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INTELLECTUAL MIGRATION OF THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL TO AMERICA AND THE RISE OF NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS (1930-1960)

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of the National Socialist regime's rise to power on the community of social science scholars at the University of Frankfurt and its broader implications for the development of modern social thought. The increasing dominance of anti-Semitic and racial ideology in pre-World War II Germany forced many Frankfurt intellectuals to flee for safety, leading to the dispersion of key scholars to various countries, including the United States. The research aims to explain how this displacement contributed to an epistemological shift from the Frankfurt School to the Chicago School, which later influenced the emergence of contemporary New Social Movements. Employing historical methods consisting of heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiographical synthesis, the study analyzes the intellectual networks of scholars in Germany and the United States, the trajectory of the Institute for Social Research, and its relocation from Frankfurt to Chicago. The findings show that the transformation of German critical theory in the United States produced new frameworks that combined postmodern and Marxian perspectives, shaping movements such as anti-war activism, Black civil rights, feminism, and environmentalism. The study contributes to historical scholarship by highlighting how intellectual migration reshaped critical theory and laid the groundwork for modern sociopolitical movements.

Keywords: American Intellectuals, European Intellectuals, Chicago School, Frankfurt School.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji dampak bangkitnya rezim Nasional-Sosialis di Jerman terhadap komunitas ilmuwan sosial di Universitas Frankfurt serta implikasinya bagi perkembangan pemikiran sosial modern. Dominasi ideologi rasial dan anti-Semit pada periode menjelang Perang Dunia II memaksa banyak intelektual Frankfurt meninggalkan Jerman demi keamanan, sehingga mendorong diaspora akademik ke berbagai negara, termasuk Amerika Serikat. Penelitian ini bertujuan menjelaskan bagaimana perpindahan paksa tersebut memengaruhi pergeseran epistemologis dari Frankfurt School menuju Chicago School yang kemudian berkontribusi pada lahirnya New Social Movements. Metode sejarah diterapkan melalui tahapan heuristik, kritik sumber, interpretasi, dan penulisan historiografis untuk menelaah jejaring intelektual Jerman–Amerika, perkembangan Institute for Social Research, serta proses relokasinya dari Frankfurt ke Chicago. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa transformasi teori kritis Jerman di Amerika Serikat menghasilkan kerangka baru yang memadukan perspektif pascamodern dan Marxis, sehingga memengaruhi munculnya gerakan anti-perang, gerakan hak-hak sipil kulit hitam, gerakan feminis, dan gerakan lingkungan. Studi ini memberikan kontribusi terhadap kajian sejarah intelektual dengan menunjukkan bagaimana migrasi ilmuwan berperan dalam membentuk kembali teori kritis dan dasar konseptual gerakan sosial kontemporer.

Kata Kunci: Intelektual Amerika, Intelektual Eropa, Mazhab Chicago, Mazhab Frankfurt.

INTRODUCTION

World War I ended with Germany's defeat on the Axis front alongside Austria-Hungary and Turkey. Economically, the consequences of Germany's defeat in the war forced the country to bear a tremendous amount of war reparations. This resulted in the bankruptcy of German industries, followed by the collapse of the banking system and a downturn in trade. Consequently, mass unemployment and widespread poverty emerged. A significant portion of the German population lost their savings, homes, and jobs. Coupled with inflation and unstable food prices, Germany experienced stagnation and was plunged into a deep national crisis. The Great Depression further intensified dissatisfaction and distrust among the German people towards the established political parties. In this situation, the Nazi Party rapidly strengthened its influence, and in January 1933, Hitler was elected Chancellor of Germany (Hart, 2012: 224).

Amidst the anxiety and frustration of the German population, the *National-sozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* (NSDAP), commonly known as the Nazi Party, rose and managed to convince the German people that it could solve their problems. Alleviating poverty and improving the welfare of the German population became the main agenda of the Nazi Party. In addition, the party promised the revival of Germany and the establishment of an empire that would last for a thousand years. These promises and major programs succeeded in winning the hearts of a desperate nation. Germany quickly recovered from its defeat and the global economic depression. The influence and hegemony

of the Nazi Party spread throughout the country. As Nazi ideology developed, a strongly anti-Semitic doctrine surfaced. Hostility driven by Hitler and the Nazi leadership increasingly targeted non-Aryans especially those of Jewish descent as well as Communists, sympathizers of the German Communist Party, and members of the Social Democratic Party (Saeng, 2012: 48).

The political and social situation in Germany during this period underwent significant changes, including in the field of science and knowledge production. Academic spaces that generated theories and intellectual ideas were rooted in many universities, one of which was the University of Frankfurt. The university housed researchers who were predominantly of Jewish descent and ideologically aligned with Marxist thought. Due to racial and ideological differences, intellectuals at the University of Frankfurt were compelled to leave Germany for their safety. Supported by wealthy and open-minded patrons, various intellectual forums began to flourish in Frankfurt; newly established universities, liberal newspapers, experimental radio stations, and eventually the *Das Freie Jüdische Lehrhaus* ("House of Free-Thinking Jewish Education") emerged (Giddens & Turner, 2008: 608–609).

These intellectuals from the University of Frankfurt were individuals who had contributed, worked, and even married into German society. The harsh political and social conditions led them to seek safety and a better life abroad through diaspora. In the early 1920s, the intellectual climate at the University of Frankfurt had already been established with the formation of the Institute for Social Research. The institute later

became known as the Frankfurt School, which dominated research utilizing Marxist theories. The development of the Frankfurt School and its critical approaches rooted in Marxism invited pressure and hostility from Hitler's anti-Marxist regime.

The evolution of the Frankfurt School went through stages of what became known as neo-Marxism. In the early 1900s to the 1930s, Marxist theory underwent notable transformation, separating itself from mainstream sociology and economic determinism. The Frankfurt School engaged in deep critiques of classical Marxism, forming what later became recognized as Critical Theory. Notable thinkers such as Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, and later Jürgen Habermas played a key role in shaping this school of thought. The Frankfurt School continued its work until 1934, when the Nazi regime intensified hostility toward the Institute for Social Research, particularly because most of its scholars were Jewish (Goodman & Ritzer, 2010: 85–86).

Ultimately, these intellectuals were forced to flee Germany for the sake of their personal safety, their families, and the preservation of their ideological work. They chose the United States as a destination, where they continued their intellectual pursuits and contributed to the emergence of new perspectives within Marxist traditions. This transformation in the United States led to what became known as post-Marxism, forming the foundation of New Social Movements. The United States ironically considered the antithesis of Marxist ideology became the site of their migration. This condition becomes a significant topic of inquiry. Based on the introduction above, this

study formulates the following research questions:

1. How did the Frankfurt School develop from Germany to the United States?
2. How did the transformation of Critical Theory contribute to New Social Movements?
3. How did New Social Movements emerge in the United States?

This research aims to describe the patterns of transformation in critical thought originating from the Frankfurt School in Germany and its continuation within the Chicago School in the United States. In addition, this article intends to:

1. provide an overview of the development of the Frankfurt School from Germany to the United States;
2. describe how the transformation of Critical Theory contributed to New Social Movements;
3. explain the emergence of New Social Movements in the United States.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used in this study is the historical method, which includes source collection or heuristics, source criticism or verification, interpretation, and historical explanation presented in historiographical writing. Data collection is conducted through literature studies by examining sources relevant to the research topic. According to Gottschalk, the historical method is the process of critically examining and analyzing records and relics from the past (Gottschalk, 2008: 39).

Within the historical method, researchers explore sources, assess them, and interpret past facts to analyze and draw conclusions from historical events. The application of this method is closely

connected to the time frame of the research, which focuses on periods that have passed and become part of history. Records and relics of the past are referred to as historical sources materials that can be used to obtain information about events that occurred in the past (Ismaun, 2005: 35).

The steps utilized in conducting historical research are as follows:

- Heuristics: This stage involves gathering sources that are relevant to the selected topic. Some of the secondary sources examined include works translated into Indonesian by prominent figures of the Frankfurt School, such as *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments* written by Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, which elaborates the essential points of Critical Theory as a critique of core Marxist ideas related to economic determinism.
- Source Criticism: This stage involves selecting, examining, and filtering the authenticity of the sources collected. Here, both external and internal criticism are applied to ensure the reliability of the sources. External criticism is conducted to determine the authenticity and credibility of the sources. For books, this involves assessing the author's expertise and academic accountability. Internal criticism focuses on evaluating the content of historical sources (Sjamsuddin, 2007: 111). Historians must determine whether the testimonies or information obtained can be relied upon. Criticism is undertaken by analyzing a text and comparing it with other credible references to identify and address discrepancies.

- Interpretation: At this stage, the researcher interprets and contextualizes the facts obtained by correlating them with one another to form coherent meaning.
- Explanation or Historiographical Writing: This final stage involves synthesizing research findings into a complete and structured historical narrative. Historiography represents the culmination of the historical research process, in which the researcher presents the results of the first three stages clearly, using appropriate academic language and writing conventions (Sjamsuddin, 2007: 156).

DISCUSSION

The *Institute für Sozialforschung* (Institute for Social Research) was a research institution composed of scholars and intellectuals from the University of Frankfurt, Germany. These scholars and intellectuals later became widely known as the academics or intellectuals of the "Frankfurt School." The institute primarily focused on studying Marxist ideology and society. The thinkers of the Frankfurt School provided critical social reflections on post-industrial society and on concepts of rationality that shaped and influenced human behavior. One major object of their study was mass media in modern life, approached through a philosophy of critique. In addition, they developed criticism toward early ideas of Karl Marx, such as economic determinism, and toward empirical positivism.

The principal focus of research conducted by the Institute for Social Research was known as *Critical*

Research, which emphasized a critical communication theory that assumes critique as an analytical tool for studying Marxism. This perspective or paradigm, which aimed to conduct studies on society that still employed socialist and Marxist approaches, became known as *critical theory*. The *Institute für Sozialforschung* was an official department of the University of Frankfurt. It consisted of several groups with diverse academic backgrounds, including Friedrich Pollock (Economist), Theodor W. Adorno (Musicologist, Writer, and Psychologist), Herbert Marcuse (Phenomenologist), Erich Fromm (Psychoanalysis), Karl August Wittfogel (Sinologist), Leo Lowenthal (Sociologist), Otto Kirchheimer (Political Scientist), Henryk Grossman (Economist and Political Scientist), Arkadij Gurland (Economist and Sociologist), and Walter Benjamin (Literary Critic), all of whom contributed unique dimensions to the Institute (Hardiman, 2009: 45).

The Frankfurt School emerged from the sociopolitical conditions in Germany after World War I. At that time, Germany fell into severe economic and political chaos. One of the major consequences of World War I was the shift of revolutionary momentum to Eastern Europe, particularly through the Bolshevik Revolution in 1919 toward the end of the war. The failure of working-class revolution in Western Europe and the rise of Nazism prompted intellectuals at the University of Frankfurt to reconsider aspects of Marx's ideas that could help explain new and unforeseen sociopolitical conditions. Felix J. Weil, one of the founding intellectuals of the Frankfurt School, expressed this view during the first Marxist Workweek (*Erste Marxistische Arbeitswoche*) held in the

summer of 1923 in Ilmenau, Thuringia. Weil argued that the goal of the meeting was to bring together different tendencies within Marxism to arrive at the ultimate goal of achieving "true Marxism" (Jay, 2005: 4).

The participants of the meeting included Georg Lukács, Karl Korsch, Richard Sorge, Friedrich Pollock, Karl August Wittfogel, Béla Fogarasi, Karl Schmuckle, Konstantin Zetkin, and Hede Gumperz. One of their major concerns was the urgency to address social problems that required intervention. The Institute für Sozialforschung was eventually established on 3 February 1923 by Felix J. Weil, the son of wheat merchant Hermann Weil, with the aim of investigating pressing social issues. The Institute's core group consisted of Marxist intellectuals from diverse backgrounds (Lubis, 2015: 4).

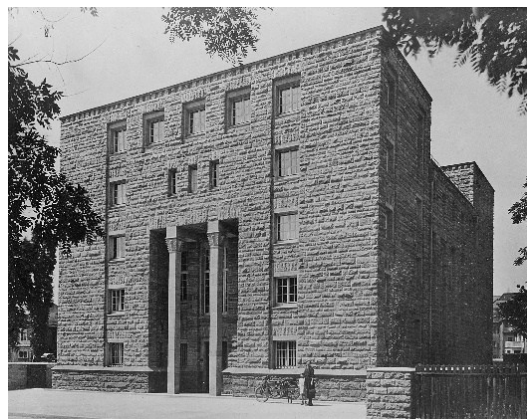


Figure 1. The Institute for Social Research building in 1930, located in Frankfurt

(Source: <http://www.sascharoesler.ch/aufsatz>) [17 maret 2016].

The Institute for Social Research was structurally affiliated with the University of Frankfurt, hence also known as the Frankfurt School (*Die Frankfurter Schule*). Ideologically, the Institute aligned itself with socialist and communist orientations, which served as

the intellectual foundation for its scientific activities (Saeng, 2012: 1–2). However, despite the affiliation, the University of Frankfurt did not provide financial support. The Institute was independently funded through contributions from the Weil family, particularly annual funding of 120,000 Marks equivalent to about 30,000 US dollars after the period of hyperinflation allowing independence in research topics and academic direction (Jay, 2015: 8).

When Max Horkheimer became the director, the Institute reached its intellectual peak. Before him, Albert Gerlach and Carl Grünberg made significant contributions as earlier directors. Gerlach, a left-leaning political scholar active in the Social Democratic movement, was appointed due to his strong dedication to spreading communist ideals, which aligned with Weil's aspirations (Saeng, 2012: 28).



Figure 2. Generation *Institut Fur Sozialforschung* Frankfurt
(Lubis. 2015: 5).

The Institute's intellectual lineage is divided into three generations. Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, Franz Neumann, Leo Lowenthal, Erich Fromm, Otto Kirchheimer, Friedrich Pollock, and Walter Benjamin represent the "first generation." Meanwhile, Jürgen Habermas, Albrecht Wellmer, Oskar Negt, Claus Offe, Helmut Dubiel, and Klaus Eder are considered the "second generation" (Beilharz, 2002: 137–138).

The Institute reached its success when Max Horkheimer became its director. Before Horkheimer assumed the leadership, several figures had contributed significantly to the Institute, including Albert Gerlach and Carl

Grünberg. Albert Gerlach was a faculty member at the University of Leipzig, Germany, and also an economics lecturer at the University of Aachen. His political inclination, which could be described as left-wing, led him to join the Social Democratic group in 1918. His strong enthusiasm and determination to disseminate communist ideology within society became a distinctive value for Gerlach. Due to his high level of militancy toward communist ideas, Felix Weil was interested in appointing him as director (Saeng, 2012: 28).

The Institute for Social Research conducted numerous studies and research efforts aimed at developing Marxism in a more productive manner. The Institute

sought to investigate more deeply the societal issues and problems that arose within the community. Ultimately, new Marxist ideas emerged and became the foundational basis for various social movements, each divided into several partial forms in line with identity-based struggles within society at large. These new social movements, rooted in the Marxist ideas of the Frankfurt School, later evolved and became derivatives of post-Marxist ideology.

These movements included the anti-war movement, the anti-nuclear weapons movement, and the environmental movement, which also belonged to the broader New Left. These social movements developed as the political orientation of New Left campus activists in the United States became increasingly clear by the mid-to-late 1960s, followed by similar mobilizations among New Left student groups in the United Kingdom. The student movement in France during May 1968 an act of resistance against French colonialism in Algeria during the early 1960s and against the Vietnam War became one of the foundational moments inspiring post-Marxist ideological discourse.

However, within this research, the primary focus will be on the development of post-Marxist ideology in relation to anti-war and anti-nuclear movements that emerged in the United States as part of the New Left and New Social Movements. Although anti-war movements in the United Kingdom and France also emphasized nuclear disarmament and global justice, the scope of this study is limited to the American context.

Anti-war movements that emerged from post-Marxist ideology were frequently considered criminal or treated as acts of subversion. Opposition to war

was often framed as a violation of state authority, even when war itself was justified as a humanitarian and justice-driven effort. Based on the analytical perspective of this research, the discussion will address core issues beginning with the lack of public support for anti-war movements.

Marxism was no longer fully aligned with the social struggles of the time; therefore, the foundational ideas of early Marxism required revision. This became a major concern among Marxist thinkers who recognized that the sociopolitical conditions they observed differed significantly from those predicted by classical Marxist theory. The transformation of Marxism began at the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt, which gathered Marxist dissidents and staunch critics of capitalism. The establishment of the Institute was closely tied to broad social, political, economic, ideological, and cultural issues, as well as widespread anxieties in Western Europe and the wider world (Saeng, 2012: 2).

The Frankfurt School is a term referring to a group of philosophers affiliated with the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt, Germany, along with other intellectuals influenced by their thought. The Frankfurt School viewed the geopolitical rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union along with the arms race involving weapons of mass destruction, such as intercontinental ballistic missile projects equipped with nuclear warheads as a central issue of their time (Saeng, 2012: 2).

The Frankfurt School included several prominent philosophers, such as Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Herbert Marcuse, and Jürgen Habermas. These thinkers laid the foundations of

what later became known as Neo-Marxism. In addition to Adorno, Benjamin, and Habermas, another essential figure who cannot be separated from the development of Neo-Marxist thought is Herbert Marcuse. Their attraction to Karl Marx's ideas stemmed in part from dissatisfaction with the narrow interpretations of Marxism advanced by orthodox supporters of Communist and Social Democratic parties. In contrast, the thinkers of the Frankfurt School argued for a broader and more critical theoretical framework. As Goodman notes, the Frankfurt School can be understood as an intellectual organization associated with the advancement of critical theory (Goodman, 2008: 176).

Another crucial point is that many of the major thinkers of the Frankfurt School were of Jewish background. This became one of the main reasons behind their relocation from Germany in Western Europe to the United States. Their migration was prompted by the political circumstances under Adolf Hitler's Nazi regime. The racial theory implemented by the Nazis prioritizing the so-called Aryan race through fascist methods forced non-Aryans and Jewish communities to live under extreme political persecution. According to Saeng, following the Nazi Party's victory in the general election on January 30, 1930, the social and political situation in Germany underwent a radical transformation (Saeng, 2012: 48).

Among the first direct victims of Nazi fascism were several thinkers from the Frankfurt School, including Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer. They were compelled to flee to other countries such as Switzerland, France, the United Kingdom, and most notably, the United

States. Another Frankfurt School thinker, Walter Benjamin, ended his own life after his library and all of his books were confiscated by Nazi forces. Despite these tragic conditions, the Frankfurt School remained highly critical of Marxist thought. While they could not be separated from the broader historical development of Marxism, their contributions represented a more advanced stage in the evolution of Western Marxism (Hardiman, 2009: 40).

Herbert Marcuse and Max Horkheimer, two of the most influential thinkers of the Frankfurt School, also fled to the United States to escape Nazi persecution. Marcuse, who was of Jewish descent and active in the Social Democratic Party, became a member of the Frankfurt School in the 1930s. When the Institute was forcibly shut down by the Nazis, Frankfurt School scholars were dispersed and went into exile across Western Europe including the United Kingdom and France as well as the United States. Marcuse's relocation to the United States was driven by an assignment from Max Horkheimer, who at that time was in Geneva, to collaborate in producing theoretical studies and ideological critiques. This assignment signified formal recognition of Marcuse's strong academic and philosophical foundation (Saeng, 2012: 45).

Not only Frankfurt School thinkers working in social philosophy and ideology were forced to flee due to their Jewish identity. Even Albert Einstein, the renowned physicist, migrated to the United States to escape Nazi oppression in Germany. As Jewish scientists and social theorists left Germany including the Frankfurt School scholars scientific and social scientific knowledge was also transferred to the United States, where

these ideas found new ground to grow. This included the Frankfurt School's critical reinterpretation of Marxism. Their influence became increasingly significant within anti-war movements as Neo-Marxist thought spread from Europe to the United States. Neo-Marxism continued to develop there, and ultimately, Marxist, Neo-Marxist, and Post-Marxist ideas played major roles in shaping various social movements in the United States, including the anti-war movement. The Frankfurt School was formally accepted in the United States through its affiliation with Columbia University, under its then President Director, Nicholas Murray Butler (Saeng, 2012: 45).

The affiliation between the Frankfurt School and Columbia University enabled the migration of Frankfurt School thinkers from Germany to the United States. Through this affiliation, all research activities conducted by the Frankfurt School in the United States became open and accepted within American universities. Horkheimer ultimately concluded that the United States had become the new scientific center of the Institute. The institution previously known in Germany as the Frankfurt School was renamed the Institute of Social Research in the United States.

The development undertaken by the scholars of the Institute of Social Research—originally belonging to the Frankfurt School tradition—continued to focus on the study and critique of Marxism. However, Marxist ideas pursued by the Institute in the United States were not expressed explicitly or overtly in their academic works. For this reason, many thinkers from the Frankfurt School continued to write and conduct

research in the German language. By the 1940s and 1950s, the theoretical orientation of the Institute had shifted toward examining the irrational origins of emerging social movements, employing paradigms such as psychoanalytic theory, social psychology, and mass society theory an approach associated with post-Marxist ideology (Mirsal, 2004: 16).

The Institute of Social Research maintained a clear mission and objective: to elevate the values of humanism and humanity throughout the world. The emergence of anti-war movements in the United States stemmed from the pursuit of truth, rationality, human dignity, solidarity, and respect for human life. War, from the perspective of these movements, fundamentally contradicts the principle of respecting human life. The Institute observed that post-World War II social, political, and economic conditions had undergone rapid transformation. Industrialization, technological advancement, poverty in the Third World, wealth accumulation in industrialized countries, as well as geopolitical tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union shaped the global landscape (Saeng, 2012: 57).

Thus, the Institute of Social Research had to adapt and develop in line with social and global changes to better understand the unfolding realities of the time. In response, the Institute initiated research that reformulated and reconstructed the foundational theoretical structure of early Marxism. This reformulation, reinterpretation, and reconstruction was reflected in numerous scholarly works published by the Institute in the United States, such as *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, *Eclipse of Reason*, *Minima Moralia*, *Eros and Civilization*,

and *One-Dimensional Man* (Saeng, 2012: 58).

Post-Marxism derives from the terms *post* and *Marxism*. *Post* carries three connotations: (1) new, (2) critical, and (3) oppositional. *Marxism* refers to an ideological framework rooted in Karl Marx's revolutionary ideas for social transformation. Post-Marxism today represents a critique of early Marxist thought, particularly its reliance on economic determinism and class struggle. Post-Marxism is a development of Marxist ideology that continues to pursue liberation from oppression. This ideological shift, referred to as post-Marxism, grew significantly during the 1960s as critiques centered on race, humanity, identity, culture, and related issues gained prominence within various social movements.

All of these struggles were categorized as new social movements, which included the civil rights movement, gay and lesbian movement, anti-war movement, anti-nuclear movement, Native American movement, the New Left, and the feminist movement. Up until the late 1990s, these movements generated dramatic transformations in Marxist, Neo-Marxist, and Post-Marxist theoretical paradigms. This new approach came to be recognized as post-Marxism, as it often employs a synthesis of Marxian theories with other theories, ideas, and methodologies (Goodman, 2007: 219).

This synthesis of Marxian theory with other theoretical frameworks as described by Goodman is exemplified today by the post-Marxist thinker Slavoj Žižek. Žižek's intellectual domain focuses on the realm of ideas and culture, or the superstructure. He discovered post-Marxist theoretical innovation through

the ideas of Jacques Lacan (Adian, 2011: 80). In this sense, Žižek attempts to integrate Marxism with Lacanian psychoanalysis, leading him to develop a concept of ideology that he believes is appropriately categorized as post-Marxism. However, two factors are involved in this process: first, the external factors that influence the social world and drive transformation; and second, the internal evolution of the theory itself (Goodman, 2007: 219).

Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe also presented a distinct conceptualization. In their book *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, they contributed substantially to the concepts of new hegemony and post-Marxist ideology. A major question in Laclau and Mouffe's discourse is whether Marxist theory remains capable of addressing contemporary social issues. The central concern is the formation of collective consciousness and collective action aimed at resisting oppressive relations. Such oppression is no longer limited to class struggle, where the bourgeoisie dominates the proletariat—a foundation of classical Marxism—but has extended to gender-based domination by men over women in various social and political sectors (a concern of feminism), and racial oppression, such as the struggle of African Americans against white domination in the United States. Classical Marxism has since been revised by several Marxist thinkers who recognize the necessity of alternative and more adequate methods for organizing society (Myres, 2003).

The victory of communist movements in Vietnam and Cambodia raised significant questions about how socialism should be understood, and what

pathways communist states outside the Soviet Union should follow. This context encouraged a renewed wave of critical reflection on classical Marxist theory that had long shaped communist state practices. Additionally, new forms of oppression arising in various sectors led to social movements beyond the discourse of class struggle central to classical Marxism such as the emergence of second-wave feminism, ethnic and national minority protest movements, gender minority struggles, ecological movements, anti-nuclear activism, and more. These developments strengthened theoretical reassessments of classical Marxism. The maturation of the bourgeois structural order resulted in the fragmentation of the working class. Meanwhile, in Russia, the limitations of bourgeois civilization due to its underdevelopment forced the working class to fight alone and to assume historical responsibilities that were not originally their own (Mouffe, 2008: 68).

The development of post-Marxist ideology has played a crucial role in shaping the intellectual foundations of global movements that struggle for racial equality and human rights. The post-Marxist-inspired anti-war movement, which later became a central force opposing the Vietnam War in the 1960s, emerged and expanded throughout major universities in the United States and France. Fundamentally, the anti-war movement in the United States fought for humanitarian concerns aligning with the primary goals of post-Marxist ideology that centers on human emancipation. As part of the New Left and the broader New Social Movements, the anti-war movement focused on issues related to the essential conditions of human existence and the possibility of a worthy

future. Therefore, its goals and targets extended across global humanitarian spaces (Singh, 2010: 127).

The anti-war movement, the anti-nuclear movement, and environmental movements challenged the Marxist paradigm that traditionally explained conflict in terms of “class” and class struggle. Marxism views all forms of struggle as class struggle, and all forms of social grouping as class-based. However, many contemporary movements such as anti-racism, disarmament, feminism, and environmentalism are neither class struggles nor reflections of class-based mobilization. Their forms of mobilization cut across class boundaries. In the context of contemporary society, Marxism has proven inadequate as an explanatory model (Singh, 2010: 126–127).

The theory of ideology originally developed from Marxism, where the struggle against class oppression by the lower class led Marx to formulate two foundational ideological theories. Ideological theory must now move beyond Marx’s economic determinism, toward mechanisms of ideology and strategies of resistance. A group of Marxists returned to the Hegelian roots of Marx’s theory to investigate subjective orientations in order to complement the analytical strength of early Marxism, which emphasized objective material conditions. These Hegelian Marxists sought to improve the dialectical relationship between human beings and their social existence unlike Marxian economic determinism, which positioned the economy as the primary determinant of all other sectors of society. Marxist thought continues to evolve, and Antonio Gramsci, an Italian Marxist, contributed ideas that bridged the evolution of Marxist theory from economic

determinism toward a more modern framework suitable for contemporary conditions (Goodman, 2008: 171).

Gramsci emphasized collective ideas more than social structures such as the economy. Although he played an important role in the transitional phase of Marxist thought—from economic determinism to modern theory—Gramsci still remained aligned with traditional Marxism. This is reflected in his Hegelian-based concept of hegemony. Goodman explains that Gramsci launched a critique against the economic determinism rooted in early Marxism. According to him, revolutionary ideas can be awakened by intellectuals, developed among the masses, and ultimately carried out by the masses. Those masses who later formed the core of the anti-war movement through organizations such as SDS and MOBE became the active agents of social revolution.

If the anti-war movement lacked intellectual figures who could provide the ideas to be developed, then it would not have been able to launch large-scale protest actions. The anti-war masses were able to internalize the movement against war, and once the idea of resisting war through the anti-war movement emerged, that idea became their sole conviction that war must be stopped. Essentially, the evolution of Marxist ideology played a significant role in shaping the anti-war movement in the United States. Gramsci was the initial thinker who marked the transition of Marxism into Neo-Marxism. The Frankfurt School comprising German neo-Marxist thinkers who were dissatisfied with the condition of Marx's theory ultimately produced Critical Theory. It was this Critical Theory that conducted a comprehensive revision of

Marxist thought and became highly influential in American sociology. The emergence of Critical Theory marked the beginnings of the anti-war movement in the United States. With the migration of sociologists and Neo-Marxian thinkers from Germany to America, their influence reached the anti-war movement. Eventually, however, this variant of Marxist theory encountered an impasse, as Adorno, Horkheimer, and Marcuse demonstrated how a theory based on the legacy of Marxism failed to stimulate a praxis capable of producing qualitative social change in modern society (Hardiman, 2009: 78–79).

The anti-war movement, influenced by this variant of Marxist ideology, needed a theoretical framework to construct a movement with revolutionary ideas. These ideas provided by intellectuals led to the rapid development of the anti-war movement in the United States. One key figure who emerged after Gramsci and Critical Theory from the Frankfurt School was Herbert Marcuse. Marcuse was a Jewish German philosopher, political theorist, and sociologist, and a member of the Frankfurt School.

Herbert Marcuse is known as the “Father of the New Left.” He exerted significant influence on the New Left movement and student movements in the 1960s, including the anti-Vietnam War movement. Marcuse migrated to the United States in 1934 and became a U.S. citizen in 1940. His critique of capitalist society particularly his synthesis of Marx and Freud in *Eros and Civilization* (1955) and his seminal work *One-Dimensional Man* (1964) resonated strongly with the interests of student movements in the 1960s. His willingness to speak at student protests earned him the title “father of the

New Left in the United States.” As Marcuse’s ideas spread, he inspired many radical scholars and activists such as Angela Davis, Abbie Hoffman, Rudi Dutschke, and Robert M. Young.

The anti-war movement in the United States first emerged around the 1960s during the war between the United States and Vietnam. This anti-war movement mainly consisted of university students protesting the war as well as young Americans forming environmentalist and anti-war communities. The most prominent student-based anti-war organization was Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), which led anti-war efforts on college campuses during the Vietnam War.

Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), as a student-led anti-war movement, has always been associated with the “New Left.” The New Left, or the new form of Marxism, became a powerful ideological force behind emerging social movements. SDS, largely composed of white college students, promoted participatory democracy, fought for civil rights, advocated for various university reforms, and protested against the Vietnam War. The ideology embraced within SDS spread rapidly across American universities, encouraging the growth of larger and more widespread youth-driven anti-war mobilizations.

The New Left ideology within SDS traces back to C. Wright Mills. Mills argued for a shift from traditional leftist movements toward countercultural values. According to David Burner, Mills claimed that the proletariat was no longer the main revolutionary force; instead, young intellectuals around the world had become the new agents of revolutionary change.

During the first SDS meeting at the University of Michigan, Alan Haber was elected as the organization’s first president. SDS’s political manifesto became known as the Port Huron Statement. Written principally by Tom Hayden in 1962, the manifesto emphasized “participatory democracy” and called for civil disobedience against compulsory military service and U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. The civil disobedience movement continued, strengthening the SDS-led student anti-war protests across the United States.

Throughout the 1960s, SDS grew into the most iconic anti-war organization in the United States and became an inspiration for anti-war movements in Western Europe such as the student occupation of Nanterre University in France in 1968, which protested war and nuclear weapons. SDS championed civil rights, free speech on campuses, and collective action among liberal and revolutionary left activists embracing universal values of peace, human rights, and environmental concern (Singh, 2010: 121).

The Port Huron Statement criticized the U.S. political system for its failure to achieve international peace, highlighting Cold War foreign policy, nuclear war threats, and the escalating arms race.

As the Vietnam War intensified, SDS’s role became increasingly significant. It produced militant activists committed to continuous anti-war demonstrations. When Tom Hayden assumed the presidency, membership rapidly increased to around 1,000. Under his leadership during the 1962–1963 academic year in Chicago, SDS expanded to nine chapters with growing influence and visibility.

The Port Huron Statement also affirmed SDS's close ties with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which helped inspire SDS's activism. SDS restructured its leadership through democratic elections, electing Lee Webb as National Secretary and Todd Gitlin as President, while Paul Booth remained Vice President. The organization continued searching for new directions to channel the rising idealism of its young members.

Eventually, SDS became the largest anti-war movement in the United States. More than 32 universities and schools joined the organization to oppose the Vietnam War and the proliferation of nuclear weapons. However, by 1967 SDS began to shift away from its original Port Huron principles, marking the start of internal fragmentation. By 1968–1969, at the height of its radical activism, SDS splintered into competing factions including extremist groups such as the Weather Underground Organization and the Revolutionary Youth Movement.

Parallel to SDS, a youth wave of anti-war activism emerged from San Francisco known as the Flower Power Movement later known as the Hippies. They used colorful flowers as symbols of love and peace, expressing the slogan "*fight with flowers*." The movement expanded into mass protests in the late 1960s covering anti-war activism, civil rights, women's rights, the student movement, and environmental protection. Hippies represented a counter-culture rejecting traditional norms, racial inequality, Cold War politics, and the threat of nuclear war.

Another major coalition was The National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam (MOBE), formed in 1967 to organize large-scale

demonstrations, such as the March on the Pentagon involving over 100,000 participants. Although short-lived and dissolved in 1969, MOBE re-emerged as the New MOBE and coordinated enormous anti-war protests in October to November 1969, supported by peace activists including Tom Hayden.

The anti-war movement expanded into the 1980s, shifting its focus toward global threats especially nuclear war. As U.S.–Soviet tensions escalated, activists warned that nuclear conflict could bring massive human and environmental destruction. Thus, anti-war movements merged with nuclear disarmament activism and environmentalism. During the post-Cold War era, new global conflicts involving the United States in the Middle East fueled further anti-war mobilizations, accompanied by rising anti-Western sentiment among Muslim communities as a reaction to perceived U.S. dominance (Huntington, 2009: 385; Kanzleiter, 2005: 22).

The movement continued into the 2000s, culminating in a Global Day of Anti-War Action in November 2002—a worldwide mobilization against looming nuclear confrontation.

In response to these persistent civic pressures, U.S. President Ronald Reagan signed legislation in 1984 establishing the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), a national institution dedicated to preventing and resolving violent conflicts worldwide. The 21st-century legislative push for a U.S. Department of Peace further reflected the enduring influence of anti-war movements.

USIP has since operated in over 30 countries to promote conflict resolution, "Track II diplomacy," post-conflict stabilization, and peaceful negotiation methods.

Ultimately, the anti-war movement—through SDS and its successors—successfully transformed national and international discourse, becoming a global reference for peace activism. The movement helped end U.S. involvement in Vietnam, resisted nuclear escalation, and continues to advocate for a world free from the catastrophic threat of nuclear warfare through global agreements such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

CONCLUSION

The political situation in Germany after the Nazi Party came to power forced the intellectuals of the Institute for Social Research affiliated with the University of Frankfurt to relocate for safety reasons. This was due to the fact that most thinkers of the Frankfurt School were of Semitic origin. The development of ideology advanced by the Frankfurt School dominated by Marxist ideas continued through theoretical critique. After Marxism developed in Germany and later shifted to the United States, its transformation fundamentally began with the intellectual migration from Germany, particularly from the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt. The evolution of post-Marxist ideology originated from the thinkers of the Frankfurt School. One of its early figures was Herbert Marcuse, a German-born American sociologist and member of the Frankfurt School who began his academic career at various universities in the United States, including Columbia University.

The development of post-Marxism eventually took root and expanded in the United States and Western Europe (especially France and Germany). This

development grew significantly alongside the emergence of anti-war movements during the 1960s, which later evolved into global-scale movements. Post-Marxism, as a continuation of Marxist ideological transformation, played a vital role in shaping anti-war movements in the United States and around the world in pursuit of global peace. Its influence became increasingly prominent as Frankfurt School thought shifted to the United States. Post-Marxism continued to progress and was accepted within American academia, particularly through the institutional affiliation between the Frankfurt School and Columbia University under President Director Nicholas Murray Butler. This affiliation also enabled the relocation of Frankfurt School scholars to the United States, allowing all research activities to be openly and widely accepted across American universities. Horkheimer ultimately declared that the United States had become the new scientific center of the Institute. During its development in the United States, the Institute for Social Research became widely recognized as the Frankfurt School.

Anti-war movements rooted in post-Marxist ideology in the United States included the Student for a Democratic Society (SDS), founded at the University of Chicago. The *Port Huron Statement*, SDS's political manifesto, became an ideological guide for its members. In addition to SDS, anti-war movements involving American youth included the *Flower Generation* later known as the Hippies and the National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam (MOBE).

Beyond movements opposing war, other New Social Movements connected to post-Marxist ideas brought by the

Frankfurt School to the United States included the Feminist Movement, Environmental and Ecological Movements, Anti-Nuclear Movements, and Civil Rights Movements supporting marginalized racial groups such as African Americans and Native Americans. These developments contribute significantly to the intellectual history discourse in Indonesia, particularly concerning class struggle transformed into identity-based struggles. Ultimately, the transformation of critical thought from the Frankfurt School to the “Chicago School” marked a paradigm shift: from class struggle rooted in economic determinism to class struggle expressed through the pursuit of equal identity recognition.

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