



RESEARCH PAPER

Notion of Repression in Modern Society: A Comparative Analysis of Sigmund Freud and Herbert Marcuse

Khadija Naz

Lecturer, Department of Philosophy, Lahore College for Women University Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan

PAPER INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Received: July 29, 2021</p> <p>Accepted: October 15, 2021</p> <p>Online: October 20, 2021</p> <p>Keywords: Modern Society, Performance Principle Repression, Surplus-Repression, The Pleasure Principle, The Reality Principle</p> <p>*Corresponding Author: khadijarizwan99 @gmail.com</p>	<p>One of the fundamental issues for modern civilized man is how to adapt a modern society without losing his individual status. Is it possible for an individual to adjust in a society where he/she loses his/her individuality and becomes part of collectivity? One point of view is that for society to flourish, man needs to be repressed. But to what extent is repression necessary for societies to rise and survive? This paper shall examine the above given questions from the standpoint of two thinkers who greatly influenced twentieth-century thought: Sigmund Freud and Herbert Marcuse. To undertake this task, first the term Repression shall be examined and then the notions of Freud and Marcuse will be discussed to determine the degree of repression required for the development of modern society.</p>

Introduction

Repression is generally defined as *a psychological process by which stressful thoughts, memories, or impulses that may result in anxiety are omitted from consciousness and left to work in the unconscious*. For example feelings are said to be repressed when in grief individual did not cry; and society is considered repressed when its customs, traditions and laws limit the freedom of its individuals. For example when women in certain societies are denied of certain basic rights like education, inheritance in property, voting and political participation.

It is also considered a tendency in which an individual did not expresses his/her negative feelings or unpleasant thoughts in order to hide his/her positive self-image from being exposed. A repressive person is socially a happy person who seldom complains about any distress, and apparently is a positive-minded person who appears to be in control of his life. But when such individual come across with someone else who discusses an emotional problem, he/she swiftly changes the subject to escape the situation of anxiety and grief, which indicates that he/she is not in control (Garsen, 2007).

Repression, refers to non-expression of undesirable sentiments, emotional embarrassment, rationality and self-control . Some of such terms are related to social and some to individual repression. Self-control, is a socially related repression in which an individual behaves maturely by controlling impulsive wants or desires. He /she deliberately hinders hostile conduct to be considerate for others. Rationality on the other hand is an example of personal repression in which an individual uses reason and logic to deal with different problems in the environment around him (Weinberger et al., 1979).

Repression is also regarded a defense mechanism and a consciousness-lowering process that happens when a person constantly drives away a discomforting or distressing thought, memory and desire in an attempt to keep his/her mind in a more pleasant and less anxious state. It is commonly considered the act of pushing upsetting memories, thoughts, or feelings out of one's mind for examples painful childhood memories or those relating to sexual or violent urges. The theory holds that although painful thoughts does not remain in the conscious mind, they definitely remain in the unconscious mind and frequently lead to psychological problems. It consists of different procedures that decreases some target material to approach consciousness. (Erdelyi, 2006). Those who are reluctant and are prevented to express their inner feelings are said to be emotionally repressed. Emotional repression sometimes leads to dangerous consequences in the cases when passionate emotions are suppressed extremely they are ultimately released in the form of fierce behaviors. It can also leads to anxiety and other obsessions, when the suppressed wish or thought appears to return into the conscious mind from the unconscious one.

In social perspective repression is linked with social movements. It is an act of controlling, calming or overpowering people, crowds and large masses through communication and other collaborative approaches. It includes influencing movement's leaders, controlling information cells and eliminating reform movements.(N., 2015. According to Stockdill, repression common in social movement is "*any actions taken by government authorities to obstruct mobilization, threaten activists, divide organizations, and physically assault, arrest, and/or kill movement participants*". Thus repression includes threats or actions taken by state "*authorities, or their supporters, against opponents or potential opponents to prevent, weaken, or eliminate their capacity to oppose policies*". (Stohl& Lopez, 1986).The effort to prevent masses from contributing in a joint action that intimidates the authorities, such as opposition, demonstration, insurgency, disappearances and imprisonment falls most commonly in the scope of state repression. Also rebels target of state agents, or state facing terrorist groups threats function as repressive entities. (Siegel, 2011).

Systematic and intense political repression is an important feature of states having dictatorship. There the secret police forces, army and paramilitary groups or death squads carried out the acts of repression which includes state terrorism, genocide and politicized crimes against humanity.(Serge, 1979). Not only in totalitarian regimes repressive activities have also been found in democratic states.(Donner, 1980),when the states create conditions to eliminate of the target of repression. For example discriminatory policies, violation of human rights through police brutality, illegal

imprisonment, execution, deportation, blackmail, extra judicial killing, forced disappearance and other penalties against political activists, protestors, and people in general.

Freud's Notion of Repression

Freud in his article "Repression," defines the term repression as "*the essence of repression lies simply in the function of rejecting and keeping something out of consciousness*" (Sigmund, 1957).

Repressed thought, feeling, or desire is that about whose existence the person is unaware. However, such hidden thoughts and feelings can influence people's behaviors and relationships. In order to analyze Freud's notion of repression it seems essential to consider his concept of human personality. According to him there are three key constituents of human personality i.e; "*the id, the ego, and the superego*" (Boag, 2006).

The Id is that primary element of personality which is present by birth and includes basic instinctive behavior. Basic impulses, desires, and needs that motivate human behavior are unconsciously stored by it and is the source of all psychic energy. It is controlled by *the pleasure principle*, which strives for direct satisfaction of desires and needs. *The Ego* mediates the demands of the id, and the superego. It stops an individual from acting on the basic impulses caused by the id and also tries to achieve a balance with moral values formed by the superego (Lunbeck, 2019). The ego functions through *the reality principle*, which attempts to gratify the id's cravings socially acceptable means by evaluating the consequences of an action before acting or abandoning it. *The Superego* is the moral and ideal aspect of personality which includes norms and principles that an individual attain from his/her family, society and culture. It guides an individual in making decisions and tries to polish and civilize his/her behavior through suppressing intolerable needs of the id and driving the ego to act upon ideal standards rather than realistic principles.

The above mentioned aspects of personality are not three distinct entities with clearly defined limits but are dynamic and always interact to influence an individual's overall personality. The unwanted impulses caused by the Id is controlled by the superego through imposing moral sense on the individual's conduct. Due to demands of the superego elementary impulses of the id are often repressed, but the ego deals with these impulses as well as the conflicts between the demands of reality and moralistic pressure from the superego.

Human behavior, according to Freud is the result of continuous and unique association of contradictory psychological forces that function at three different levels of mind i.e.; preconscious, conscious, and unconscious (Boag, 2006). The preconscious mind comprises of those feelings, thoughts memories and desires that could possibly be conveyed to the conscious mind. It also controls the information that enters into conscious mind. At the conscious level mind functions rationally and an individual is aware of his/her thoughts, feelings, desires and memories. The unconscious level contains undesirable and

unpleasant material such as feelings of pain, anxiety and conflict. It also includes repressed feelings, desires and hidden memories. Although at this level an individual is unaware of underlying influences which effect his/her behavior but it has a dominant impact on personality and could possibly lead to psychological agony (Timary et al., 2011).

Freud's attempts to discover the unacceptable hidden thoughts of his patients led him to conclude that *"there was some force that prevented them from becoming conscious and compelled them to remain unconscious"* (Freud, 1995). This force plays an important role in the human psyche and is the *"corner stone on which the whole structure of psychoanalysis rests."* (Freud & Jones, 1967). According to Freud, *"the process of repression lies, not in putting an end to, in annihilating, the idea which represents an instinct, but in preventing it from becoming conscious."* (Freud & Rieff, 2008). He has mentioned two phases of repression: *Primal repression* and *Repression Proper*.

The primal repression occurs when instinctive impulses, feelings and desires are not allowed to enter into the conscious mind. This process happens completely unconsciously, however, sometimes such impulses and desires enter into conscious mind in hidden forms. It results in the formation of a nucleus of unconscious ideas and is an innately determined barrier which keeps large part of the Id permanently unconscious. The second phase that is repression proper occurs when an individual becomes aware of the repressed matter but then intentionally sent back to the unconscious due to the threat of the super ego (Boag, 2006). It targets either mental derivatives of the primary repressed material or those associated with it.

In *the Ego and the Id*, Freud further elucidated the process of repression and claimed that, *"the ego seeks to bring the influence of the external world to bear upon the id and its tendencies, and endeavors to substitute the reality principle for the pleasure principle which reigns unrestricted in the id"* (Freud, 1926).

The instinctual demands of id are either satisfied by the Ego or repressed by it due to the undesired consequences which may result from its satisfaction. Despite the individual's efforts to repress certain impulses, the process of repression, Freud claimed does not abolish the instinctive demands. According to him, *"the repressed exercises a continuous pressure in the direction of the conscious, so that this pressure must be balanced by an unceasing counter-pressure."* (Boag, 2006). He further said that the repressed can appear again when *"recent events produce impressions or experiences which are so much like the repressed material that they have the power to awaken it."* (Freud & Jones, 1967).

Freud further elucidated the notion of repression in the context of the evolutionary development of human civilization and said that human beings in order to survive and fulfil his basic needs began to live in hordes and established a sort of social contract. According to him, *"communal life becomes possible only when a majority comes together that is stronger than any individual and presents a unified front against every individual."* (Freud et al., 2010). He further claimed that the process of social organization was, *"accompanied by renunciation of instinctual gratification; recognition of mutual obligations; institutions declared sacred, which could not be broken—in short, the beginnings of morality and*

law."(Capuzzi & Stauffer, 2016). Human civilization therefore is founded upon the repression of the basic instincts of the individuals.

Human life is a continuous and ardent tussle between the *Eros* or life Instinct and *Thanatos* or the Death Instinct. *Eros* or the life instincts deals with the survival and reproduction of human species. It is indispensable for conservation as well as the continuation of the lives of human species.(Capuzzi & Stauffer, 2016). It includes basic instincts such as thirst, hunger, attainment of pleasure and avoidance of pain. The energy which is created by the discharge of such drives is called *libido*. Freud strongly emphasized that biologically *Eros* is not social but is fierce and its anarchic power frequently seeks outlets for its own pleasure.(Garland , 2006). Thus when *Eros*, is left untamed and not controlled by standards and rules of the culture it is socially dangerous. *Thanatos* or death instinct was at first mentioned by Freud in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, in which he suggested that "*the goal of all life is death.*" It is the power that makes human beings to struggle for an inorganic state. It does not appear in isolation and expresses itself through aggressive behaviors as anger, repetition compulsion, and self-destructiveness.(Segal, 1988).Freud believed that people usually channel their death instincts outwards(Jones-Smith, 2016).

As for Freud communal life was not organic or instinctive in humans and they opted for this life style not intentionally but out of necessity. Thus in the course of the development of civilization the relationship between humans and civilization become uncomfortable as humans had to transform their basic nature in order to accommodate the demands of civilized society. Freud claimed that as members of the civilized society humans had to control, their natural instincts but only partially as even today, humans exercise their powerful instincts such as love and aggressiveness which govern their lives and dictate their behaviours.(Freud et al., 2010).Thus the growth of human civilization, is a result of conflict between ego and id; pleasure principle and reality principle; unconscious and conscious mind; as it is place of conflict where an individual's psyche is denounced for the sake of cultural community (Kalik &Delceva, 1970).

While exploring the clash between the desire for individuality and society's demands Freud assumed that the tension between individual and society is the result of individual's quest for instinctive freedom and civilization's opposing demand for repression of instincts. Desires which are determined by the pleasure principle are accompanied by the feelings of satisfaction on their fulfilment. Many basic human instincts for example, the desire to kill and the limitless yearning for sexual satisfaction are dangerous to the well-being of a society. To maintain calm and order certain laws are created by society that prohibit acts like killing, rape, and adultery etc. Violation of such laws is accompanied by severe punishments which restricted individual's prospects of happiness. This process is inherent characteristics of civilization which result in the endless feelings of discontent among its citizens. (Freud & Gay, 1999).

Freud holds civilization responsible for individual's misery. As in it the authority of individual is replaced by that of the community and the possibilities of individual's

satisfaction are restricted for the sake of collective interests of law and order. The individuals organized themselves into civilized society to avoid suffering but it inflicts back on them. The resentment to civilization increased when individuals decided that avoiding society's restrictions would lead to greater pleasure. Because of this desire of aggression civilization is in continuous threat of disintegration. To master individual's desire for aggression it installs within the individual a sort of regulatory agency, that is the super-ego which regulates both thoughts and actions of an individual. Disobedience of the commands of super-ego lead to the feeling of internal guilt which the civilization reinforced to regulate the relationship of its individual. But in this process it became more repressive and was difficult for the individuals to tolerate. Freud has regarded this sense of guilt as "*most important problem in the development of civilization,*" as it has taken a huge toll on the happiness of individuals. "*Civilization has controlled the aggressiveness of the individual "by weakening him, disarming him and setting up an internal authority to watch over him, like a garrison in a conquered town."*(Freud et al., 2010). Guilt therefore is, "*the instrument which culture uses, against aggressiveness.*"(Ricoeur & Savage, 1979). By constantly generating the sense of guilt, civilization assures that individuals are willingly ignoring instinctive satisfaction by repressing their instinctive drives, which, in turn is causing the "discontents" of civilization.

As repression is that continuous process which prevents individuals to satisfy their instinctive urges for the sake of attaining a civilized life, Freud suggested that compromised satisfaction of instinctive drives can rescue individuals to survive in civilized life. He called it the process of sublimation. In *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud argued that sublimation helps individuals to overcome the unavoidable pain and anxiety which they experience in a repressive society. This technique enables individuals to "*displace the aims of the drives in such a way that they cannot be frustrated by the external world.*"(Freud et al., 2010). Sublimation thus enables individual to find out more civilized ways of instinctive gratification. "*Sublimation of the drives,*" wrote Freud, "*is a particularly striking feature of cultural development, which makes it possible for the higher mental activities—scientific, artistic and ideological—to play such a significant role in civilized life*"(Freud et al., 2010).

Marcuse's Notion of Repression

Herbert Marcuse, has discussed the concept of repression in his work *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*. In this work he has discussed the problems faced by modern industrial societies, and has critically analyzed Freud's concept of repression faced by modern civilized man. According to him, "*the notion that a non-repressive civilization is impossible is a cornerstone of Freudian theory.*"(Marcuse, 1974). He further added that the picture of civilization's evolution (as the evolution of repression presented by Freud) is very bleak as it does not show any possibility of emancipation from the repression which is inherently present in civilization.

As it has already discussed above that according to Freud individual existence is regulated by two principles that is the pleasure principle related to the instinctive sphere of inborn, organic and unconscious drives (id) and the reality principle related to the

sphere of consciousness (ego). When animal instincts are transformed into human instincts, pleasure principle is transformed into reality principle. As external world is hostile towards pleasure principle and does not follow its commands, the pleasure principle reverts and turns repressed. The pleasure principle which requires unlimited and instant pleasure, is prevented by the reality principle to achieve its goal. Thus the domination of the reality principle over the pleasure principle compels the civilization to progress under repression. Marcuse against the Freud argued that repression of the fundamental instincts is not a necessary condition of civilized life. Human beings in order to live in community need some degree of repression because if in a society individuals live according to the demands of the pleasure principle, they will infringe the freedom of others. Hence, freedom and happiness must be mutually limited for maintaining calm and order in communal life.

Contrary to Freud's claim that human instincts are biological and fixed, Marcuse held that they are social and historical also. Society plays an important role in shaping the instincts of individuals. For him, "*the vicissitudes of the instincts are the vicissitudes of the mental apparatus in civilization* (Farr, 2019). *The animal drive become human instincts under the influence of the external reality.*" Human instincts are not static but modify when the society and its mechanism of repression changes and this generates the possibilities of the elimination of repression (Farr, 2019).

In order to distinguish the biological variations of the instincts from that of the social, Marcuse introduced two new term: *Basic repression* and *Surplus repression*. First one denotes the repression or modification of the instincts which are essential "*for the perpetuation of the human race in civilization.*"(Marcuse,1974). The second one, denotes "*the restrictions necessitated by social domination.*" The surplus repression shapes the instincts according to the existing "performance principle" which is "*the prevailing form of the reality principle*". Necessary repression originates, within the superego and when conflict occurs between the libidinal instincts of id and conscience of super-ego, ego mediates, "*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*" (Jauhiainen, 1995).

Surplus repression is the "*restriction on human behaviour necessitated by social domination.*" It results in societies where the resources are distributed unequally and against the needs of individuals. The difference in distribution of resources results due to the interests of few who are in domination and use this domination to sustain and enhance their privileged status. As domination needs control over human behaviour, it "*introduces additional controls on human behaviour over and above those indispensable for civilized human association*" (Marcuse, 1974). This includes "*the modifications and deflections of instinctual energy necessitated by the perpetuation of the monogamic-patriarchal family, or by a hierarchical division of labor, or by public control over an individual's private existence*" Thus for Marcuse instead of biological repression it is surplus repression which has increased the troubles of modern civilized society. It is social standard of hierarchical domination, through which advanced capitalist societies function. Surplus repression

shapes the instincts in accordance with the present “*performance principle*” which is “*the prevailing form of the reality principle*” (Farr, 2019).

According to Marcuse, *the performance principle*, is a way of realizing how the progress of a repressive civilized society achieves more objectives than each individual’s *reality principle* jointly would. It supports the existence of a civilized society where the fulfilment of immediate pleasure is most often repressed by the thought of economic growth and infrastructure. As for Marcuse social relations are based on domination the reality principle develops social interaction among individuals whereas the performance principle develops a large scale capitalist civilization. It is basically connected to the economic system of growth and in Marcuse words, “*of an acquisitive and antagonistic society in the process of constant expansion*”(Fujii, 1995). Thus in performance society the instinctual pleasure is replaced by financial security but at the cost of individual’s freedom to pursue pleasure outside the norms and paradigms of their civilized society (Jauhainen, 1995). The performance principle presumes extensive growth during which domination has been gradually rationalized and control over social labour reproduces large scale society with improved conditions.

Marcuse emphasized that real freedom lies in individual’s autonomy or self-determination and every action that obstructs his/her autonomy is repressive. He furthered his argument by claiming that no institution has right to determine the needs of the individuals as this would bound the individuals to choose certain goods and reject others, and thus spread a false economic consciousness. Similarly, no establishment has the right to determine the political opinions as this would also bound the individual to favor the existing political system over others, and thus publicize a false political consciousness. In both cases, self-determination would be obstructed and individuals would be repressed. From this it follows that the individuals, in order to be free, must live as they like and also in the society of their choice (Marcuse, 1974), But in case of alteration in their likes the society will have to go through modification, or in other words, they will have to live in what Marcuse calls a “*polymorphous society*.”

Analytical comparison of Freud and Marcuse

It is imperative for this study to critically analyze the core initiatives taken by Freud and Marcuse with regard to repression as prerequisite for the civilized life. Although there are differences with regard to the amount of repression and overcoming it they both agree on the requisition of repression in the development of civilization. According to Freud as communal life was not in human nature, human had to adjust with the new environment during the course of growth and development of societies. That is why, the relationship between individual and society became complicated because individual had to transform his/her nature in order to accommodate in a society. Such transformation, however, was neither voluntary nor intentionally but rather accidentally out of necessity. This means that humans were not created with an organic desire for civilization and by becoming part of it, they had to control, their natural instincts. Freud further added that the life of primitive man was much similar to that of other animal species and was governed by powerful inborn

biological impulses such as love and hostility. These instincts control and dictate his behavior (Fujii, 1995).

When societal norms were established individual's basic instincts were incompatible with them as particular types of conduct were expected. For instance, primitive man had no concept of commitment to one specific partner and was thus polygamous, civilization imposed restrictions so that man would fit into society. In the process of creating and sustaining civilization, individuals had to gradually suppress their primordial impulses which guided them in primitive times. At this moment repression of biological instincts became a requirement, otherwise these powerful instincts would have prevented the growth and development of civilized life (Freud et al., 2010). It is here the reality principle (sphere of consciousness, i.e., *ego*) started to dominate the pleasure principle (unconscious sphere of innate organic instincts, i.e., *id*).

Although repression seems necessary for growth and development of civilization, it must not be employed in a manner that simply destroys man's libido, as this instinctual energy is so powerful and deeply rooted in human essence that instead of eradicating it had to be diverted in other direction. Freud holds that through the process of sublimation, man's libidinal energy is transformed into energy that can be used favorably for civilization and for the good of society. Necessity, called *Ananke* by Freud, leads man to carry out work in order to satisfy his needs, since man's fundamental instincts always yearn for pleasure without sacrifice, they must be controlled so that he can pursue his objectives (Farr, 2019).

In principle, Marcuse seems to agree with Freud, that civilisation needs repression of our biological instincts but to certain extent (Marcuse, 2006). Our mind under the impact of *reality principle* helps us to consider possible hindrances and consequences before we pursue or obtain the satisfaction of *pleasure principle*. This makes repression a prerequisite for civilisation. Without repression man would constantly seek pleasure and civilisation would be under serious threat (Farr, 2019). Marcuse distinguished biological and social variations of instincts by introducing two new terms: *basic repression* and *surplus repression*. The first one refers to the modification of instincts necessary, "for the perpetuation of the human race in civilization". The second refers to "the restrictions necessitated by social domination" (Marcuse, 2006). The surplus repression modifies the instincts according to the present "*performance principle*", that is "*the prevailing form of the reality principle*". That is to say, in modern societies repression goes beyond the minimal fundamental repression needed. Here, Marcuse's point of view is clearly contrary to the Freud as it would be difficult to identify the existence of surplus-repression from a Freudian point of view, fundamentally because its roots are found in the primordial concept of *Ananke*.

Unlike Freud, who sees the world as originally too scarce for us to be able to satisfy our needs without work, Marcuse holds that such scarcity did not gain prominence naturally or accidentally, but rather intentionally (Fujii, 1995). Throughout the history of civilisation, scarcity has been organised consciously by minority with the intent to control the majority. The presence of a planned scarcity which was used as a means of domination,

made work necessary for survival (Marcuse, 2006). Thus during the progress of civilization the basic amount of work necessary for the maintenance of life was transformed into surplus work. In affluent societies workers had no power to determine their wages and the amount of work which was required to fulfil their needs. The capitalist in order to maximize the profit demanded surplus work which was more than the work needed for the satisfaction of worker's needs (Farr, 2019). Thus for Marcuse, the progress of a repressive civilization was determined by increasing profit and working performance instead of seeking pleasure. In a civilized society the quest for pleasure is mostly repressed for the sake of economic progress and infrastructure (Marcuse, 2006).

Freud perceived large-scale repression as justified and essential (Fujii, 1995). He said that although the new civilized conditions which individuals adapted, their primary instincts remained as strong as before. Therefore, individual had to fight with two incompatible forces: on the one hand with his powerful primordial instincts, and on the other with forces necessary for civilization. The solution of this problem was possible only through transforming the instinctual energy into an energy that was compatible and useful for civilization.

The large-scale repression, for Marcuse, derives from the reality principle. In advanced capitalism the *reality principle* becomes *performance principle*. This principle governs modern civilization and establishes its fundamental norms and values which are strongly rooted in the idea of competitive economic performance (Marcuse, 2006). It manifests itself in the form of satisfaction through labor that is why it has become common knowledge that one must work if he or she is to pursue a successful and happy life. However, to the majority of people, Marcuse argues, such fulfillment remains a distant reality as their means of production are not controlled by them (Fujii, 1995). They are ignorant of the independent force that is the labor establishment which actually governs their labor, which in turn is controlled by a small group of individuals and to which the masses must submit themselves in order to survive. Moreover, by submitting themselves and working under such system, individuals do not become any happier, his satisfactions do not become any closer to realization. Instead, the focus of man's life becomes that of carrying out his function within this system rather than living his life itself. As Marcuse puts it: "*while they work, they do not fulfil their own needs and faculties but work in alienation*" (Marcuse, 2006).

Such living conditions develop two major concerns for an individual, which are both related: First, because he constantly accepts such work in which he does not find any satisfaction which his pleasure principle demands. Secondly, since in order to perform alienated labor the individual self-imposes certain limits on satisfying his pleasure drives. As a result individual has to face dual suppression as the labor which he performs does not satisfy him and also his pleasure drives does not give him satisfaction because that will affect his labor. Although an excessively strong repression is overpowering the majority of the individuals in our modern civilization, but instead of necessary Marcuse regards it surplus-repression (Fujii, 1995).

Freud clearly ignores the institutional repression and more strictly concerns the biological and psychological repression, while Marcuse expands it by identifying societal repression which creates extra repression in addition to the necessary biological one. Contrary to the Freudian position Marcuse argues that it is one thing to have biological repression without which civilization would not exist, but it is an entirely different thing to assume that such biological repression would necessarily require institutional repression.

Freud claims that along with the Eros-related instincts such as love, sex, pleasure, modern man has inherited aggressive instincts from primitive man, and civilization has played a central role in the suppression of such aggressive drives. As he puts it: "*they are, on the contrary, creatures among whose instinctual endowments is to be reckoned a powerful share of aggressiveness*" (Freud, 1963). Individual's aggressiveness appears repressed in a process where the civilization uses individual's rational abilities to internalize the hostile urges and return them to where they originated. This generates an inner conflict which develops feeling of guilt, hence both external and internal means are responsible for repressing individual's aggressiveness. Civilization thus has become the master of individuals' instincts through the repression of their most powerful drives Life and Death (Fujii, 1995).

This conformism and pessimism in Freud's position is clearly different from that of Marcuse's views, which challenge society's repression and are optimistic about the overcoming of a surplus-repression dominated civilization. It is possible that historical factors may have, partly, influenced their respective positions. In *Civilization and its Discontents*, which was written just after the First World War, Freud mentions that barbarities committed throughout history proves that man is basically destructive, citing the First World War as the most recent example. In line with this largely destructive history, Freud sees strong repression crucial to holding men together and preventing them from mutual destruction, as common interests alone would not be sufficient. However, Freud has highlighted aggressiveness and sexual drives so much as if most of the individual's instincts were limited to these two forces. By doing so, Freud confines human essence to the realm of sex and destruction and treats every single human being as belonging to one category, as if humans could be entirely explained, therefore using a great deal of generalization in his analysis. Humans simply cannot be explained mechanically as if they were machines or computers (Fujii, 1995)

Marcuse, in turn, regards men as fundamentally capable of coexisting and sees the capitalist system as the primary cause of concern rather than men's destructive nature. In Marcuse's view, it is capitalism that must be tackled instead of human instincts, for he believes that a civilization free from social repression would be both possible and better (Marcuse, 1974). A society in which only minimal repression exists and man can undertake a work that is truly fulfilling to him would be a society without the institutional domination where workers are merely '*instruments of production*'.

Conclusion

After analyzing arguments of Freud and Marcuse about the necessity of repression in the development of civilization, it seems the only point of similarity between them is that they both agree on the fact that man has to sacrifice his primordial instincts for the sake of civilization. A sense of mutual dependence developed between the two when man compromised through repressing primal instincts and find a way to balance his individuality with the wider collectively. Whereas we have seen that Freud takes repression as an absolute essential factor in the rise and continuity of civilization, while Marcuse on the other hand identifies a civilization that exercises repression beyond that which it necessitates, beyond that which humans need.

Finally, it seems that the main point of difference between Freud and Marcuse's positions is that Freud treats repression as an absolute condition for civilization while Marcuse sees repression only as a social condition of certain periods in history, that is, challengeable and changeable. It may thus be concluded that the psychoanalytical approach by Freud and the Freudo-Marxist approach by Marcuse ultimately see different degrees of repression being required for civilization to exist: repression is essential and required to a great degree, and repression is required to a certain degree but not to the extent current civilization exercises, respectively.

References

- Capuzzi, D., & Stauffer, M. D. (2016). *Theories and interventions - american counseling association*. <https://www.counseling.org/Publications/FrontMatter/78118-FM.PDF>.
- Donner, F. J. (1980). *The age of surveillance: The aims and methods of America's political intelligence system*. Alfred A. Knopf.
- Erdelyi, M. H. (2006). The unified theory of repression. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 29(5), 499–511
- Farr, A. (2019, April 10). *Herbert Marcuse*. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/marcuse/>.
- Freud, S. (1926). *The Ego and the Id*. Hogarth Press.
- Freud, S. (1995). *Five lectures on psycho-analysis*. Penguin Books.
- Freud, S., & Gay, P. (1999). *The freud reader*. Norton.
- Freud, S., & JONES, K. (1967). *Moses and monotheism*. Vintage Books.
- Freud, S., & Rieff, P. (2008). *General psychological theory: Papers on metapsychology*. Touchstone.
- Freud, S., Hitchens, C., & Strachey, J. (2010). *Civilization and its Discontents*. W. W. Norton.
- Frued, S. (1963). *" International encyclopedia of the social sciences. . encyclopedia.com*.
- Fujii, W. Z. (1995). *Freud, Marcuse and repression as a requirement for civilisation*. Academia.edu.
- Garland , C. (2006). *The Freudian Moment: Reflections on Herbert Marcuse*. Untitled document. <https://pages.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/Illumina%20Folder/garland%5Bmarcuse.htm>.
- Garssen, B. (2007). Repression: Finding our way in the maze of concepts. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 30(6), 471–481. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10865-007-9122-7>
- Jauhiainen, I. (1995). *The performance principle as a tool to Desublimat the drives in a repressive civilization*. Academia.edu. https://www.academia.edu/35900495/The_Performance_Principle_as_a_Tool_to_Desublimat_the_Drives_in_a_Repressive_Civilization.
- Jones-Smith, E. (2016). *Theories of counseling and psychotherapy: An integrative approach*. SAGE.

- Kalik, M., & Delceva, G. (1970, January 1). [PDF] *Marcuse 's critique of Freud 's theory of civilization and society: Semantic scholar.* [https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Marcuse-%E2%80%99-s-critique-of-Freud-%E2%80%99-s-Theory-of-and-Kalik-Delceva/1bf4afc1ae7966b29508a9d071894cedba10cecc.
- Lunbeck, E. (2019, October 7). *Virtual roundtable on "The ego and the id"*. Public Books. <https://www.publicbooks.org/virtual-roundtable-on-the-ego-and-the-id/>.
- Marcuse, H. (1974). *Eros and civilization: A philosophical inquiry into freud with a new preface by the author.* Beacon Press.
- Marcuse, H. (2006). *Eros and civilization: A philosophical inquiry into Freud.* Routledge.
- N., P. M. S. (2015, June 25). *What is social repression? Definition of Social Repression (psychology dictionary).* Psychology Dictionary. <https://psychologydictionary.org/social-repression/>.
- Ricoeur, P., & Savage, D. (1979). *Freud and philosophy: An essay on interpretation.* Yale University Press.
- Segal, H. (1988). *Introduction to the work of Melanie Klein.* Karnac Books.
- Serge, V. (1979). *What everyone should know about repression.* New Park Publications.
- Siegel, D. A. (2011). When Does Repression Work? Collective Action in Social Networks. *The Journal of Politics*, 73(4).
- Sigmund, F. (1957). *The standard edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, volume Xiv (1914-1916): On the history of the psycho-analytic movement, papers on metapsychology and other works.* Unspecified.
- Stohl, M., & Lopez, G. A. (1986). *Government violence and repression: An agenda for Reserch.* Greenwood Press.
- Timary, P. D., Heenen-Wolff, S., & Philippot, P. (2011). The question of "representation" in the psychoanalytical and cognitive-behavioral approaches. some theoretical aspects and therapy considerations. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2.
- Weinberger, D. A., Schwartz,, G. E., & Davidson, R. J. (1979). Low-anxious, high-anxious, and repressive coping styles: psychometric patterns and behavioral and physiological responses to stress. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology.*, 88(4), 369–380.