**Chapter I**

**INTRODUCTION**

**The web of domination**

**has become the web of Reason itself,**

**and this society is fatally entangled in it.**

**-Herbert Marcuse-**

* 1. **Background of the Study**

Today, without doubt, technology has played a big role in our society. They are everywhere. Marcuse describes technology “as a mode of production, as the totality of instruments, devices and contrivances which characterize the machine age.”[[1]](#footnote-2) Technology is thus created to help human individuals ease their work. It is a great attempt to explore into the issue of considering technology as a primal culprit in the society wherein the individual and the masses, are being totally controlled by technology. One of the integral part and factor of technology is human individuals.

“Each individual is determining factor of the development of technology.”[[2]](#footnote-3) Technology is an ever progressive development per se. It is hard to live or imagine a life that doesn’t involve at least some tools, machines and gadgets. We need them in order to live. We cannot doubt that the development of technology would associate in the building of bombs and other sophisticated instrument of death.

“Herbert Marcuse worked for various agencies of the United States government, including World War II intelligence agencies and the state department.”[[3]](#footnote-4) Marcuse was one of the most important living theorists at that time. “He interprets Hegel and Marxian as producers of ontology of society and history, but uses their method and ideas for developing a critical theory of society.”[[4]](#footnote-5) Upon studying the Marxists he came up in his mind the development of technology that would affect the society. Marcuse’s critique on technology as a “system of domination and he presents National Socialism as an example in which technology and a rationalized society can serve as instruments of totalitarian domination.”[[5]](#footnote-6)

“The efficiency and power of Technological society overwhelmed the individual, who gradually lost the earlier critical rationality.”[[6]](#footnote-7) Indeed, if every one of us has been dominated by the use of technology we have the possibilities to experience repression if we reverse the purpose of technology. This would end up on the abolition of labor which could possibly cause the collapsed of civilized industrialization which are permanently based on the labor of humanity. The master- slave relationship would be abolished because of the progress of machineries that would help to put an end to the problem of scarcity. In Asia, Japan has build up robotic institutions for them to make robots which can perform tasks and interact in its environment without the aid of human interaction.

**1.2 Statement of the Problem**

This research paper, titled, Herbert Marcuse’s Ideology of Technological Society is responding primarily to the question: How does Technology affect the society? “Philosophy is, thus, to supply the norms for social criticism and the ideal of liberation which would guide social change and individual self transformation.”[[7]](#footnote-8) It aims to expose and discuss the Ideology of Herbert Marcuse on technological society.

The researcher presents the following sub- problems that will guide the overall discussion.

1. What are the Problems of Technological Society?

2. Why is Herbert Marcuse’s Ideology of technological Society significant today?

3. How does technology lead to oppression and domination?

**1.3 Significance of the Problem**

This study serves as a way not only for the researcher but also for the readers to understand Marcuse’s Philosophy of Technology. Writing such a research paper, indeed, entails a lot of effort to be exerted most especially by the researcher himself. Nevertheless, the researcher does not expect to change the world’s perspective when it comes to technology. Hence, the researcher sees the significance of this philosophical paper fundamentally on its contribution to the social philosophy and its contribution to the academic institution as a whole.

Our aim is to expose Technological society as taught and expounded by Marcuse. To do this, we will be guided by the sub- problems stated above.

**1.4 Scope and Limitation**

Marcuse has contributions in many areas of philosophy. He writes on a wide range of philosophical topics. In particular, this paper likes to expose Marcuse’s Ideology of Technological Society. Along with this, the study chiefly relies on Marcuse’s own philosophical works, most specially One- Dimensionality, which primarily give the researcher significant information in making this thesis possible. In pursuing this study, it is best to show that “advanced industrial society is building a system of total administration: the centrifugal forces are integrated into the system through the medium of technology, which appears as rationality.”[[8]](#footnote-9) If there are not queries that are not related to the stated problem, the researcher will not discuss them.

**1.5 Methodology**

The researcher employs the expository method, using Marcuse’s Towards a Critical Theory of Society and Technology, War and Fascism as primary sources. The researcher utilizes secondary sources such as books and journals that provide commentaries and critique the ideas of Marcuse. It is necessary for the researcher to clarify the terms used by Marcuse in order to give a clear discussion about the topic.

Moreover, the researcher uses primary and secondary sources in order to have a better understanding of the topic. The sources serve to guide the researcher in Marcuse’s use of these terms in his philosophy; these also help him to understand Marcuse’s thought.

1. Herbert Marcuse, *Technology, War, and Fascism*, ed. Douglas Kellner (London: Routledge, 1998), 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Ibid., 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Marcuse, *Towards a Critical Theory of Society*, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Ibid., 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Marcuse, *Technology, War, and Fascism*, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Ibid., 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Herbert Marcuse, *One- Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advance Industrial Society* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991), xv. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Marcuse, *Towards a Critical Theory of Society*, 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)