begins with the perpetual internal conquest of the "lower" faculties of the individual: his sensuous and appetitive faculties. Their subjugation is, at least since Plato, regarded as a constitutive element of human reason, which is thus in its very function repressive.** The struggle culminates in the conquest of external nature, which must be perpetually attacked, curbed, and exploited in order to yield to human needs. The ego experiences being as "provocation", as "project"; it experiences each existential condition as a restraint that has to be overcome, transformed into another one. The ego becomes preconditioned for mastering action and productivity even prior to any specific occasion that calls for such an attitude" (pg. 83)
 - "**The Phenomenology of the Spirit unfolds the structure of reason as the structure of domination**—and as the overcoming of domination. Reason develops through the developing self-consciousness of man who conquers the natural and historical world and makes it the material of his self-realization. When mere consciousness reaches the stage of self-consciousness, it finds itself as ego, and the ego is first desire: it can become conscious

of itself only through satisfying itself in and by an "other." But such satisfaction involves the "negation" of the other, for the ego has to prove itself by truly "being-for-itself" against all "otherness." This is the notion of the individual which must constantly assert and affirm himself in order to be real, which is set off against the world as his "negativity," as denying his freedom, so that he can exist only by incessantly winning and testing his existence against something or someone which contests it. The ego must become free, but if the world has the "character of negativity," then the ego's freedom depends on being "recognized," "acknowledged" as master—and such recognition can only be tendered by another ego, another self-conscious subject. Objects are not alive; the overcoming of their resistance cannot satisfy or "test" the power of the ego: "Self-consciousness can attain its satisfaction only in another self-consciousness." **The aggressive attitude toward the object-world, the domination of nature, thus ultimately aims at the domination of man by man.** It is aggressiveness toward the other subjects: satisfaction of the ego is conditioned upon its "negative relation" to another ego... (pg. 85-86)

- "Freedom involves the risk of life, not because it involves liberation from servitude, but because the very content of human freedom is defined by the mutual 'negative relation' to the other. And since this negative relation affects the totality of life, freedom can be "tested" only by staking life itself. Death and anxiety—not as "fear for this element or that, not for this or that moment of time," but as fear for one's 'entire being'"—are the essential terms of human freedom and satisfaction. **From the negative structure of self-consciousness results the relation of master and servant, domination and servitude.** This relation is the consequence of the specific nature of self-consciousness and the consequence of its specific attitude toward the other (object and subject)" (pg. 86)
 - *"The Phenomenology of the Spirit* leads to the overcoming of that form of freedom which derives from the antagonistic relation to the other. And **the true mode of freedom is, not the incessant activity of conquest, but its coming to rest in the transparent knowledge and gratification of being.**" (pg. 86)
 - ◆ "Mutual acknowledgment and recognition are still the test for the reality of freedom, but the terms are now forgiveness and reconciliation" (pg. 87)
- *"The Phenomenology of the Spirit* throughout preserves the tension between the ontological and the historical content: the manifestations of the spirit are the main stages of Western civilization, but these historical manifestations remain affected with negativity; the spirit comes to itself only in and as absolute knowledge. It is at the same time the true form of thought and the true form of being. **Being is in its very essence reason.** But the highest form of reason is, to Hegel, almost the opposite of the prevailing form: it is attained and sustained fulfillment, the transparent unity of subject and object, of the universal and the individual—a dynamic rather than static unity in which all becoming is free self-externalization (Entäusserung), release and "enjoyment" of potentialities." (pg. 87)
 - **"Being is no longer the painful transcendence toward the future but the peaceful recapture of the past. Remembrance,** which has preserved everything that was, is 'the inner and the actually higher form of the substance'" (pg. 88)
 - ◆ **this is very similar to Sartre's for-itself and in-itself & 'remembrance' represents the passageway to 'capture' 'historical' negativity.*
 - **"The past remains present; it is the very life of the spirit; what has been decides on what is. Freedom implies reconciliation—redemption of the past. If the past is just left behind and forgotten, there will be no end to destructive transgression"** (pg. 88)
 - ◆ "But neither the state nor society embodies the ultimate form of freedom. No matter how rationally they are organized, they are still afflicted with unfreedom. **True freedom is only in the idea.** Liberation thus is a spiritual event. Hegel's dialectic remains within the framework set by the established reality principle." (pg. 88)
 - "The consummation of being is, not the ascending curve, but the closing of the circle: the re-turn from alienation. Philosophy could conceive of such a state only as that of pure thought. Between the beginning and the end is the development of reason as the logic of domination—progress through alienation. The repressed liberation is upheld: in the idea and in the ideal." (pg. 88-89)
- The philosophy of Western civilization culminates in the idea that the **truth lies in the negation of the principle that governs this civilization—**negation in the twofold sense that freedom appears as real only in the idea, and that the endlessly projecting and transcending productivity of being comes to fruition in the perpetual peace of self-conscious receptivity." (pg. 87)
- In its most advanced positions, Freud's theory partakes of this philosophical dynamic. His metapsychology, attempting to define the essence of being, defines it as Eros—in contrast to its traditional definition as Logos. The death instinct affirms the principle of nonbeing (the negation of being) against Eros (the principle of being). The ubiquitous fusion of the two principles in Freud's conception corresponds to the traditional metaphysical fusion of being and nonbeing" (pg. 93)
 - **"Freud's interpretation of being in terms of Eros recaptures the early stage of Plato's philosophy,** which conceived of culture not as the repressive sublimation but as the free self-development of Eros. As early as Plato, this conception appears as an archaic-mythical residue. Eros is being absorbed into Logos, and Logos is reason which subdues the instincts. The history of ontology reflects the reality principle which governs the world ever more exclusively: The insights contained in the metaphysical notion of Eros were driven underground. They survived, in eschatological distortion, in many heretic movements, in the hedonistic philosophy. Their history has still to be written—as has the history of the transformation of Eros in Agape. Freud's own theory follows the general trend: in his work, the rationality of the predominant reality principle supersedes the metaphysical speculations on Eros" (pg. 94)
- Chapter 6 - The Historical Limits of the Established Reality Principle (pg. 99)
 - "The preceding analysis tried to identify certain basic trends in the instinctual structure of civilization and, particularly, to define the specific reality principle which has governed the progress of Western civilization. We designated this reality principle as the performance principle; and we attempted to show that domination and alienation, derived from the prevalent social organization of labor, determined to a large extent the demands imposed upon the instincts by this reality principle" (pg. 99)
- Chapter 7 - Phantasy and Utopia (pg. 108)
 - **"Art is perhaps the most visible 'return of the repressed'..."** (pg. 111)
- Chapter 8 - The Images of Orpheus and Narcissus (pg. 123)
 - See text
- Chapter 9 - The Aesthetic Dimension (pg. 133)
 - "To Kant, the aesthetic dimension is the medium in which the senses and the intellect meet." (pg. 138)
 - "The truth of art is the liberation of sensuousness through its reconciliation with reason: this is the central notion of classical idealistic aesthetics" (pg. 141)
 - "Art challenges the prevailing principle of reason: in representing the order of sensuousness, it invokes a tabooed logic—the logic of gratification as against that of repression" (pg. 141-142)
 - "[Civilization's] wound is caused by the antagonistic relation between the two polar dimensions of the human existence. Schiller describes this antagonism in a series of paired concepts: sensuousness and reason, matter and form (spirit), nature and freedom, the particular and the universal. Each of the two dimensions is governed by a basic impulse: the "sensuous impulse" and the "form-impulse." The former is essentially passive, receptive, the latter active, mastering, domineering. **Culture is built by the combination and interaction of these two impulses.** But in the established civilization, their relation has been an antagonistic one: instead of reconciling both impulses by making sensuousness rational and reason sensuous, civilization has subjugated sensuousness to reason in such a manner that the former, if it reasserts itself, does so in destructive and "savage" forms,

while the tyranny of reason impoverishes and barbarizes sensuousness. The conflict must be resolved if human potentialities are to realize themselves freely. Since only the impulses have the lasting force that fundamentally affects the human existence, such reconciliation between the two impulses must be the work of a third impulse. Schiller defines this third mediating impulse as the play impulse, its objective as beauty, and its goal as freedom. We shall presently try to rescue the full content of Schiller's notion from the benevolent aesthetic treatment to which the traditional interpretation has confined it." (pg. 142-143)

- **"The quest is for the solution of a "political" problem: the liberation of man from inhuman existential conditions.** Schiller states that, in order to solve the political problem, "one must pass through the aesthetic, since **it is beauty that leads to freedom.**" The play impulse is the vehicle of this liberation. The impulse does not aim at playing "with" something; rather **it is the play of life itself, beyond want and external compulsion—the manifestation of an existence without fear and anxiety, and thus the manifestation of freedom itself. Man is free only where he is free from constraint, external and internal, physical and moral—when he is constrained neither by law nor by need.** But such constraint is the reality. **Freedom is thus, in a strict sense, freedom from the established reality:** man is free when the "reality loses its seriousness" and when its necessity "becomes light" (leicht). "The greatest stupidity and the greatest intelligence have a certain affinity with each other in that they both seek only the real"; however, such need for and attachment to the real are "merely the results of want." In contrast, "indifference to reality" and interest in "show" (dis-play, Schein) are the tokens of freedom from want and a "true enlargement of humanity." **In a genuinely humane civilization, the human existence will be play rather than toil, and man will live in display rather than need"** (pg. 143-144)
 - "These ideas represent one of the most advanced positions of thought. It must be understood that the liberation from the reality which is here envisaged is not transcendental, "inner," or merely intellectual freedom (as Schiller explicitly emphasizes) but freedom in the reality. The reality that "loses its seriousness" is the inhumane reality of want and need, and it loses its seriousness when wants and needs can be satisfied without alienated labor. Then, man is free to "play" with his faculties and potentialities and with those of nature, and only by "playing" with them is he free. His world is then display (Schein), and its order is that of beauty. Because it is the realization of freedom, play is more than the constraining physical and moral reality: "... man is only serious with the agreeable, the good, the perfect; but with beauty he plays." Such formulations would be irresponsible "aestheticism" if the realm of play were one of ornament, luxury, holiday, in an otherwise repressive world. But here the aesthetic function is conceived as a principle governing the entire human existence, and it can do so only if it becomes "universal."" (pg. 144)
 - "Aesthetic culture presupposes "a total revolution in the mode of perception and feeling," and such **revolution becomes possible only if civilization has reached the highest physical and intellectual maturity. Only when the "constraint of need" is replaced by the "constraint of superfluity" (abundance) will the human existence be impelled to a "free movement which is itself both end and means.**" Liberated from the pressure of painful purposes and performances necessitated by want, man will be restored into the "freedom to be what he ought to be." But what "ought" to be will be freedom itself: the freedom to play. The mental faculty exercising this freedom is that of imagination. It traces and projects the potentialities of all being; liberated from their enslavement by constraining matter, they appear as "pure forms." As such, they constitute an order of their own: they exist "according to the laws of beauty." Once it has really gained ascendancy as a principle of civilization, the play impulse would literally transform the reality. Nature, the objective world, would then be experienced primarily, neither as dominating man (as in primitive society), nor as being dominated by man (as in the established civilization), but rather as an object of "contemplation." With this change in the basic and formative experience, the object of experience itself changes: released from violent domination and exploitation, and instead shaped by the play impulse, nature would also be liberated from its own brutality and would become free to display the wealth of its purposeless forms which express the "inner life" of its objects. And a corresponding change would take place in the subjective world. Here, too, the aesthetic experience would arrest the violent and exploitative productivity which made man into an instrument of labor. But he would not be returned to a state of suffering passivity. His existence would still be activity, but "what he possesses and produces need bear no longer the traces of servitude, the fearful design of its purpose"; beyond want and anxiety, **human activity becomes display—the free manifestation of potentialities"** (pg. 144-145)
- "In other words, the salvation of culture would involve abolition of the repressive controls that civilization has imposed on sensuousness" (pg. 145)
- "We have seen that the Orphic and Narcissistic images symbolize the rebellion against passing, the desperate effort to arrest the flow of time—the conservative nature of the pleasure principle. If the "aesthetic state" is really to be the state of freedom, then it must ultimately defeat the destructive course of time. Only this is the token of a non-repressive civilization. Thus, Schiller attributes to **the liberating play impulse the function of "abolishing time in time," of reconciling being and becoming, change and identity. In this task culminates the progress of mankind to a higher form of culture"** (pg. 146)
- "If we reassemble its main elements, we find: (1) The transformation of toil (labor) into play, and of repressive productivity into "display"—a transformation that must be preceded by the conquest of want (scarcity) as the determining factor of civilization. (2) The self-sublimation of sensuousness (of the sensuous impulse) and the de-sublimation of reason (of the form-impulse) in order to reconcile the two basic antagonistic impulses. (3) The conquest of time in so far as time is destructive of lasting gratification. These elements are practically identical with those of a reconciliation between pleasure principle and reality principle. We recall the constitutive role attributed to imagination (phantasy) in play and display: **Imagination preserves the objectives of those mental processes which have remained free from the repressive reality principle; in their aesthetic function, they can be incorporated into the conscious rationality of mature civilization.** The play impulse stands for the common denominator of the two opposed mental processes and principles." (pg. 147)
- "Non-repressive order is essentially an order of abundance: the necessary constraint is brought about by "superfluity" rather than need. Only an order of abundance is compatible with freedom. At this point, the idealistic and the materialistic critiques of culture meet. Both agree that non-repressive order becomes possible only at the highest maturity of civilization, when all basic needs can be satisfied with a minimum expenditure of physical and mental energy in a minimum of time. Rejecting the notion of freedom which pertains to the rule of the performance principle, they reserve freedom for the new mode of existence that would emerge on the basis of universally gratified existence-needs. **The realm of freedom is envisioned as lying beyond the realm of necessity: freedom is not within but outside the "struggle for existence."** Possession and procurement of the necessities of life are the prerequisite, rather than the content, of a free society. The realm of necessity, of labor, is one of unfreedom because the human existence in this realm is determined by objectives and functions that are not its own and that do not allow the free play of human faculties and desires. The optimum in this realm is therefore to be defined by standards of rationality rather than freedom—namely, to organize production and distribution in such a manner that the least time is spent for making all necessities available to all members of society. **Necessary labor is a system of essentially inhuman, mechanical, and routine activities; in such a system, individuality cannot be a value and end in itself.** Reasonably, the system of societal labor would be organized rather with a view to saving time and space for the development of individuality outside the inevitably repressive work-world. **Play and display, as principles of civilization, imply not the transformation of labor but its complete subordination to the freely evolving potentialities of man and nature.** The ideas of play and display now reveal their full distance from the values of productiveness and performance: play is unproductive and useless precisely because it cancels the repressive and exploitative traits of labor and leisure; it "just plays" with the reality. But it also cancels their sublime traits—the "higher values." The desublimation of reason is just as essential a process in the emergence of a free culture as is the self-sublimation of sensuousness. In the established system of domination, the repressive structure of reason and

- the repressive organization of the sense-faculties supplement and sustain each other. **In Freud's terms: civilized morality is the morality of repressed instincts; liberation of the latter implies "debasement" of the former.** But this debasement of the higher values may take them back into the organic structure of the human existence from which they were separated, and the reunion may transform this structure itself. If the higher values lose their remoteness, their isolation from and against the lower faculties, the latter may become freely susceptible to culture." (pg. 148-149)
- Chapter 10 - The Transformation of Sexuality into Eros (pg. 152)
 - "The vision of a non-repressive culture, which we have lifted from a marginal trend in mythology and philosophy, aims at a new relation between instincts and reason. The civilized morality is reversed by harmonizing instinctual freedom and order: liberated from the tyranny of repressive reason, the instincts tend toward free and lasting existential relations—they generate a new reality principle. In Schiller's idea of an "aesthetic state," the vision of a non-repressive culture is concretized at the level of mature civilization. At this level, the organization of the instincts becomes a social problem (in Schiller's terminology, political), as it does in Freud's psychology. **The processes that create the ego and superego also shape and perpetuate specific societal institutions and relations.** Such psychoanalytical concepts as sublimation, identification, and introjection have not only a psychological but also a social content: they terminate in a system of institutions, laws, agencies, things, and customs that confront the individual as objective entities. Within this antagonistic system, the mental conflict between ego and superego, between ego and id, is at one and the same time a conflict between the individual and his society. The latter embodies the rationality of the whole, and **the individual's struggle against the repressive forces is a struggle against objective reason.** Therefore, the emergence of a non-repressive reality principle involving instinctual liberation would regress behind the attained level of civilized rationality. This regression would be psychological as well as social: it would reactivate early stages of the libido which were surpassed in the development of the reality ego, and it would dissolve the institutions of society in which the reality ego exists. In terms of these institutions, instinctual liberation is relapse into barbarism. However, occurring at the height of civilization, as a consequence not of defeat but of victory in the struggle for existence, and supported by a free society, such liberation might have very different results. It would still be a reversal of the process of civilization, a subversion of culture—but after culture had done its work and created the mankind and the world that could be free. It would still be "regression"—but in the light of mature consciousness and guided by a new rationality. Under these conditions, the possibility of a non-repressive civilization is predicated not upon the arrest, but upon the liberation, of progress—so that man would order his life in accordance with his fully developed knowledge, so that he would ask again what is good and what is evil. If the guilt accumulated in the civilized domination of man by man can ever be redeemed by freedom, then the "original sin" must be committed again: "We must again eat from the tree of knowledge in order to fall back into the state of innocence."" (pg. 152-153)
 - "The notion of a non-repressive instinctual order must first be tested on **the most "disorderly" of all instincts—namely, sexuality.** Nonrepressive order is possible only if the sex instincts can, by virtue of their own dynamic and under changed existential and societal conditions, generate lasting erotic relations among mature individuals. We have to ask whether the sex instincts, after the elimination of all surplus-repression, can develop a "libidinal rationality" which is not only compatible with but even promotes progress toward higher forms of civilized freedom." (pg. 153-154)
 - "Freud repeatedly emphasized that the lasting interpersonal relations on which civilization depends presuppose that the sex instinct is inhibited in its aim. Love, and the enduring and responsible relations which it demands, are founded on a union of sexuality with "affection," and this union is the historical result of a long and cruel process of domestication, in which the instinct's legitimate manifestation is made supreme and its component parts are arrested in their development. This cultural refinement of sexuality, its sublimation to love, took place within a civilization which established possessive private relations apart from, and in a decisive aspect conflicting with, the possessive societal relations. While, outside the privacy of the family, men's existence was chiefly determined by the exchange value of their products and performances, their life in home and bed was to be permeated with the spirit of divine and moral law. Mankind was supposed to be an end in itself and never a mere means; but this ideology was effective in the private rather than in the societal functions of the individuals, in the sphere of libidinal satisfaction rather than in that of labor. The full force of civilized morality was mobilized against the use of the body as mere object, means, instrument of pleasure; such reification was tabooed and remained the ill-reputed privilege of whores, degenerates, and perverts. Precisely in his gratification, and especially in his sexual gratification, man was to be a higher being, committed to higher values; sexuality was to be dignified by love. With the emergence of a non-repressive reality principle, with the abolition of the surplus-repression necessitated by the performance principle, this process would be reversed. In the societal relations, reification would be reduced as the division of labor became reoriented on the gratification of freely developing individual needs; whereas, in the libidinal relations, the taboo on the reification of the body would be lessened. No longer used as a fulltime instrument of labor, the body would be resexualized. The regression involved in this spread of the libido would first manifest itself in a reactivation of all erotogenic zones and, consequently, in a resurgence of pregenital polymorphous sexuality and in a decline of genital supremacy. The body in its entirety would become an object of cathexis, a thing to be enjoyed—an instrument of pleasure. This change in the value and scope of libidinal relations would lead to a disintegration of the institutions in which the private interpersonal relations have been organized, particularly the monogamic and patriarchal family." (pg. 154-155)
 - "These prospects seem to confirm the expectation that **instinctual liberation can lead only to a society of sex maniacs—that is, to no society.** However, the process just outlined involves not simply a release but a transformation of the libido: from sexuality constrained under genital supremacy to erotization of the entire personality. It is a spread rather than explosion of libido—a spread over private and societal relations which bridges the gap maintained between them by a repressive reality principle. This transformation of the libido would be the result of a societal transformation that released the free play of individual needs and faculties. By virtue of these conditions, the free development of transformed libido beyond the institutions of the performance principle differs essentially from the release of constrained sexuality within the dominion of these institutions. The latter process explodes suppressed sexuality; the libido continues to bear the mark of suppression and manifests itself in the hideous forms so well known in the history of civilization; in the sadistic and masochistic orgies of desperate masses, of "society elites," of starved bands of mercenaries, of prison and concentration-camp guards. Such release of sexuality provides a periodically necessary outlet for unbearable frustration; it strengthens rather than weakens the roots of instinctual constraint; consequently, it has been used time and again as a prop for suppressive regimes. In contrast, the free development of transformed libido within transformed institutions, while eroticizing previously tabooed zones, time, and relations, would minimize the manifestations of mere sexuality by integrating them into a far larger order, including the order of work. In this context, sexuality tends to its own sublimation: the libido would not simply reactivate pre-civilized and infantile stages, but would also transform the perverted content of these stages" (pg. 155-156)
 - Chapter 11 - Eros and Thanatos (pg. 171)
 - "Under non-repressive conditions, sexuality tends to "grow into" Eros—that is to say, toward self-sublimation in lasting and expanding relations (including work relations) which serve to intensify and enlarge instinctual gratification. Eros strives for "eternalizing" itself in a permanent order. This striving finds its first resistance in the realm of necessity. To be sure, the scarcity and poverty prevalent in the world could be sufficiently mastered to permit the ascendancy of universal freedom, but this mastery seems to be self-propelling—perpetual labor. All the technological progress, the conquest of nature, the rationalization of man and society have not eliminated and cannot eliminate the necessity of alienated labor, the necessity of working mechanically, unpleasurably, in a manner that does not represent individual self-realization." (pg. 171)
 - Epilogue: Critique of Neo-Freudian Revisionism (pg. 183)

- "...while psychoanalytic theory recognizes that the sickness of the individual is ultimately caused and sustained by the sickness of his civilization, psychoanalytic therapy aims at curing the individual so that he can continue to function as part of a sick civilization without surrendering to it altogether." (pg. 188)
- "The chief objections of the revisionists to Freud may be summed up as follows: Freud grossly underrated the extent to which the individual and his neurosis are determined by conflicts with his environment." (pg. 190)

d. Further Readings:

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