Interpreting the Frankfurt School and Herbert Marcuse's Approach from the Perspective of Sociology of Communication

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Abstract: Herbert Marcuse, one of the leading representatives of the Frankfurt School, addresses the conditions that give rise to 'One-Dimensional Man' through a political, philosophical, economic, cultural bridge from technology to political domination. Key themes such as the fragmentation of needs, the deconstruction of freedom, the dysfunctionality of mass media, methodological myopia offer a structural critique in the field of sociology of communication. Sociology of communication examines communication as a practice that constructs individual and collective relations, institutions, values, and evaluates its transformation in the context of mass media and social phenomena and processes. Based on this framework, the study aims to conduct a theoretical discussion problematized on six main axes: the debate on freedom, the critique of consumerism, the approach to technology and mass media, the emphasis on methodology, and the theory of liberation by identifying the main research orientations in Herbert Marcuse's sociology and works in the field of communication studies, starting from the historical context of the Frankfurt School. In conclusion, Marcuse's focus on "social individual", his positioning of technology and mass media in the construction of "oppressive tolerance", his evaluations on the relationship between technique and politics, his discussion of one-dimensionality and consumerism, the dilemma between real and artificial needs, and the contributions of his concept of freedom, which he defines through "libidinal rationality", to communication studies have been evaluated from a sociological perspective.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sociology of communication, Frankfurt School, Herbert Marcuse
Jel Kodları: D83, Z1, Z10

Frankfurt Okulu ve Herbert Marcuse'nin Yaklaşımını İletişim Sosyolojisi Perspektifiden Okumak

Öz: Frankfurt Okulu'nun önde gelen temsilcilerinden Herbert Marcuse, 'Tek Boyutlu İnsan'ı doğuran koşulları teknolojiden siyasi tahakküme uzanan siyasi, felsefi, ekonomik, kültürel bir köprü üzerinden ele almaktadır. İhtiyaçların parçalanması, özgürlüğün yapısökümü, kitle iletişim araçlarının işlev(siz)liği ve metodolojik miyopluk gibi kilit temalar, iletişim sosyolojisi alanında da yapısal bir eleştiri sunmaktadır. İletişim sosyolojisi, iletişimi bireysel ve kolektif ilişkileri, kurumları ve değerleri inşa eden bir pratik olarak incelemektedir ve bunun kitle iletişim araçları ile toplumsal olgu ve süreçler bağlamında dönüşümünü değerlendirmektedir. Bu çerçeveden hareketle çalışma, Frankfurt Okulu'nun tarihsel bağlamından hareketle; Herbert Marcuse'nin sosyolojisi ve eserlerinde iletişim çalışmaları alanına ilişkin temel araştırma yönelimlerini saptayarak; özgürlük tartışması, tüketimcilik eleştirisi, teknoloji ve kitle iletişim araçları yaklaşımı, metodoloji vurgusu ve kurtuluş teorisi olmak üzere altı temel eksende sorunsallaştırılan kuramsal bir tartışma yürütmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Sonuç olarak, Marcuse'nin "sosyal birey"e odaklanması, teknolojiyi ve kitle iletişimini "baskıcı hoşgörü"nün inşasında konumlandırması, teknik ve politika arasındaki ilişkiye dair değerlendirmeleri, tek boyutluluk ve tüketimcilik üzerine tartışmaları, gerçek ve yapay ihtiyaçlar arasındaki ikilem ve "libidinal rasyonalite" üzerinden tanımladığı özgürlük kavramının iletişim bilimlerine katkıları, sosyolojik perspektifle ele alınmaktadır.

Keywords: İletişim sosyolojisi, Frankfurt Okulu, Herbert Marcuse
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1. Introduction

Alan Swingewood's (1998) statements on Western Marxism, which laid the intellectual foundations of the Frankfurt School, serve as an introductory remark that can contribute both to the evaluation of the views adopted by this school and to the examination of the approach of one of its prominent figures, Herbert Marcuse. "When we look at orthodox Marxism, we see a mechanical base-superstructure model built upon a necessary economic causality. However, Western Marxists (particularly Lukács, Bloch, Adorno, Horkheimer, and Marcuse) redefined Marxism as a philosophical 'critique' based on humanist concepts such as praxis, alienation, liberation, and utopia. Western Marxism was primarily a philosophy of history that focused on the fate of culture, values, meaning, and human purposes, rather than on the laws of development. Social consciousness and practice were not mere reflections of economic laws" (Swingewood 1998: 261). Therefore, considering the critiques the Frankfurt School raised regarding the culture industry, enlightenment, and instrumental reason, it is possible to outline the school's political stance, work, and approach in broad terms.

The Frankfurt School, or Critical Theory, fundamentally addresses the concepts of Enlightenment and the instrumental reason. According to the Frankfurt School, Enlightenment, with its promises of freedom to the individual, shaped modern paradigms such as science and rationality. Contrary to these promises, however, it serves as a carrier of new forms of domination. These new forms of domination are built upon the creation of a massified, homogeneous society. In this school of thought, instrumental reason, which is organized around technical utility and personal interest, manifests itself both in social practices and in the fields of science and scientific inquiry. This observation led the school to adopt a critical stance against the instrumental reason produced by Enlightenment thought and the self-interested technical scientific structures it has fostered, which is frequently examined in their theoretical constructs. Their developed theory of culture emerges as a product of these assumptions and observations, and the concept of culture is critically discussed in terms of mass culture and the culture industry, both of which are subjected to critique in terms of their process of instrumentalization. For Frankfurt School theorists, culture offers an alternative framework to the infrastructure-superstructure debate in evaluations of capitalism. Therefore, it is important to address and make visible the processes of hegemony and persuasion underlying the concept of culture (Slater, 1998, pp. 76-77).

When look at the historical background of the Frankfurt School, established in 1923, it is necessary to address the question of why and how the school was founded and developed. The rise of fascist movements in the 1930s, the Nazi ascension to power, and the weakening of socialist movements in many countries during this period are key factors that must be considered. Theoretical reflections aimed at answering questions such as why the expected revolutions did not occur and why socialist movements lost strength became an approach adopted by the school (Held, 1980; Jay, 1996). Moreover, due to increasing pressures during this time, the thinkers of the Frankfurt School decided to continue their work in the United States, distancing themselves from the political events unfolding in Europe. The key figures of the Frankfurt School include Max Horkheimer, Theodor W. Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, Leo Lowenthal, and Erich Fromm (Slater, 1998, p. 42).

The Frankfurt School's initial systematic studies after migration shifted from a Europe-centered cultural critique to one focused on America, examining mass society, the culture industry, and consumer society. Developments in Fordism and mass production in America, the emergence and growth of the consumer society, technological advancements, the use of mass media as political tools of control, the rise of cinema as a mass medium, and the dynamics of the entertainment industry, alongside the overall functioning of the American economy and lifestyle, all contributed to the clarification of the School's perspectives on the culture industry. Bottomore assesses the Frankfurt School's reflections on these issues in three main areas: "the epistemological and

methodological critique of positivism in the social sciences, a critical stance toward the ideological influence of science and technology as key factors in the formation of a new technocratic and bureaucratic form of domination, and analyses of the cultural dimensions of domination, specifically the culture industry." Furthermore, in their evaluations, the Frankfurt School frequently employs concepts such as commodification, exchange, reification, and fetishism (Bottomore, 1994, p. 27-28). These conceptual discussions provide a direct ontological, epistemological, and methodological foundation for the field of communication sociology.

An important point to emphasize here is the observation regarding the transition from 'the culture of society to the culture industry,' which also serves as a subtitle in the article "Frankfurt School and Critique of the Culture Industry." Accordingly, the concept of culture is understood as a set of values generated by the internal dynamics of a society, with an emphasis on the unique characteristics of societies in the construction of culture. On the other hand, especially in pre-industrial societies, there is a notion of subcultural diversity. In modern industrial societies, however, culture has been transformed into an industrial product, shaped by the production requirements of the contemporary era, and has taken on a form that includes necessities such as mass/standardized production. This is because the rules of industry contradict the initial definition of culture. In other words, the rationality of industry requires mass and standardized production. Therefore, these industrial rules lead to the inefficiency of creativity, make questioning more difficult, confine reason within narrow boundaries, and result in the gradual disappearance of originality (Şan & Hira, 2007, p. 285).

Another key point is the explanation regarding the Frankfurt School's preference for using the term "culture industry" instead of "mass culture" (Adorno, 2003). The concept of mass culture, by emphasizing the needs of the masses rather than capital in the capitalist organization of culture, tends to obscure the role of capital and is not used because it does not offer a direct critique of the actors involved but instead presents a critique of the system. Instead, starting from the late 19th century, the term "culture industry" was used by Adorno and Horkheimer in their book "The Dialectic of Enlightenment" to describe the commodification of cultural forms in the entertainment industry, particularly in the U.S. and Europe (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002). The emphasis on industry in this term is used not to describe a production process directly, but to convey the standardization of a cultural product and the rationalization of distribution techniques. According to Horkheimer and Adorno, in advanced capitalist society, financial and productive powers also have control over cultural monopolies. This structure aims to rationalize the status quo by commodifying culture and to provide individuals with a consumption motivation appropriate to their status through mass culture products. In this culture, every individual sells not only their labor but all of their resources and even their free time in exchange for products that are said to "bring wealth to their lives" (Adorno, 2007). The goal presented to the masses is always to live better, to produce more, and to consume more. However, the common notion of "luxury cars that cannot be used to escape to another world, refrigerators packed with frozen food, and dozens of magazines and newspapers requiring no intellectual effort" obscures the truth that the individual could work less and define their real needs (Marcuse, 1968: 31-32). Therefore, the economy instrumentalizes culture to create a lifestyle of consumption and to generate false needs in consumers (Atiker, 1998, p.52).

Within the conceptualization of the "culture industry", the main issues critiqued by the Frankfurt School include the products produced through the culture industry and the creation of false needs, the destruction of the potential for questioning and critique while ensuring the individual accepts the existing order, and the symbolic determination of the individual's needs and the commodities they should consume about their social roles and status (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002; Bottomore; 1994). Additionally, the "culture industry" does not encourage the consumer to think; rather, it presents ready-made interpretations of the world. The "culture industry" is essentially about the reproduction

of the status quo, and the clear distinction between high culture and entertainment culture in bourgeois society has become blurred in mass society, transforming into something entirely massified and commercial. Finally, while the "culture industry" seems to offer the individual a certain space for living, it fundamentally opposes their individuality and only allows differentiation within a very narrow space that does not disrupt the functioning of the established order (Adorno, 1998, p. 206-207).

The main criticism directed at the Frankfurt School focuses on the claim that their radical negativity toward modernity leads to the complete disregard of the achievements of modernity. The newer thinkers of the school have argued that this approach oversimplifies the image of modernity and unjustly neglects some of the rational content of cultural modernism. Despite this criticism, it is impossible to overlook the observations made by the Frankfurt School regarding the excessive mechanization of modern society, the rise of technology to the point of determining human life, and their persistent focus on the phenomenon of reification/commodification, which they depict as a crisis of modern culture (Bronner, 2011). Additionally, considering that the culture industry was still in its early stages during the period the Frankfurt School conducted its studies and that internet technology, which brought about a significant societal transformation, had not yet existed, there are undoubtedly gaps in the current evaluations of their works. However, it is equally important not to overlook the many points in their theories where they were accurate (Slater, 1998, p. 266).

The discipline of communication sociology examines communication as a practice that constructs individual and collective relationships, institutions, and values, while also evaluate this practice transformation in the context of social phenomena and processes through mass media. Within this framework, the study identifies key research orientations in Marcuse's sociology and works, particularly those that can be explored within the field of communication studies (Fuchs, 2016). In this context, the study aims to identify the key research directions that could contribute to the field of communication studies by examining the sociology of Herbert Marcuse and his works within the historical framework of the Frankfurt School. The study seeks to provide theoretical responses to questions regarding how the concept of freedom is interpreted in the context of the critique of contemporary capitalism, how the critique of consumerism is conceptualized, what Marcuse's approach to technology and mass communication is, how the methodology of critical theory can be understood, and whether there is a future-oriented theory of liberation. The theoretical discussion is structured around six core axes: the debate on freedom, the critique of consumerism, technology, mass media, methodological emphasis, and the theory of lib In conclusion, it is demonstrated that Marcuse's focus on the "social individual," the positioning of technology and mass media in the construction of "repressive tolerance," the relationship between technique and politics, the discussion of one-dimensionality and consumerism, the dilemma between real and artificial needs, and the concept of freedom as defined through libidinal liberation all offer significant theoretical and research contributions to communication studies from a sociological perspective.

2.   Herbert Marcuse's Sociological Approach

A prominent figure in the Frankfurt School following M. Horkheimer, alongside T. W. Adorno, is Herbert Marcuse[1]. His theoretical perspective and sociological outlook can

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[1]Herbert Marcuse, one of the leading thinkers of the Frankfurt School, was born on July 19, 1898, in Berlin. Having studied literature and philosophy, Marcuse completed his doctoral education at Freiburg University in 1922, during which he became a member of a political party aligned with social democrats. After working briefly as a bookseller in Berlin, he wrote his first article in 1928 and returned to Freiburg in 1929 to write his dissertation, "Hegel's Ontology and the Theory of Historicity," under the supervision of Martin Heidegger. Later, he collaborated with significant figures such as Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, contributing to the establishment of the Frankfurt School. Together with other members of the school, Marcuse played a key role in the development of the critical theory model and participated in interdisciplinary studies on topics such as the modern state, monopoly capitalism, and the examination of German fascism, which were central to the school's areas of focus. Following the rise of Hitler in 1933, Marcuse moved to Geneva and then to the United States, where he continued his work at the Institute for Social Research at Columbia University.

be summarized as a reinterpretation of Marxist theory in light of changing historical and social conditions. The views Marcuse expressed on various topics, such as racism, sexual inequality, and the devaluation of education, led to his ideas being embraced and supported by the student movements of the 1960s (Marcus & Tar, 1984; Slater, 1998, p.79).

This observation is further reinforced in Anderson's Reflections on Western Marxism, where he underscores that Marcuse, while remaining loyal to classical Marxism, deliberately refrained from engaging with the working class or its political organizations. In particular, in his theoretical discussions in One-Dimensional Man (1964), Marcuse highlights the impossibility of proletarian activism leading to socialism, in addition to pointing out the integration of the American working class into capitalism. This is interpreted by Anderson (2008, p. 66) as a clear declaration of the rupture between theory and practice. According to Anderson, rather than attempting to reconcile Marxist theory with social struggle, Marcuse advanced a theory that argued that an industrialized and, consequently, capitalist working class could not possess any substantial socialist potential (Anderson, 2008, p. 79). The subsequent criticisms of Marcuse for his perceived pessimism and acceptance of political inaction can also be contextualized within this framework.

It is possible to define Marcuse's object of study as the 'social individual' based on his works. Because society itself is a mass mechanism based on the mode of production. Individuals also lose their individuality within society. Marcuse draws attention to the domination relations in the social sphere; on the other hand, he aims to emphasize the necessity of reminding the individual of his existence, thought, and creativity within society. Ultimately, when it comes to salvation, Marcuse puts society before the individual and sees salvation as possible only through social effort. In this respect, Herbert Marcuse's interpretation of social reality can be associated with his pessimistic perspective. Following the perspective of the Frankfurt School, Marcuse, in his criticism, speaks of a legitimizing intention towards the dominationist establishment of social reality within the culture industry and the elimination of the individual's mechanisms of dissent against it, moreover, the elimination of the need for individuals to dissent. Therefore, according to him, there is a social reality, but it lags behind an artificial reality that is projected onto society and established. This reality will only be able to remind itself again when the determining conditions created by the system of production are eliminated.

The fundamental issues and critiques that Marcuse addresses while constructing his approach and shaping his theory can be read through the lens of the concept of "repressive tolerance," where all forms of opposition and spaces for free discussion are suppressed in advanced industrial societies (Marcuse, 1969, p.83-85; West, 1998, p.97). According to Marcuse, "the industrial society, which has taken control of technology and science, is organized to dominate humans and nature more effectively to utilize its resources more efficiently" (Marcuse, 1968, p.28). In the construction of repressive tolerance, based on this primary assumption, the positioning of culture also emerges as a crucial point (Fopp, 2010). Marcuse's theoretical framework can be described as moving from a condition of free competition created under unequal circumstances to how individuals' rights and freedoms in modern industrial societies are defined, replacing independent thought, autonomy, and the right to political opposition with a social order where the shift towards an authoritarian system goes unchallenged (Kellner, 1984, p.230).

Marcuse's framework may be shaped from a critical center, addressing various aspects of society. At a fundamental level, Marcuse's relationship between the technical and the political can be seen in the following statement: "Today, political power is determined by the power over machine processes and the technical order of devices. In advanced and progressing industrial societies, the government can only ensure its security and continuity if it is capable of activating, regulating, and operating the technical

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Unlike Adorno and Horkheimer, Marcuse did not return to Germany after World War II, instead remaining in the U.S., where he became a U.S. citizen in 1940 and continued his academic career at various universities. His notable works include A Study on Authority (1936), Reason and Revolution (1941), Eros and Civilization (1955), Soviet Marxism (1958), One-Dimensional Man (1964), Repressive Tolerance (1965), The End of Utopia (1967), Counter-Revolution and Revolt (1972), and The Aesthetic Dimension (1978).

scientific, and mechanical production achieved by industrial civilization. The fact that the physical power of the machine surpasses the power of the individual or a group of individuals, makes the machine the most effective political tool in all societies where the fundamental order is machine operation" (Marcuse, 1968, p.30).

3.   Understanding Marcuse Through His Work

3.1. "One-Dimensionality" and Freedom

Progressing through the key discussions in Herbert Marcuse's 1964 work One-Dimensional Man allows for a comprehensive understanding of his critiques. In this book, Marcuse addresses topics such as the redefinition of freedom in contemporary society, the manipulative function of technology as a mechanism for constructing freedom, the distinction between artificial and real needs, and methodological critiques.

Moreover, he emphasizes that the division within the social structure can merge with a mass movement capable of fostering fascism. From this, he directs a critique of the culture industry that touches upon mass culture, anomie, standardization, modernity, and the internally controlled society defined by it (Wheatland, 2009). Marcuse presents a situation of a modern society where the ordinary experiences of individuals are transformed into consumer-driven, numbing, and dehumanizing forms of slavery (Marcuse, 1968). In such a social world, "false needs" dominate, perpetuating "hardship, aggression, misery, and injustice." (Cutts, 2019). In this framework, Marcuse argues that modern capitalism has eliminated people's capacity for critical and independent thinking and constructed a reality driven by manufactured needs. The social world, in this view, becomes a terrain where the potential for human freedom is suppressed under the weight of the culture industry and capitalist control (Swingewood, 1998, p.338).

Marcuse argues (1968) that the "one-dimensional man" results from an emerging form of domination that runs parallel to the development of technology in advanced industrial societies. This is because industrial society creates advanced forms of oppression and control, which, in turn, lead to a situation where even the most intimate aspects of human life are encompassed by the totalitarian system, aiming to control both the present and the future functioning of individuals. Therefore, any definition of freedom today corresponds to a limited notion of freedom, which can be deceptively defined within the current system and integrates individuals into "one-dimensionality." Marcuse emphasizes this observation: "As a sign of technological development, in advanced industrial society, a comfortable, rational, smooth, democratic unfreedom prevails. Indeed, what could be more reasonable than to subject individuals to pressure in implementing certain tasks that are necessary, albeit regrettable, from the societal perspective?" (Marcuse, 1968, p. 27).

Marcuse declares one-dimensionality as a form of graded slavery in modern industrial societies (Swingewood, 1996, p.40). The passive definition of freedom in which individuals are left inactive transforms them into what Marcuse refers to as the objects of choice. In this way, an artificial selection process, both economic and political, is created for individuals, and the freedom defined from this point becomes the primary instrument of domination used against the individual. However, Marcuse (1968) emphasizes that this space for choice offered to individuals can never, in fact, become a determining factor in measuring human freedom. He states, "The coming to power of the masters through free choices does not abolish the masters or the slaves. Making a free choice between various goods and services does not equate to freedom, as long as these goods and services support societal pressures on a life filled with hardship and fear, thereby leading to alienation. At best, these will only determine the strength of the pressures..." (Marcuse, 1968, p. 35).

According to Marcuse, industrial society and the welfare state, which developed in line with the Enlightenment and rational thought, contain a definition of freedom that has deviated from its true value and importance. Marcuse highlights a contradiction at this

point: the things produced in industrial society are wasteful, in other words, artificial and created needs. The standard of living elevated through the distribution of goods now brings about a relatively optimistic picture, and through this illusion, the necessity of struggle becomes meaningless. Individuals are confronted with a compulsory work obligation to fulfill their created needs. "The rational and material foundation for the juxtaposition of opposites in one-dimensional political behavior is precisely this. On this foundation, excessive political forces within society are suppressed, and qualitative change can only occur through external factors. The rejection of the welfare state in the name of abstract concepts of freedom is not reasonable at all" (Marcuse; 1968, p.85). Therefore, the result that emerges is concrete freedom, a non-volitional system of governance, and individuals who can only exist for others within the practices of production and consumption. On the other hand, the welfare state builds peace and a homogeneous society through a continuous discourse of war and mobilization.

Therefore, the free individual cannot be thought of independently from the idea of a free societal transformation. In terms of contemporary debates within communication sociology, such as media ownership, property relations, political elites, the production-consumption relationships propagated through media, network technologies, and globalization, the critical evaluation of the societal and structural conditions discussed in this section offers an alternative perspective that can be considered when addressing research questions related to the field.

3.2. Critique of Consumerism and the Definition of Real-Artificial Needs

In One-Dimensional Man, Marcuse argues that the individuality created by consumer culture is a form of semi-individuality developed to maintain social control and reproduce exploitation. According to him, the illusion of free choice, which was discussed in the section on freedom, fosters totalitarian tendencies in areas such as consumer preferences and free media in advanced capitalist societies. The result is a society of control, characterized by repressive tolerance, despair, and constant manipulation (West, 1998, p.97). Another important point is the function of consumption in maintaining the continuity of the system. Marcuse suggests that a driven form of consumption, developed in line with the desires of production, triggers the need for more work, thereby reinforcing the integration of individuals into the system woven by both labor and the consumption of artificial needs (Atiker, 1998, p.62).

Marcuse (1998) also addresses the cultural implications of these dependency-producing practices on individuals. The irrational appearance of the domination created in industrial society directs individuals towards a sequence of absurd situations, where waste is defined as a need, and destruction is seen as creation. Furthermore, individuals are seen defining themselves through the same irrational circumstances that allow them to fulfill their existential and life goals through commodities, thereby constructing their identities (Marcuse, 1998, p. 37). A similar evaluation can be made in the context of consumption discourse and representation in communication sociology. Marcuse's critique of consumerism, spread through communication content, and his depiction of the one-dimensional man are summarized in the following paragraph: "These products impose a lifestyle and worldview on the consuming individual, condition them, and when they are adopted by a large number of people across different social classes, advertising values create a way of life. Thus, one-dimensional thinking and behaviors are shaped" (Marcuse, 1968, p.27). In a similar vein, the creation of an entertainment industry, where cultural or artistic products are prepared for mass consumption in line with capitalist accumulation and profit motives, results in the standardization and rationalization of cultural products.

Therefore, Marcuse's critique of consumerism highlights not only the economic and sexual conditions that are improved and glorified by a society endowed with a consumer culture but also the constant production of a "better" framed by abundance. He underscores that this situation leads to an increase in the power and violence of control

mechanisms that suppress art, science, free thought, forms of representation, and social opposition. The conclusion emerges from this is the necessity of defining the happy individual as one who has also surrendered to this system (Jameson, 1997, p. 104).

Marcuse extends his critique through a distinction between real and artificial needs. Real needs, as defined here, are socio-economic requirements that enable the individual to survive at a basic level, such as "affordable food, clothing, and shelter" (Marcuse, 1998, p. 18). Artificial needs, on the other hand, are those that go beyond real needs and, thus, are produced for the individual by external forces. These needs, by their very nature, serve to control the individual. Focusing on artificial needs, Marcuse argues: "These needs lead to suffering, injustice, misery, and aggression. Fulfilling them may make the individual quite happy, but if this happiness prevents the ability to diagnose or remedy the disease that afflicts the whole, it is happiness within unhappiness. These needs, determined by powers beyond the individual's control, have a societal content and function and are products of a society that requires oppression" (Marcuse, 1968, p. 32).

Marcuse's proposed solution to distinguishing between real and artificial needs is that, ultimately, the decision rests with the individual; however, it is crucial to consider whether these needs contribute to the individuals themselves or serve the functionality of the system. He states, "Yet, the question of which needs are real and which are artificial must be answered by the individuals themselves. But only when the individual is truly free to provide their answer..." (Marcuse, 1968, p. 33-34). According to this, basic physiological needs—those we can be sure do not carry ideological conditioning—are considered real needs. In contrast, the satisfaction of false needs, such as those that perpetuate overwork, aggression, misery, and injustice, may initially appear to serve a function for the individual, but they ultimately embody the "happiness within unhappiness." These needs are represented in consumption practices that align with the vacation, entertainment, and advertising industries, defined by "other people's" preferences. Marcuse notes, "The individual is surrounded by a mass society, continuously pushed toward such needs through deep manipulation. These needs have a content and function, determined by external forces beyond the individual's control. These needs will not change under any circumstances, and will remain as the manipulative products of a society that requires the oppression of people" (Marcuse, 1998, p. 17-18). When the eradication of poverty becomes a fundamental and universal benchmark, the clear distinction between these needs will also become more apparent.

3.3. Criticism of Technology and Mass Media

Another critisms of Herbert Marcuse on mass culture is directly related to the mass media. According to him, technical development itself is a factor in the formation of new forms of power and the reinforcement of the passive position of individuals. Undoubtedly, the role of language and discourse is also very important here. Through the mass media, discourses produced in art, politics, religion, or philosophy in line with certain commercial concerns become widespread, and a decisive external voice speaks the same language as the individual expectations and needs of the whole society. Marcuse emphasizes the destruction of real culture and the loss of values by distinguishing between real culture and mass culture (Marcuse, 1968:76). "If the worker and the boss watch the same television program and go to the same resorts if the makeup of the typist's daughter is as attractive and beautiful as the makeup of the boss's daughter, if the black man has a Cadillac car if they all read the same newspaper, these similarities do not show that classes have disappeared. It only shows how widely the needs and satisfactions that serve to maintain the established order are shared by the underlying population" (Marcuse, 1968, p.36).

Another emphasis Marcuse makes regarding technological control and mass communication relates to the legitimizing difference between traditional forms of coercive apparatuses and the new, technology-centered forms (Fuchs, 2011; Maboloc, 2017). According to him, today, compared to military and police forces, mass media have

arguably become more effective in performing the repressive function, but they also obscure resistance by presenting their activities as aligned with the interests of social groups. Marcuse's assessment here highlights the everyday dimension of this issue at the level of behavior. He states, "Indeed, in the most advanced regions of contemporary society, the transformation of social needs into individual needs is highly effective... One cannot tell whether mass communication tools are vehicles for news and entertainment or instruments for management and rule-making. Similarly, is the car a nuisance or a convenience? Is functional architecture a horror or a comfort? Is work being done for national defense or anonymous profits? Are private pleasures at stake, or are commercial and political interests aimed at increasing birth rates being served?" (Marcuse, 1968, p.36-37).

Thus, for Marcuse, the discussion of massification in communication tools refers to a holistic critique of multiple social conditions, including technology, real and artificial needs, class relations, and freedom. This interconnected approach to understanding the relationship between technology and freedom, which also includes the forms of communication, can be further explored through his work Eros and Civilization (1955), which serves as a foundational text in his critique of modern society. In this work, Marcuse addresses how technological development, the suppression of human instincts, and the creation of artificial needs all contribute to the alienation of individuals, while also limiting their freedom within the confines of an increasingly rationalized and repressive social order.

In this work, Marcuse examines Freud's metaphor of Eros within the context of a theoretical discussion about the relationship between nature and humans. Building on Adorno and Horkheimer's observation that humanity, having "triumphed over nature," has created a psychological division, Marcuse argues that this dilemma, where the natural world becomes directed, also takes on a political form. He contends that Eros, which represents the instinctual nature of humanity, results in both a primary level of repression to meet basic needs due to "civilization," and, alongside inequality and oppression, a "surplus repression" associated with a class-based society. According to Marcuse, technology holds the potential to end this surplus repression through the accumulation it creates. However, it is being used as a mechanism that strengthens repressive apparatuses (Marcuse, 1998, p.4). The division between the pleasure principle and the reality principle also represents a barrier to the integration of the libido with the social realm (Fuchs & Winseck, 2011, p.251). Reformation of the production system centered on real needs could enable a "libidinal liberation," defining the unity of human-nature and subject-object. However, "contemporary capitalism has produced the opposite of true libidinal liberation, an oppressive form that eliminates the exaltation of commodified sexuality, and has halted and frozen the rebellion of erotic drives at a deeper level" (Anderson, 2008, p. 128-130).

This political action has also manifested itself in culture and art. Marcuse, in his 1979 work The Aesthetic Dimension and An Essay on Love, Civilization, and Freedom, points to the aesthetic themes of the relationship between art and society, especially when redefining the space of true freedom (Anderson, 2008, p.122). The central conclusion of Eros and Civilization is shaped by all these observations. According to Marcuse, in capitalism, technology-centered accumulation has led to the proletariat losing its class consciousness, which allows it to integrate into the order under control (Marcuse, 1968, p.130). Today, concepts such as democracy and tolerance, which are perceived as expressions of freedom, correspond to a form of domination in which factions that cannot oppose the system elect their rulers.

3.4. On a Methodological Critique: Bridgeman's Problematique of the Practical Tendency

In One-Dimensional Man, Marcuse relates his critiques of the culture industry to the scientific and methodological dimensions, linking them to the dominant paradigms of the

time, namely behaviorism and pragmatist practices. In these critiques, Marcuse draws upon the problem raised by P.W. Bridgeman's observations. According to Bridgeman, the criterion for a concept to gain scientific validity is its practical applicability and measurable counterparts. Furthermore, he emphasizes that for this pragmatic perspective to gain universal validity, changes must be made in the way of thinking, and it must apply to all fields of science.

Marcuse criticizes this view on the grounds that it represents a kind of "one-dimensionality" in scientific and research methodologies. Given the research objects of communication sociology, it becomes evident that Marcuse's critique not only establishes a theoretical axis but also presents a discussion on methodology.

When the validity criterion of a concept is reduced to its applicability and measurable definability, concepts that may cause "discomfort" for certain interest groups can be easily "excluded." According to Marcuse, modern industrial societies today face this positivist scenario. The most evident consequence of this situation is that ideas must conform to dominant mainstream views, be restricted within the system, and those that are in disagreement are not considered "scientific." Every thought that exceeds the predefined boundaries of freedom is transformed into anarchistic propaganda. As a result, what emerges is the one-dimensional reality of the one-dimensional man.

At this point, efforts for liberation or resistance become impossible, and science, shaped as an unquestioned form of acceptance, becomes a political force that annihilates critical thought. Marcuse views the dogmas created by science in the modern world as no different from the dogmas of a new church that deceives the human mind with promises of a new heavenly kingdom (Marcuse, 1968, p. 43-44).

4. In Conclusion: Does Marcuse Have a Theory of Liberation?

Marcuse argues that an industrialized society cannot sustain itself through the political, economic, and cultural practices of traditional societies and will be forced to maintain its passive, instrumental position. Therefore, new forms of practice must be constructed; however, they should be detached from the oppressive meanings associated with them in contemporary contexts (Abromeit & Cobb, 2004; Vogel, 2004). For example, economic freedom should not be defined as achieving working conditions and living standards that prevent economic hardship through earning a good income, but rather as liberation from the domination created by the economy itself, the necessity of work, and the overall exploitative relationship. Similarly, political freedom must mean freedom from controlling policies imposed on the individual, and intellectual freedom should be understood as a mode of individual thinking that is free from mass control.

Marcuse emphasizes that the perception of these forms of freedom as impossible or utopian is, in fact, an illusion, related to the nature of the current conditions and the powerful successes of the forces that prevent them. As a proposed solution, he defines the most effective and sustained form of struggle for liberation as the creation of material and intellectual needs that would make it possible to use the outdated forms he critiques. "Liberation depends on the awareness of the consciousness of slavery. The furthest point to be reached is the elimination of artificial needs and the satisfaction that leads to oppression" (Marcuse, 1968, p.34). This is because the technological mechanisms of production and distribution always activate forms of pressure, both materially and culturally, to create the political and economic habitat necessary for their spread. In this form, contemporary industrial society is on the path to totalitarianism. Totalitarianism, according to Marcuse, is not merely a political order governed by terror; rather, it corresponds to a production and distribution system that, at times, reconciles with multi-party, press-supported, or systems in which various opposing groups unite to seek power (Marcuse, 1968, p.29-30). Marcuse's approach should also serve as a reference regarding structural conditions in contemporary studies on communication research or the social, economic and cultural interaction of mass media.

In his work Counter-Revolution and Rebellion (1972), Marcuse explains the relationship between liberal democracy and fascism through the concept of "counter-revolution," which he uses to defend the capitalist-centered development in the West. According to Marcuse, counter-revolution, unlike Nazi Germany, is characterized by the technical and economic power brought about by advanced capitalism in the U.S., and the potential for social change to veer toward fascism. He draws attention to this potential with the words, "We may be the first people to become fascist through democratic voting." Marcuse's argument in this book is critiqued by Slater, whose criticism aligns with that of Anderson. According to Slater, Marcuse argues that students and intellectuals do not have the responsibility of enlightening workers, and furthermore, that workers and intellectuals must resist for their own problems and goals (Slater, 1998, p.179). This interpretation is supported by Marcuse's statement: "Each of us is harmed, stupefied, overfed, and distorted by the contradictions of the established society. Since the solution to these contradictions can only be realized by the revolution itself, these contradictions should be seen as comprehended contradictions entering into the development of strategy by the movement" (Marcuse, 1968, p.48). In this process, the reproduction of historically existing communication systems in the form of a plausible persuasion technique that covers propaganda should be the subject of current research by rethinking concepts such as liberal democracy, class debate, and counter-revolution within the framework pointed out by Marcuse.

Marcuse emphasizes that the highest stage of capitalist development also corresponds to the lowest revolutionary potential. In Marxist theory, he evaluates the working class's revolutionary potential through three key observations: the ability to halt the production process, the fact that the working class forms the majority of the population, and the redefinition of labor practices in ways that are distinct from mere human existence. The most significant process for blue-collar workers in the U.S. centers on the first of these observations (Marcuse, 1991, p.38). This is because the problem it generates is the integration of the working class with capitalism. Here, the distinction between the productive and non-productive blurs, and the theory of the "one-dimensional man" reaffirms itself. "… In the advanced regions of the technological society, the organized worker maintains this negation in a less conspicuous manner; like other human elements in the work sector of society, he participates in the technological community formed by the masses of people who are managed" (Marcuse, 1968, p.56; Bounds, 2016). Giddens also supports this interpretation, stating: "The mechanization that led to the increasing integration of the workforce into the overall design of technology was still the focus of alienation. However, the gradual disappearance of harsh and overtly brutal working environments concealed the fact that man had become a slave to the machine.

Moreover, the machine itself became part of a much larger technological and organizational system that blurred the distinctions between manual and intellectual labor. Giddens (2000, p.228) emphasizes that Marcuse here points to a loss of identity for both workers and capitalists, and industrial managers. In his relatively pessimistic theory of resistance, Marcuse (1968, p.17) discusses how capitalist development has blurred the definitions and polarities of proletariat and bourgeoisie. He argues that the working class is integrated into the system through processes such as speculative activities, such as the stock market, which allow them to accumulate capital. This theory also assesses the acceptance and compromise between trade unions and the state. However, the gradual disappearance of harsh and frankly brutal working environments has obscured the fact that man has become a slave to the machine. Therefore, it is important to reconsider the debates on technology that are prominent in the field of contemporary communication studies from the perspective of one-dimensional man in a multidimensional world, as pointed out by Marcuse and the Frankfurt School in general.

The critique of "one-dimensionality," which is consistent with the author's approach, becomes apparent in all of these contexts. While this negative or pessimistic stance presents a competent theoretical discussion, it is criticized for potentially excluding a

discussion of will and agency that could be constructed through praxis, both in the broader context of social construction and reproduction processes and, more specifically, within the context of communication sociology. Other issues criticized by Marcuse within the arguments of the Frankfurt School are the apparent break between theory and practice, the loss of the effort towards class consciousness, and the move away from concerns with aesthetic and artistic elitism (Slater, 1998, p.266-267). When material production is defined as the fulfillment of all vital needs, and thus, when a minimum work hour is provided for everyone and the individual sheds the fictitious needs imposed by work practices, technological progress, which occurs in line with mechanical and standardized goals, could then be used for repressive purposes. Instead, it would pave the way for achieving peace and real freedom, where nature and society reach harmony. Only in this way can the individual free themselves from the necessity of existing as an economic entity within the market mechanism. This, of course, would be possible only if the means of production were organized to meet real needs. Should such a form of freedom come to fruition, Marcuse notes that he would regard it as "one of the greatest achievements in the history of civilization." "This is what industrial civilizations should aim for," and it represents "the end of technological logic"; however, the situation is developing in exactly the opposite direction (Marcuse, 1968, p.29).

In addition to the critiques expressed above, Herbert Marcuse offers a multidimensional and critical perspective that provides a holistic approach to concepts such as libidinal liberation, consumerism, language and discourse, entertainment culture, art and aesthetics, democracy and civilization, and definitions of freedom. His work highlights the necessity of reconsidering every "naturalized" concept as a constructed and oppressive. Communication processes, institutions, tools, actors, relationships, and content cannot be thought of independently from social phenomena, structural processes, or actions. By integrating this approach into communication studies, the perspective of communication sociology contributes to the development of a deeper insight. In this regard, Marcuse, as one of the representatives of the Frankfurt School, offers a theoretical and methodological framework that suggests re-examining the a-priori accepted concepts and assumptions specific to the field, encompassing both the interdisciplinary areas of the social sciences and the original theoretical and fieldwork contributions to communication science and communication sociology.

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