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C R I T I C A L A E S T H E T I C T H E O R Y

The Aesthetic Theories of the Frankfurt School

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## ABSTRACT

The following study outlines the different aesthetic theories developed by Theodor.W. Adorno, Leo Löwenthal and Herbert Marcuse between 1931 and 1978, describing the work they undertook while members of the Frankfurt School (1931-1942) and relating this to their later writings. A brief explanation is also given of why - in the author's opinion - Walter Benjamin's work should not be included amongst that of the Frankfurt School. The thesis adopts a chronological approach based on immanent, textual analysis of primary source material including unpublished correspondence. The main point of comparison from which the different aesthetics are evaluated is the degree to which they accept the main social theory developed in the School by Max Horkheimer. It is argued that Horkheimer's work was in turn based on Friedrich Pollock's theory of state capitalism. One of the main arguments advanced here is that all the aesthetics constructed before and after 1942 were indeed influenced to a greater or lesser extent by Pollock's theory, an argument which challenges the dominant interpretations of Frankfurt School aesthetic theories which regard them as not being grounded in a theory of the base. The thesis shows that adopting Pollock's social theory created problems for the aesthetic theories and led to the emergence of two different aesthetics: Adorno's aesthetics of mimetic experience and Marcuse's political aesthetics. Löwenthal's essays are judged to form a literary sociology and not an aesthetics as such. The dissertation concludes with the attempt to recuperate Adorno's concept of mimesis as the basis for a Marxist aesthetics.

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C H A P T E R 1 : INTRODUCTION

The following study will attempt to provide a systematic account of the aesthetic theories of the Frankfurt School. This task is not as straightforward as it might seem for, as has often been the case with discussions of 'schools of thought', there are considerable differences of opinion as to what or who exactly constitutes the 'Frankfurt School', and when it was constituted. I say 'what' because there has been a tendency to describe the 'School' in terms of its physical existence in one place or another. Jürgen Habermas has recently stated that there was no Frankfurt School until its location as the Institute of Social Research at 429 West 117th Street in New York in the second half of the 1930s,<sup>1</sup> in which case it might be more accurate to speak of a New York School. This would be inappropriate as most of the inhabitants of the above address had worked at the Institut für Sozialforschung in Frankfurt from 1930 onwards, although since most of them were of Jewish descent they had emigrated from Germany in 1933. Nevertheless, most of them had published fairly regularly in the Institut's journal, the Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung, from the 1932 first issue on until its last issue as the Studies in Philosophy and Social Science. For the purposes of this thesis, the label 'Frankfurt School' is used to signify the School in terms of the body of formal members of the Institut in Frankfurt and the Institute in New York. I shall therefore refer to these two institutions collectively as the Institut(e).

The following individual members of the Institut(e) and their respective contributions to School aesthetic theory provide the central focus of this study: Max Horkheimer, Director from 1929-30 onwards, philosopher; Leo Löwenthal, editor of the Zeitschrift/Studies' review section,

a theorist on the sociology of literature and a member from the same time as Horkheimer; Herbert Marcuse, a philosopher who worked for the Institut(e) from 1931-32 onwards; Friedrich Pollock, Vice-Director and one of the Institut(e)'s economists from the time of Horkheimer's arrival; and last Theodor W. Adorno, philosopher and musicologist, who did not formally become a member until 1938, contributed a weighty essay to the inaugural issue of the Zeitschrift.

Recent studies often mention Jürgen Habermas in the same breath as Horkheimer et al. Nevertheless, because he belongs to a later generation of 'critical theorists', his work falls outside the parameters of this study. He first started having work published after the disbandment of the New York Institute and the second 'diaspora' of its members. Furthermore, any close examination of his thought would provide ample evidence of a different starting point in his work to that taken by the other theorists in the 1930s.

The above list omits any mention of Franz Borkeuau, Erich Fromm, Henryk Grossmann and Karl Wittfogel, who were all present in Frankfurt and New York and thus fall within the bounds of our definition. Their exclusion is not arbitrary, however, for despite having written important essays in their respective fields for the Zeitschrift, they played little part in the devising of the aesthetic theories. Admittedly, to exclude Fromm from this discussion ignores his considerable influence on the foundation of early Institut(e) 'critical theory', the trade name under which Institut(e) work goes after 1937. However, his work is both well documented elsewhere<sup>2</sup> and not of crucial importance to the School's aesthetic positions and need not, therefore, concern us here.

Adopting this restricted definition of the Frankfurt School, however, immediately presents us with three main difficulties. Firstly, work undertaken prior to the inception of the Zeitschrift goes unmentioned

and is judged to have little or no influence on the individual writers, which is clearly a dangerous assumption. Secondly, there is the danger of smoothing over differences between the respective theorists in order to accommodate them under the umbrella of the School, a problem particularly acute in the case of Adorno's work. Thirdly, it follows from our definition that one of the major thinkers of this century, Walter Benjamin, could be included in the ranks of the School. He will not be. Older than the other writers, he was never formally a member of the School, although he received an Institut(e) stipend; and research has shown that he had already established his own intellectual method prior to writing for the Zeitschrift. It would therefore be unjust to reduce his work either to the status of his four main essays in the Zeitschrift, or to accredit him with the desire to influence the thought and development of the School.

Generally speaking, the Frankfurt School's main contribution to European thought is judged to have been their expounding and elaboration of 'critical theory' and not their work on aesthetics. Critical theory is held to be a methodology constructed as a heuristic addition to either a Marxist sociology or philosophy, or to socio-cultural criticism, an addition that was intended to bring these disciplines up to date in the 1930s. It is in terms of these disciplines that the School's work has usually been discussed, although attention has also been paid to the underlying philosophy or theory that informs the sociological and cultural propositions. Such discussions have in the main treated the various theorists either individually<sup>3</sup> or else have subordinated their work to the thought of the School.<sup>4</sup> On the one hand, studies of the thought of an individual theorist have tended to divorce his theories from those of the remaining members of the School and underplay or even disregard any instructive role the School

may have had.<sup>5</sup> This approach leaves the researcher confronted with various discrete monographs on theorists who all worked for a number of years in the same offices on the same projects. On the other hand, studies that investigate the School's work usually ignore - in their emphasis on the distinct branches of School theory - the dialectical interplay between an individual theorists's position and the overall guidelines laid down in the joint work of the School.<sup>6</sup> Although the individual work of each member warrants the first approach, and the importance of the material merits the second, both procedures are beset by methodological problems. They tend to isolate the theorist or the particular field under discussion in a manner which runs contrary to the nature of critical theory. The conception of society developed by the School is either lost completely or reduced from an integrated and systematic analysis of society to a series of individual thoughts.

Although the previous intellectual influences on each member are indeed important to an understanding of their respective work, be it Adorno's intellectual attraction to Benjamin or Weber's theoretical influence on Horkheimer, the study of this background also cannot be made the sole purpose of an investigation of the School's work. Such a mode of inquiry is limited to the extent that it can neither conceptualise the influence of the School on the writings of its members, nor conceive of the manner in which each member's work interacted with this overall body, be it in rejection or acceptance of the wider framework.

The limitation of the approaches outlined has much to do with the interdisciplinary nature of Institut(e) work testified to in Horkheimer's inaugural address at the Institut(e).<sup>7</sup> As Helmut Dubiel has demonstrated,<sup>8</sup> the School practised critical theory by delegating to each member research in his specific field. The research work then undertaken, for example that on aesthetics, was continually mediated with the more wide-ranging theories



of society that the School produced. Only in such a manner, Horkheimer in particular believed, could a research institute claim validity for its results. Accordingly, all the members of the Institut(e) met in regular plenary sessions to discuss not only each other's work but also the overall theory of society that they sought collectively to establish. Horkheimer himself was responsible, as is evidenced by his essay 'Traditionelle und kritische Theorie',<sup>9</sup> for laying down publicly the School's basic position; in this respect he was as much a linchpin for its research work as he was an administrator and coordinator. This 'delegation of duties' within the Institut(e) can be most clearly seen in the 1941 Studies edition, in which the four issues that comprise it each centre on a separate specific topic which, in turn, refers back to the other three areas of discussion. The compendious Autorität und Familie<sup>10</sup> also bears witness to this process, Horkheimer and Marcuse providing socio-philosophical articles for it and Fromm elucidating the psychoanalytical basis for the study.

The following inquiry will thus differ from previous studies of the Frankfurt School both in the material it addresses and in the method it adopts. Firstly, it discusses the different aesthetic positions developed by the various members of the School. Secondly, in order to do so it utilizes a methodology that emphasizes precisely the interplay of the various theorists' respective work while still setting the individual aesthetic positions off from one another. A chronological account of School work will be given because such an approach is best suited to highlight the similarities as well as the differences between the individual aesthetics. In this manner the aesthetic positions will be elaborated but in such a way as to reveal both the influence general School theory had on them and also how they formed part of that wider analytical framework. It is hoped that this dual emphasis will do justice not only to the claims of individual members to have constructed

aesthetic theories but also to a portrayal of how these theories interlocked in their analysis of certain commonly perceived problem areas.

This approach involves correlating the work of Adorno, Horkheimer, Löwenthal and Marcuse before and after 1950 (the date usually taken by researchers as marking the time after which no comparison between the theorists' respective writings can be made). The methodology best suited to this task is textual analysis since it allows for both an outline of each individual aesthetics as well as for cross-referencing of these aesthetic positions, because only in this way can it be established whether common denominators exist between the divergent theories. This study, therefore, consists mainly of an immanent analysis of the writings of Adorno, Horkheimer, Löwenthal and Marcuse which is both comparative and contextual in the sense that each piece of work by one of these authors is placed in the context of the writings of the others. This immanent analysis of each individual aesthetics will pay great attention to the logical consistency in the construction of each argument. Criticism of the aesthetics themselves will at first centre on pinpointing illogicalities, inherent problems or implicit logical barriers, rather than bringing external standards to bear on the theories. In other words, each aesthetic position will be tested to see whether it fulfils what it set out to achieve, and to ascertain whether it accomplishes this without altering the basis of its structure or starting point. The methodology of this thesis thus rests on the assumption that a logically consistent argument warrants greater attention than a flawed system of thought and that only the former can merit further critical investigation as to whether the observations that can be made by applying such a theory to empirical material are accurate, i.e. 'correct', or not.

The other main presupposition of this study is that a theory consists

of two distinct levels of reflection. On the one hand, a theorist tries to construct an internally structured, logical body of thought and, on the other, he or she intends that structure to grasp adequately an object in all its specific forms and permutations. Thus, once the logical underpinnings of the aesthetic theories of the Frankfurt School have been outlined and tested for consistency, the respective aesthetics will be criticized wherever they fall short of their common aim; that is to say, they will be assessed as to whether they do provide an example of or an epistemology for an historical materialist theory of art. That this is indeed their aim will be elaborated in the course of the reconstruction of their discussions on aesthetics. Although methodologically separate, these two angles of criticism do, on occasion, coincide owing to the nature of the material, for aesthetic theories operate at a high level of abstraction, and thus illogicality can entail a loss of descriptive power.

This second line of criticism focusses primarily on the relation between Frankfurt School aesthetic theories and the conceptual preconditions necessary for an historical materialist understanding of art. The theorists' respective views of the relationship between art and society will be examined critically in this context, for a Marxist aesthetics is founded epistemologically in a particular conception of this relation. This critical investigation is of especial importance, for, as we shall see, it has often been claimed that members of the School possessed no Marxist view of society at all and thus, by extension, that they could not have produced Marxist theories of aesthetics. The assessment of Adorno, Löwenthal and Marcuse's respective contributions to a Marxist aesthetics will, therefore, be connected to the immanent analysis of their positions, in that the absence or presence of an historical materialist view of society can only be determined by examining the internal suppositions of their theories. Additionally, this external form of criticism allows a differentiation to be made between, on the one hand, individual flaws, and, on the other,

mistakes common to all the School's aesthetic theories. Common errors can then be scrutinised in order to ascertain whether these can be traced to Institut(e) work, i.e. whether or not they occur as the consequence of a commonly held, but incorrect assumption.

In order to introduce the subject of Frankfurt School theory, a synopsis of the main strands of its reception will be given. This will serve to pinpoint the main problems areas thus far detected in Frankfurt School work, and in particular the claim that the Frankfurt School did not have a Marxist conception of society. An attempt will then be made to evaluate this criticism in the course of outlining the various aesthetic positions the School's members developed. The first half of the outline (Section I) concentrates on the genesis of Adorno, Löwenthal and Marcuse's theories of art, whereas the second half of this comparative, immanent analysis (Section II) discusses the positions they later adopted or rather the aesthetics which evolved out of each original set of ideas.

Adorno, Löwenthal and Marcuse's writings are thus treated chronologically in the sense that their work is divided into two periods: one prior to, the other consequent on the disbanding of the New York Institut(e). These two periods are paralleled by the two main Sections of this study, a structure which in turn reflects an hypothesis on the periodisation of Frankfurt School work; namely, that from 1932 - 1942 aesthetic theories existed alongside a critique of political economy whereas from 1942 - 1978 the aesthetic theories to a great extent replaced, or attempted to replace, the critique of political economy epistemologically.<sup>11</sup>

#### Reception of the Frankfurt School

The absence of a systematic outline of School aesthetic theories seems at first glance somewhat puzzling and yet closer analysis reveals numerous factors that go some way towards explaining this gap in the reception of the Frankfurt School. However, before discussing what these reasons might

be, it must be pointed out that any synopsis of the reception of the School's work must differentiate according to geographical interests. An awareness of regional considerations is necessary in order to take account of the different academic and intellectual traditions that form the background to the reception, e.g. factors such as the foreignness of Hegelian language to ears drilled in Anglo-Saxon philosophy, or the comparative lack of translations of the School's work.<sup>12</sup> This dearth until very recently of translations moots causes other than just a linguistic tradition however. For example, the fact that in the Anglo-Saxon world sociology is rarely extended to include aesthetic theory means that Frankfurt School aesthetics is from the outset foreign to a reader trained in England or the U.S.A. The regional approach must consequently be complemented by an outline of the possible historical and political reasons for changes in the reception of the School. In order to explain this lack of work on the School's aesthetic theories a brief portrayal of the School's reception in Germany, the U.S.A., and England is attempted. This sketch will both contextualise and historicise the various understandings of critical theory and of School aesthetics as well as delineating the main problem areas discussed by the secondary literature.

During the 1950s and early 1960s - the Cold War era of Adenauer's chancellorship - the Frankfurt School's influence in West Germany was twofold: first of all, Adorno and Horkheimer's reopening of the Institut für Sozialforschung in Frankfurt furthered a concern with Marxism and with the empirical methods used by American sociologists; and secondly, through the figure of Adorno, a great influence was exercised over musical and literary criticism. Outside academic or artistic circles, however, a wider knowledge of School work was first gained after the School had been 'rediscovered' in the late 1960s by the anti-authoritarian student movement. This coincided with an awakening of interest in Marcuse's work, initiated by the publication in 1964 of One Dimensional Man. In a sense

Marcuse promoted this revival of interest in School work by delivering a series of lectures at the Free University in Berlin which touched on topics close to the heart of the student movement. As a consequence of this theoretical affinity, the sprightly 70-year old became the movement's spiritus rector.

However, the German anti-authoritarian movement was quick to turn on its intellectual predecessors and rejected their work for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, the School was charged with being pessimistic in the sense that it did not foresee a rapid revolutionary change occurring in West Germany in particular or in capitalist society as a whole. Furthermore, the School was accused of being elitist, for it was deemed to have underestimated the working class's power and to have abandoned the linkage of theory to praxis. Both these charges were based on the supposition that the School eschewed any analysis of the economic base of society. Since, it was argued, the School had addressed itself only to superstructural questions, especially aesthetic ones, they could no longer be considered Marxists. The economistic interpretation of Marx's writings that followed the resurgence of interest in Marx is quite telling here. Although this accusation is undoubtedly true in the case of Horkheimer's later beliefs, its accuracy as a description of the writings of the School as a whole is highly questionable. One of the main purposes of the following pages will be to demonstrate the simplistic nature of such accusations.

Versions of the above objections raised against the School's work can be found in various periodicals at this time, such as Kursbuch, Das Argument, Alternative or even Merkur. This general hostility led to Adorno's aesthetics being rejected out of hand as 'elitist' or 'metaphysical' without due attention being paid to its methodology or intentions. The reasoning behind this accusation is of particular interest in this context. Because Adorno, who had initially been viewed as a paragon of Marxist literary criticism, later refused to man the students' barricades or take up their banner, his

student following increasingly rejected his work, no doubt to his great sorrow and disappointment. Adorno's lack of personal engagement - falsely understood to be a reflection of his political sympathies - was used as an excuse for iconoclastic attacks on him. A similar fate did not befall Marcuse, perhaps on account of his being more openly involved in the student movement. However, Marcuse's writings were nevertheless rejected by the students for the reasons given above and with the same speed with which they had previously been acclaimed.

The question of whether the School was Marxist or not continued to dominate debates in Germany and was taken up in a seemingly separate discussion concerning the writings left in Benjamin's estate. Alternative, a young Berlin journal on aesthetic matters and German studies, launched an attack on both Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann in the late 1960s by suggesting that the latter two men's edition of Benjamin's letters and works was insidiously partisan in that the editors were judged to have deliberately omitted Benjamin's more explicitly Marxist works.<sup>13</sup> This charge was extended to include another claim, one perhaps more vicious than the first, namely that while the Institut(e) was in New York it forced Benjamin, working alone in Paris in the late 1930s, to alter his essays substantially before they could be accepted for publication in the Zeitschrift/Studies. It was inferred that Benjamin's Institut(e) stipend thus became dependent on his watering down the Marxism of his essays 'Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit' and 'Über einige Motive bei Baudelaire'. In particular, it was Adorno, the chief Institut(e) correspondent with Benjamin, who was held responsible for this supposed intellectual blackmailing. Subsequent research has shed much light on this whole argument. It was Pollock, on Horkheimer's instructions, who allocated the stipends, so that Adorno can at most be charged with having tried to bully Benjamin.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, at the time the effect of this accusation in Alternative was considerable as far as the acceptance of Adorno's work was concerned. Adorno,

hitherto regarded as a Marxist aesthetician, was now considered reactionary and idealist. The revived interest in the 'Expressionism Debate', with which this acrimonious discussion more or less coincided, tilted decidedly in Brecht and Benjamin's favour. Adorno's academicism or intellectualism was no longer de rigeur and was replaced by the activism acclaimed in Brecht's work on realism.

In the wake of the student movement the emphasis in the reception of the School in the 1970s was altered. Principally, it moved in two directions: one was concerned with the logic of the aesthetics, the other with theories of mass culture. Ever since Hans Magnus Enzensberger's essay on the 'consciousness industry'<sup>15</sup> there had been some critical involvement with Adorno and Horkheimer's theory of the production and dissemination of mass culture, i.e. their analyses of the different forms of popular culture. Two notable examples of this critical use of Adorno and Horkheimer's work would be Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge's Öffentlichkeit und Erfahrung and Dieter Prokop's Faszination und Langeweile.<sup>16</sup> These studies sought to provide an objective theory of mass culture founded on the empirical analysis that was judged to be absent from the School's work. The concern with the methodology developed by the Frankfurt School has been kept alive in particular by Jürgen Habermas' researches into 'critical theory'. His work has led to an attempt to redress the damage done to the reception of critical theory in the late 1960s—with a view to assessing more impartially to what extent critical theory provides the basis for a theory critical of contemporary society or for an interdisciplinary, critical sociology.<sup>17</sup> Jürgen Habermas, too, maintains that the School's work is inadequate for such a task because it is not based, or so he claims, on an interactive model of truth. Nevertheless, he still uses many of the School's central concepts alongside more hermeneutically based ones in his construction of a model of 'communicative action'. This attempt to treat the School in an 'academic' or even 'neutral' manner is also evident in the writings of



Wolfgang Bonß, Helmut Dubiel, Alex Honneth and Alfons Söllner.<sup>18</sup>

The most recent work being undertaken that uses Frankfurt School theory tends to be found in social science faculties, where the importance of Marcuse's early work for a phenomenologically grounded Marxism is being studied as part of a search for an epistemological foundation for the social sciences. This interest centres on work written prior to Marcuse's membership of the Institut(e) and is therefore excluded from this study, although some of the later essays, such as those addressed to audiences in Korcula and Prague, echo these early themes and will be considered below with regard to their place in Marcuse's thought. The influence these early essays might have had is restricted at present by the authority exercised by the form of phenomenological Marxism espoused by Agnes Heller and György Markus.

The work of a member of the School who up till now has been generally ignored in Germany, namely Leo Löwenthal, is slowly coming into vogue. His efforts to establish a literary sociology are being re-examined in intellectual circles disappointed by Marxist approaches to the subject hitherto. Nevertheless, not until 1982 did Löwenthal's extensive work in this area (i.e. his erection of a framework for a sociology of literature) start to merit more than an occasional footnote in books on the subject.

Quite a broad spectrum of interest in the Frankfurt School was to be found in the United States from the early 1960s onward following the publication in 1949 of the Studies in Prejudice. Horkheimer's major work on the Eclipse of Reason had appeared in the English original two years prior to that, but it did not attract the critical acclaim that awaited the Studies in Prejudice. This concern with the School's psychological work was not extended, however, to its other writings, except in the case of Marcuse, whose Reason and Revolution was widely discussed. Partly because he resided in the U.S.A. and partly because he published in English, Marcuse's works came to be regarded as critical theory per se. Eros and Civilization, Soviet

Marxism and One Dimensional Man were debated seriously in forums ranging from the Jewish journal Commentary to the communist periodical Partisan Review. Eros and Civilization in particular was a subject of discussion, prompted possibly both by Marcuse's debate with Norman O. Brown as well as the broadsides exchanged between Marcuse and the 'revisionist' Freudians.

In the late 1960s the 'New Left', composed mainly of ex-members of the SDS (Students for a Democratic Society), set about about rediscovering critical theory from a broader vantage point than that previously taken in America. This is evidenced, above all, by the amount of translation work undertaken between 1967 and 1973. The ensuing accessibility of the texts to non-German speakers led to a great deal of discussion of critical theory and widespread interest in establishing whether there were still parts of the theory relevant to contemporary Marxism. The leading articles in this context were published in Telos,<sup>19</sup> New German Critique, Social Research and, at a slightly later date, in Theory and Society, although many other less seminal journals carried articles on the subject at that time. Russell Jacoby's article 'Towards a Critique of Automatic Marxism'<sup>20</sup> can be taken as representative of discussions prevalent then.

Critical theory was utilized as a weapon against vulgar Marxism but it was also applied as a tool in debates on the social implications of technology's use and on the connection between the technocratic society and a loss of subjectivity.<sup>21</sup> Both debates drew their inspiration from Marcuse's writings, although Adorno and Horkheimer's Dialektik der Aufklärung was also a standard reference work in this context. The end of these discussions coincided more or less with the publication of the translation of Marx's Grundrisse, which served to reopen the argument as to whether technology could indeed function to satisfy truly 'human' needs or whether it was condemned forever to being the lackey of the profit-motive.

This renewed interest in the Frankfurt School culminated in 1973 with the publication of Martin Jay's The Dialectical Imagination, a thorough, empirical and historical portrait of Frankfurt School work up until 1950.<sup>22</sup> This book, almost single-handedly, put critical theory firmly on the map of 'European thought and ideas', as well as providing a vast wealth of material culled from numerous unpublished sources. For this achievement alone the book is to be lauded. However, as Russell Jacoby was quick to point out,<sup>23</sup> the methodology Jay had used precluded any fecund interpretation or application of the School's diverse work. In many ways Jay had inadvertently ensconced debate on the Frankfurt School in a purely academic arena.

The Dialectical Imagination was followed by a spate of articles on the Frankfurt School by various authors, discussing its Marxism or its 'dialectical humanism'. Typical of this line of inquiry was Zoltan Tar's brief monograph of 1977.<sup>24</sup> Most of the work undertaken in the U.S.A. on the School does not, however, address aesthetic questions and certainly nothing like to the extent to which they were posed in Germany, although debates in Germany were known to American readers from the pages of Telos and New German Critique. Susan Buck-Morss' book on the relationship between Benjamin and Adorno touches on the subject, as do Barry Katz' and Morton Schoolman's books on Marcuse, while Harold Bleich's monograph devotes all of three pages to this major aspect of Marcuse's work.<sup>25</sup>

Adorno's influence in the United States never matched that which he exerted in Germany (perhaps owing to the absence of translations) and little critical attention was paid to him. By the time his main work on aesthetics, the Ästhetische Theorie, had been translated into English in 1982, Post-structuralism and Deconstructionism had jointly cornered the discipline in the U.S.A. Frederic Jameson, Diane Waldeman and Richard Wolin nevertheless published articles on his work, as had Russell Berman at a slightly earlier date.<sup>26</sup> Whereas Jameson compares Adorno's work to other Marxist

aesthetic theories, Waldeman tries to assess the value of Adorno's jottings on film. Wolin's article is less a critical discussion of Adorno's work than a praiseworthy attempt to define for an Anglo-Saxon audience the essential concepts in Adorno's aesthetics. Unfortunately, Wolin's essay suffers from a common complaint of recent American work in the field for it relies over much on an esoteric jargon in its exegeses of School work. While Adorno once argued that critical writing had necessarily to be complex if it were to prevent its ideas from being infected by reality's monochromatic character, the same excuse can hardly apply to expositions of Adorno's work if these are intended to clarify precisely the original complexities.

The Frankfurt School has more or less been ignored in England for not until the late 1970s was there any real reception either of critical theory in general or of Frankfurt School aesthetic theories in particular. Various reasons can be put forward to explain this curious lacuna. Firstly, translations of the School's writings appeared later here than they did in the U.S.A., indeed some of the translated texts have not been published in England at all. In the early 1970s the New Left Review altered this balance slightly by publishing a few hitherto untranslated articles by School members, some of which treated aesthetics. Over the years, however, the New Left Review was to devote no more than ten pages to discussions of Adorno. Marcuse's works were more widely available than the writings of the others, although even here a time-lag is noticeable in relation to the appearance of his works in the United States.

Perhaps this lack of reception is itself a comment on the way debates on Marxism developed in post-War Britain. From the late 1950s onwards leftist English theorists were more concerned with rescuing a forgotten indigenous working-class tradition and providing a left-wing interpretation of English culture than with importing new theories from abroad. Above all, Edward P. Thompson and Raymond Williams distinguished themselves in this area. Such empirically oriented cultural historiography was hardly compatible with the highly theoretical nature of, for example, Adorno's

writings.

This particularly English approach evolved, on the one hand, into an attack within English Studies on the elitist, high culture academicism of contemporary literary criticism. Such an assault on the dominant mode of text interpretation sought not to claim those texts for the leftist camp but to refute the interpretation's claim to neutrality. The literary criticism practised by Terry Eagleton, for example, endeavours to identify the bourgeois character both of the interpretations and the authors in question. On the other hand, such groups as the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies tried to provide a non-empirical theory of mass culture starting from a critique of the work by Thompson and Williams. In such a situation there could be little place for the prescriptive aesthetics offered by Adorno and Marcuse, although an ideology critique, in the form in which it was practised in early Frankfurt School work, namely as an attempt to locate anti-ideological elements within bourgeois culture, could most certainly have aided these projects. Nor, it must be added, was the reception and acceptance of the Frankfurt School furthered by the reticence of German Studies in British universities to engage in the debates outlined above.<sup>27</sup>

The strong sway the various schools of thought round Raymond Williams and Edward Thompson, Terry Eagleton, the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies or even the New Left Review held over the type of theory to be adopted and practised, all but barred the entry of Frankfurt School work into English theoretical discussions. Furthermore, in order to counter what they saw as excessive empiricism in the former two theorists' work, the younger generation of English thinkers turned to French Structuralism as expounded by Louis Althusser in their efforts to underpin their work with a solid theoretical foundation. Althusser's dissociation of the different structures forming society meant that the Frankfurt School's depiction of the superstructure was anathema to the groups that followed him.<sup>28</sup> In

other words, whereas in Germany the younger generation of thinkers rejected the Frankfurt School as 'unscientific' for supposedly not possessing an adequate theory of the base, in England the School was labelled 'unscientific' for precisely the opposite reason, namely for having used the base-superstructure model in the first place. Althusser's reading of Marx was heavily slanted against an 'Hegelian' Marxism that saw the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts as important and, since the Frankfurt School were adjudged quite accurately to be 'Hegelian' in their thought on Marx, they were rejected out of hand as 'un-Marxist' by Althusser's followers in this country.<sup>29</sup>

One example of the recent dominance of French thought in England can be seen in the fact that even in its work on fascism the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies concentrated on Nicolas Poulantzas' theory and largely ignored the pioneering research the Frankfurt School had undertaken in this field. However, perhaps the best illustration of the comet-like ascendancy of Structuralist thought and the opposition to the Frankfurt School that accompanied it is to be found in the New Left Review's presentation of the 'Expressionism Debate'. This debate, so vital to German thinking on aesthetics, was never discussed thoroughly in the journal. Instead, the editors chose to print translations of letters exchanged between Benjamin and Adorno, the implication of this correspondence being the by now familiar claim that Adorno had watered down Benjamin's Marxism. At the same time, Perry Anderson, New Left Review's editor, and Göran Therborn<sup>30</sup> both attacked the Frankfurt School for being 'unscientific'. It was not until the publication in 1977 by New Left Books of Aesthetics and Politics,<sup>31</sup> a motley collection of essays culled from the 'Expressionism Debate', that more material was made available for discussion and some of Adorno's criticisms of Benjamin were belatedly acknowledged to be valid. However, the New Left Review had by then settled discussions in favour of Brechtian or Benjaminian aesthetics, so that the Frankfurt School never received a

real hearing.

A welcome exception to this form of rejection is to be found in Phil Slater's The Origins and Significance of the Frankfurt School. However, in his strict and somewhat partisan adherence to Brechtian aesthetics and his reiteration of criticisms of the School common in Germany at the time, he ends up damning the School for its bisection of the 'theory-praxis nexus'. Also the book unfortunately concentrates on defining what the Frankfurt School were not rather than on identifying what they were, and so left the task of providing a systematic English introduction to critical theory still unfulfilled. In recent years a number of books have been published in England that go some way towards filling this vacuum. Gillian Rose, David Held and Michael Billig<sup>32</sup> show in their respective work a common interest in engaging in a critical dialogue with the School's writings. Most recently, Julian Roberts has returned to the problematic question of the relationship between Adorno and Benjamin.<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless, the impact of these various studies, especially in the field of aesthetics, has as yet not caused a reevaluation of the Frankfurt School to be made.<sup>34</sup> With respect to literary and aesthetic theory then the case for or against the Frankfurt School still remains to be debated in England.

In summary, it must be said that most profiles of critical theory have been over-influenced by the particular political discussions current in various countries at the time of interpretation, with the result that such outlines have rarely been able to compare Frankfurt School thought with the School's own philosophical and methodological intentions. In trying to apply School work to a contemporary setting, an eye for the historical nature and evolution of critical theory has often been lost. Thus, rejection or acceptance of the Frankfurt School's conclusions has often depended on the subjective preferences of the interpreters, i.e. on whether they approached the material in question already convinced that the School was Marxist, idealist or even metaphysical, instead of founding their evaluation on more objective criteria.

With regard to the School's aesthetic propositions, such slanted approaches offer little room for a discussion of views of art or of the artwork. Rather, they reduce aesthetics to a reflection of a pre-affirmed or pre-condemned social theory, in that any evaluation of the aesthetics is made entirely dependent on whether the Frankfurt School's social theory is judged to have been Marxist or not. In order to avoid this pitfall, the following study will concentrate on determining the exact nature of the Frankfurt School's version of Marxism and will explore in what manner it is reflected in the different aesthetic theories members of the School produced. Outlining these different aesthetic theories will, nevertheless, remain our primary concern, for , as we have seen, up till now no systematic account has been provided of the interrelations obtaining between the aesthetic works of the individual members of the School after 1950, nor has much attention been paid to the aesthetic theories in terms of their forming an important branch of Frankfurt School work.



## S E C T I O N I

### C H A P T E R 2 : FRIEDRICH POLLOCK'S THEORY OF STATE CAPITALISM

#### Pollock and Horkheimer

If one approaches the School's work only from a study of the secondary literature or solely having read the School's 'major' writings, then one could be excused for supposing that the theorists in question knew and wrote little about that domain so crucial to Marx's thought, namely the substructure or base of society. However, this was not the case, as even a cursory examination of the contents of the Zeitschrift/Studies shows: numerous articles exist on economic matters. Alongside essays by the main Institut(e) political economists, Henryk Grossmann, Friedrich Pollock and Franz Neumann, others were published by Julian Gumperz, Kurt Mandelbaum and Gerhard Meyer, who all also worked for or collaborated with the Institut(e). Surprisingly, this evidence is often overlooked by critics of the main theorists and is particularly ignored or forgotten when discussing their aesthetic and cultural theories.<sup>1</sup> A critical analysis of theorists who understood themselves as Marxists that omits to pay attention to their colleagues' conception of the base of society is seriously flawed, particularly when one considers the interdisciplinary nature of the Institut(e).

Of the economists mentioned above, it was specifically Pollock whose work over the decade from 1932 - 1942 came to form the basis of the School's economic theory of society, and thus his essays in the Zeitschrift/Studies warrant outlining if the aesthetic theories produced by other members of the Institut(e) are to be understood correctly. The extent to which Pollock's work plays a role in constituting the underlying thought of Adorno, Horkheimer, Löwenthal and Marcuse during the years of the Zeitschrift/Studies's publication can then be explored. (this course will be pursued in the post-war years in Section II). This exploration also entails establishing whether specific differences between each individual reception of Pollock's work

exist or not. Despite the fact that he only wrote sparsely on aesthetics, I include Horkheimer in the above group, because, owing to the delegatory nature of School work, it was in his writings that the School's theory of society and its methodology was elaborated. Agreement or disagreement with Pollock's work can thus be assessed in part by comparing each individual theorist's writings to Horkheimer's work at a particular time.

There is a wealth of empirical evidence, especially correspondence, that establishes quite firmly that Pollock's theory of the substructure - or to be exact his theory of 'state capitalism' - was indeed endorsed by Horkheimer. The theory is developed within the general framework of the School's research - the study of the transition from liberal capitalism to monopoly capitalism or the authoritarian state - in two periods, from 1932-34 and from 1940-41. With reference to the theory of monopoly capitalism, Horkheimer wrote to Pollock on the 18th of June, 1934:

Es schiene mir eine starre und unhistorische Betrachtungsweise zu sein, wollte man die gegenwärtige Epoche insofern der vorhergehenden gleichsetzen, als man die Kombination, in welcher die vorhandenen Kräfte sich dann wirklich entladen, für relativ zufällig erklärte. Den Inhalt der europäischen Gegenwart bilden vielmehr die Bestrebungen einer Zusammenfassung der hochentwickelten Länder zum gemeinsamen, aus wirtschaftlicher und politischer Krise herausführenden Handeln.

Horkheimer thus opposed the orthodox Marxist position, championed by the Comintern and the KPD, according to which contemporary society formed a simple linear continuation of monopoly capitalism and fascism constituted a last-ditch attempt to save capitalism. Rather, he implies that a qualitative change has occurred, for crises are no longer merely domestic but now take place on the world market. While thus realizing that a new Marxist model was needed to describe this change Horkheimer was not prepared, however, to accept Pollock's suggestion that society had become state capitalist. He commented on this to Pollock in a letter of the 3rd of July, 1934 referring to Pollock's concept of state capitalism:

Eine Rückkehr zur Demokratie ist für die ökonomisch Ausschlaggebenden jedenfalls nicht mehr zu befürchten. Aber all das sind Einzelheiten, unser Gesamtbild der deutschen Situation scheint in den entscheidendsten Punkten

immer noch nicht übereinzustimmen...Du nimmst die Ereignisse, welche meiner Ansicht nach mehr der Oberfläche angehören,..., für die wesentlichen Tendenzen... Wenn die Verhältnisse im Osten ihren gesellschaftlichen Sinn ändern, dann kann die Oberfläche zum Wesen werden.

However, by 1938-39 Horkheimer revised his position. His essay 'Autoritärer Staat', written in 1938 but published in 1942 is a pellucid expression of this revision. The article was originally entitled 'Staatskapitalismus' but this term only appears twice in the final version, one of the two references making the significance of the term obvious: "Der Staatskapitalismus ist der autoritäre Staat der Gegenwart". The elision of the term in the final draft was not the result of Horkheimer's rejection of the concept of state capitalism, but is attributable instead to the fact that the label 'authoritarian state' embraced both East and West and was therefore judged to be theoretically more powerful. Horkheimer must have adopted this evaluation of Soviet society and capitalism by 1941 at the latest, for he says to Pollock in a letter of the 30th of April of that year:

Die Russen haben ein Gefühl dafür, daß der Staatskapitalismus die zeitgemäße Form der Herrschaft ist. Ihr unbewußtes oder bewußtes Bekenntnis zu ihm ist keine Liebe, eher Haß - Haß gegen das Unrecht in seiner veralterten Form, der sich jetzt hervorrägt, eben weil sie veraltet ist, wie der Haß gegen den sterbenden König, wenn der junge schon die Hand nach der Krone ausstreckt.

On reading the draft manuscript of Pollock's state capitalism essay he was to comment (1st of July, 1940):

Die These ist schlagend: Die ökonomische Entwicklung zeigt eine Tendenz zum Staatskapitalismus - überall. Die totalitäre Form ist nur eine seiner möglichen Formen... Ich halte ihn (the essay) für einen bedeutsamen Schritt in der Richtung der so notwendigen neuen Manifeste. 2

He went on to insist, however, that Pollock make it clear that 'state capitalism was still an internally antagonistic social structure, to prevent anyone from thinking that the Zeitschrift/Studies in any way supported it.

By the 18th of August, 1941 Institut(e) opinion must have been solidly behind Pollock's theory, judging from the way Adorno addressed the topic in a letter to Horkheimer concerning the foreword the latter was to write

for Pollock's state capitalism article:

X ... (zugleich) finde ich, daß das Vorwort ausgezeichnet die taktische Aufgabe löst, daß Mißverständnis auszuschließen, als erkenne der Aufsatz von Fritz in der Tat die Möglichkeit eines nicht-antagonistischen Staatskapitalismus an, ohne daß Sie doch den offiziellen marxistischen Optimismus die leiseste Konzession machten.

The main reason for the acceptance of Pollock's work by this time can be gleaned from the interpretation Marcuse gave of Pollock's main essay on state capitalism in an interview conducted by Jürgen Habermas in 1978:

Pollock hat ja den Aufsatz geschrieben über den Staatskapitalismus, der meiner Meinung nach einer der allerersten Versuche war zu zeigen, daß der Spätkapitalismus aus inneren Gründen, aus rein ökonomischen Gründen nicht zusammenbrechen wird. 3

Pollock's theory offered the Institut(e) an up to date model of society that avoided the problems posed by other Marxist interpretations. Before assessing the influence of Pollock's theory of state capitalism on the work of Adorno, Horkheimer, Löwenthal and Marcuse, however, it is necessary to describe in greater detail its exact nature and development.

#### Pollock's Theory of State Capitalism

Pollock had studied the concept of a 'planned' economy before he commenced writing for the Zeitschrift, for in 1929 he had published Die planwirtschaftliche Versuche in der Sowjetunion.<sup>4</sup> However, when he took up the question of planning again in his articles in the Zeitschrift/Studies a distinct difference can be noted: he now addressed capitalism. When tackling this analysis of capitalism Pollock found himself confronted with the question facing many Marxist economists at the time, namely whether capitalism would collapse owing to its inner contradictions, or whether it somehow had the capacity to avert such a crisis. The conclusions reached by the various economists differed according to the emphasis adopted within their particular analyses of capitalism. However, Pollock's work offered a novel approach to this context for he decided in a series of essays written over two periods (1932-34 and 1940-41) that capitalism need not collapse at all.<sup>5</sup> In his first two essays for the Zeitschrift Pollock outlined his theory of state capitalism by means of an analysis

of the crises inherent in monopoly capitalism and found a potential antidote to them in the possibilities afforded by a planned economy. Two distinct currents of thought were prevalent at the time of writing: one view held that crises were caused by a decisive shift in the organic composition of capital, the other, the theory of 'underconsumption', located their origin in the inability of capital to create a market capable of meeting the requirements of its own production. Pollock took a daring step in that he proceeded to incorporate solutions to both these forms of crisis in the concept of state capitalism. While admitting that isolated economic and political problems were of import he nevertheless situated all crises in the structural problems that arose as a result of the concentration of capital in ever fewer hands. He detected that the concentration of capital itself led to increased difficulties in valorizing profit, as large amounts of goods had to be off-loaded with a consequently lower profit margin. Furthermore, the introduction of new technology, which attacked this process, entailed a rationalisation of the means of production with concomitant unemployment. In overcoming these problems capitalism tended to try to bridge the gap between politics and economics, so that the opposite poles of 'state' and 'capital' met and cooperated. Pollock explained this causation as follows. He suggested that the existence of large monopolies resulted not only in a contraction of competition but also in the reliance of increasingly large sections of the work force on the economic prosperity of a single company. This process was accelerated by crises which had the effect of eliminating 'disproportionality' within and between the different sectors of the economy in that they tended to destroy smaller companies, which in turn exacerbated the tendency towards capital concentration. Consequently, the state was forced into improvisatory intervention in the economy in order to bail out the companies upon whom ever larger numbers of workers had come to depend. This amounted to direct political action in order to guarantee the functioning of the economy. Such

an interlocking of economics and politics could only become greater because, by dint of being in receipt of state aid, monopolies now not only obstructed free competition but destroyed its very basis in equal opportunity.

The inflexibility in the economy increased still more as the capital investment per company that was necessary to ensure technological innovation and cheaper production grew. Pollock proposed that this had two radical consequences for the economy and thus for society. Firstly, technological development now unceasingly necessitated structural changes in the mode of production. Secondly, capital-intensive mass production replaced labour-intensive work processes bringing with it the dual dangers of perpetual over-production and structural unemployment. These two socio-economic tendencies, Pollock maintained, caused crises to become greater and to occur in ever more rapid succession.

Pollock held that mere contingency measures on the part of the state were insufficient to prevent these crises from causing a collapse of the capitalist system. Rather than predicting the imminent collapse of capitalism, therefore, he reached a conclusion which at the time must have seemed somewhat surprising, for he suggested that a restructuring of the system was possible without its capitalist foundations being shaken. This should not be read to mean that Pollock believed the tensions and antagonisms within the capitalist system to have abated, but rather that, unlike orthodox Marxists, he viewed an automatic collapse of capitalism to be improbable:

Ohne Zweifel läßt sich begründen, daß diese Krise mit kapitalistischen Mitteln überwunden werden kann und daß der 'monopolistische' Kapitalismus auf zunächst unabsehbare Zeit weiter zu existieren vermag.<sup>6</sup>

In other words, a new social structure that allows capitalism to continue can be achieved by limiting the economic and political powers of the individual owners of the means of production, in short by establishing a capitalist 'planned' economy.

This would involve formulating a unified production and pricing policy either for each individual economic sector or for the economy in its

entirety. Such a wide-scale restructuring of capitalist society, Pollock observed, would have to be effected by means of the machinery of the state. The state, as the agent of the ruling class, was in a position to devise a plan that involved all sectors of the economy and allowed for optimum output. By arguing that the continuation of the capitalist economy now depended on state intervention and regulation, Pollock proposed that state capitalist planning betokened something economically and socially new:

Sie ist qualitativ etwas ganz anderes als die bisher vorgenommenen partiellen Eingriffe. Sie setzt voraus, daß die mächtigsten Gruppen sich zugunsten des kapitalistischen Gesamtinteresses über eine planwirtschaftliche Politik verständigen, die die Gewinninteressen einzelner dieser Gruppen sehr stark berühren muß. Eine solche allmächtige Planzentrale hätte dann über das Wohl und Wehe aller übrigen Wirtschaftssubjekte, Kapitaleigentümer und Arbeiter eigenmächtig zu bestimmen, soweit sie nicht bei ihrer Willensbildung ausschlaggebend mitgeteilt wären. 7

Since political measures could clearly be used to effect a stabilisation of the economy, prognoses of an imminent systemic collapse lost any validity they might have had.

The plan was enforced, Pollock believed, so rigorously by the state that any opposition it might encounter from sections of the population would soon be eradicated:

...das veränderte Gewicht der Arbeiterklasse im Wirtschaftsprozess, die Umwälzungen in der Waffentechnik und die außerordentliche Vervollkommnung der geistigen Massenbeherrschung lassen auf absehbare Zeit einen Widerstand nur im Gefolge schwerster Katastrophen als möglich erscheinen. 8

From an assessment of these twin characteristics of contemporary capitalism, economic planning and the concomitant loss of social freedom, Pollock concluded that a new phase in the history of capitalism had begun:

Was zu Ende geht ist nicht der Kapitalismus, sondern nur seine liberale Phase. Ökonomisch, politisch und kulturell wird es in Zukunft für die Mehrzahl der Menschen immer weniger Freiheiten geben. 9

This assumption that capitalism was undergoing or had already undergone a significant change runs like a thread through the Institut(e)'s work in the 1930s, and it is thus hardly surprising that the changes in the role of the working class and the advent of techniques for controlling the masses became focal points of School research.

Pollock provided a sociological outline of the structures of power that held in this new form of capitalist economy. Within the framework of this 'planned' economy society became controlled by an ever dwindling group of 'economic feudal lords' and their adjutants. Private owners of capital either abdicated their power in favour of this group or went out of business and dropped into the ranks of the proletariat (while a pronounced division simultaneously became evident between highly qualified and unskilled workers). Further, this most powerful social group dictated what measures the government was to take and underlined its authority by controlling the whole apparatus of psychological mass domination.

Whereas the concept of a 'planned' capitalist society seemed plausible in sociological terms, a major objection could be raised against it from the viewpoint of economics. It was argued that a capitalist 'planned' economy was impossible, for capitalism could not survive without a market in which commodities could be bought and sold. Pollock contested this by suggesting that the destruction of the market actually permitted a more efficient regulation of prices and therefore of profits. The formation of capital would be facilitated by the fact that the economy was no longer subject to the vicissitudes of single owners of capital. It was thus possible that the removal of the market by the state through political intervention could eliminate the problems caused by monopolisation, for example, its negative effects on the forces of production, by establishing a direct relation between production and consumption. If subjected to a plan the concentration of capital into monopolies would not necessarily curb technological advancement either and changes within the organic composition of capital could thus be contemplated that would not effect employment or the realisation of surplus value. In order to be able to conceive of a marketless capitalist system Pollock had to change the relation between production, distribution and consumption that customarily held true in Marxism, for the locus of distribution and that of consumption more or less coincide in a 'planned'



capitalist economy. In a situation in which the market had either totally disappeared or existed only in a residual form and could no longer be considered an independent economic factor, distribution and consumption would be subject to the dictates of the sphere of production and their position in the theoretical model altered. This new conception allowed Pollock to avoid two obstacles he had originally foreseen to the factual existence of a 'planned' capitalist economy, namely the problem of striking a balance between centralisation and decentralisation, and the necessity of retaining limited consumer freedom so as to ensure sales.

If distribution and consumption were to be controlled, the second point became insubstantial, for freedom of choice would be a redundant category. Thus

Pollock was able to assert:

Durch eine beschränkte Konsumfreiheit wären aber erhebliche Störungen des Planes nicht zu befürchten, da die Bedarfsgewohnheiten bei mittleren Einkommenslagen relativ starr sind und diese Konstanz durch gesellschaftliche Beeinflussung und das Zusammenrücken der Einkommenspyramide sich noch verstärkte. 10

As we shall see, this proposed convergence of economic and social forms of controlling the population's wishes was later to be accorded great significance by Adorno and Horkheimer.

Pollock's conception of a 'planned' capitalist economy lays great emphasis on the interaction of base and superstructure. In a sense, this also amounts to a modification of Marxism, for Marxists had usually considered the relation between base and superstructure to be one-way, i.e. the base was judged to determine the nature of the superstructure and not vice versa. In Pollock's concept of state capitalism, by definition the state (an integral part of the superstructure) became enmeshed in regulating the means and relations of production, that is to say, in controlling the base rather than merely helping to maintain those relations. Pollock supposed that such state intervention was precipitated by the need to restructure the relations of production in line with the development of new techniques within the means of production, e.g. flow-processing, taylorisation etc. In other words, he

asserted that the forces of production had expanded and developed to such an extent that superstructural control of the base was necessary if capitalism was to be able to utilize these new forms effectively. The superstructure thus became, for the first time ever, a 'pure' superstructure: it adapted so as to meet the demands of the base and performed and functioned only to meet the base's demands - although the dialectical possibility of it affecting and thereby altering the base is equally dominant in Pollock's analysis.

It is now necessary to examine just how and to what extent Pollock saw this change as having taken place by 1941, following the establishment of a totalitarian planned state in Germany under National Socialist rule. In the 1941 issue of the Studies Pollock devoted an article to an elaboration of his concept of state capitalism. Significantly this article contained a preface by Horkheimer in which he described the series of which it was a part as depicting the transition from liberalism to totalitarianism. In his article Pollock judged state capitalism to be the successor to 'private' capitalism, because the state had assumed important functions held previously by entrepreneurs. State capitalism was not, however, to be equated with monopoly capitalism, for the market no longer possessed a regulating function; production and distribution could be coordinated by a system of direct controls. Consumption had in effect become the reflection of production. It could thus be said that the consumer was left no freedom of choice whatsoever owing to the preponderance of this system of controls. The new ruling class that emerged under state capitalism asserted its interests by installing itself as the administrative bureaucracy governing society. In its bureaucratic capacity it directed and dominated the vast majority of the population. Society was therefore still to be considered as an antagonistic unity of two opposing classes. However, Pollock did not elaborate on the form this antagonism took (something that has definite consequences for the validity of his theory) for in his view it could be kept in check by administrative

measures in the political arena :

The genuine problem of a planned society does not lie in the economic but in the political sphere, in the principles to be applied in deciding what needs shall have preference, how much time shall be spent for work, how much of the social product shall be consumed and how much shall be used for expansion etc. 11

Such political decision-making rested on a bed-rock of continuous production, for production could not, in the absence of economic risk and private, competing interests be interrupted by economic factors. State capitalism's success thus depended on its ability to legitimate itself politically, i.e. to prevent conflict within the ranks of the ruling class both as to the choice of ends to be encoded in the plan and on the distribution of profits.

In his discussion, however, Pollock remained undecided whether the higher standard of living possible in a peace-time economy would permit the continuation of a state capitalist system which seemed to be founded on a dictatorial war economy. He indicated that a peace-time economy would also allow more free time for the population, which might lead to greater difficulties for the ruling class in legitimating itself politically. In this context Pollock mentioned that a democratic form of state capitalism might exist. He did not clarify this point, mainly because such a form would appear to be logically impossible; state capitalism is founded on the domination of individual interest by a plan, and democracy runs counter to such domination. It would appear that this form of state capitalism is only mentioned to prevent Pollock's readers from seeing state capitalism as a stable, unchangeable structure.

In general, under state capitalism the political sphere is compelled by the needs of the economy to impose its wishes by force upon the sphere of production by suppressing society's real economic divisions. Society is therefore static in essence, not dialectical, for no dynamic relation exists between the superstructure (the polity) and the economic substructure. Pollock's theory thus culminates in an undynamic view of society, one, it will be seen, which becomes embedded in the analyses of the other theorists of the School.

Whereas in his 'state capitalism' article Pollock had only mentioned Nazi

Germany in passing, he devoted his next essay for the Studies 'Is National Socialism a New Order?' to the task of determining whether Nazi Germany was a state capitalist society or not. He first assessed Germany's social structure and ascertained that a compromise had been reached by the ruling groups which had resulted in a small, bureaucratic elite deciding on the scope and direction of the productive process. This new group ruled by diktat, thus abolishing the liberal public sphere. In the absence of such a public sphere, social power came to be determined solely by one's position in a hierarchy of commanders and commanded, i.e. the hierarchy Pollock viewed to be necessary if state capitalism were to persist. He summarised the situation:

...all basic concepts and institutions of capitalism have changed their function, interference of the state with the structure of the old economic order has by its sheer totality and intensity 'turned quality into quantity', transformed monopoly capitalism into state capitalism. 12

The function this caretaking elite exercised resembled that which Pollock had discerned to be one of the hallmarks of state capitalism. In a similar manner, the complete erosion of the market he found to have occurred under National Socialism was also a fundamental feature of state capitalism. In economic terms the market, prices and profits were now fully regulated and full employment achieved, guaranteeing the all-important political legitimisation necessary if state capitalism was to establish itself. The central steering of the whole economy led to the actual disappearance of the market as a social force. In this context Pollock argued that in Nazi Germany profit interests had become subsumed under a general plan, thus eliminating the possibility of market-caused crises. Such planning also meant that the totalitarian state became pervaded by a one-sided, non-legitimatory technical rationality, allowing a high degree of precision to be attained in planning.

It was possible to designate the order of National Socialist society as new, Pollock insisted, because it was state capitalist, i.e. an (as yet not necessarily fully developed) command economy, as opposed to a free market economy. This 'new order' seemed to be highly resilient, although the price for its

resilience was the 'total brutalization' of society, for the absence of autonomous market or economic laws, eradicated by the 'all-comprehensive technical rationality' of the plan, ensured that no serious dangers existed to prevent its continuation. One can conclude from this that Pollock did not foresee a speedy end to National Socialism. This is not to say that his theory of state capitalism and his centring of it on Nazi Germany was not without its problems. Pollock's approach forced him to abandon the Weberian ideal types of his previous essays. As state capitalism was regarded as innately totalitarian, the concept of 'democratic' state capitalism would now appear logically implausible. By concentrating on Nazi Germany Pollock also failed to make clear whether capitalism as a whole was changing into state capitalism as its only hope for stability, or whether this was an isolated German phenomenon. The thrust of his argument favoured the latter position, whereas he explicitly mentioned that state capitalism was coming into being elsewhere, albeit in non-totalitarian forms.

This last judgement was accepted by some of the other theorists of the 'School' who held the concept to have more general relevance and treated it as a theory of late capitalism. If this was Pollock's underlying intention then it would imply that he thought capitalist states as a whole were forced to be totalitarian if they wished to survive. This view of late capitalism's totalitarianism cannot envisage a change coming about, for if society is commanded by a plan - economically and psychologically - then nobody will be able to alter the fabric of state capitalism. Pollock's theory thus ends in a theoretical cul-de-sac.

The difficulties Pollock faced in correlating state capitalism and Nazi Germany are matched by a lack of clarity in the analysis he offers of the exact theoretical implications of the assumed absence of the market. He specified that the abolition of the market deprived individuals of the space they needed to constitute and develop their individuality. Marxism had traditionally founded its theory of revolution in a theory of individuality;

only by seeing himself to be an individual, it was believed, could a person comprehend his individuality as being curtailed by the ruling class. In the absence of a public sphere the individual was prevented from being more than an abstract 'in-itself'. Its 'for-itself' could no longer develop. If Marxism were to accept the theory of state capitalism, according to which the sphere of distribution was eradicated, then it had concomitantly to acknowledge that an agent of revolution was now prevented from developing, be it the working class or a non-class based grouping. In other words, without a market the social structure is static regardless of whether society is overtly totalitarian or not. A critical analysis that takes this into account can only negate society completely for a theory of determinate negation can no longer be situated within the social structure. The proletariat can now be conceived of as the determinate negation of society only at the very most in a highly abstract manner. However, even such an extremely pessimistic, abstract conception would have to be erected on an analysis of the constitution of surplus value and production in state capitalism. Pollock suggested that production now determined what was consumed and thus the sphere of distribution had no function independent of production, i.e. any dialectical relation that had existed under liberal capitalism had now ceased to exist.

Since production and technology were judged to be geared to furthering the requirements of a totalitarian ruling group any theory of change cannot be founded in them nor hope to use them. Equally, in the absence of a market, the concepts of surplus value and exchange value lose the character they had in Marx's work: they no longer describe capitalism. Quite how Pollock is therefore able to specify that society remains capitalist is unclear, for the appropriation of labour power can no longer be situated in a concept of surplus value. In other words, Pollock's initially fruitful, and indeed highly necessary corrective to mechanistic versions of Marxism deprives Marxism of its all-important dialectical theories of production and

change. The change Pollock detected in the organisation of commodity exchange and the problems it creates for Marxism have two important consequences for an analysis of art and culture. Firstly, culture, if understood as part of the superstructure, undergoes a functional change. The base now dictates to the superstructure how it should function. The superstructure, and with it culture, becomes a reflex of the base, although besides carrying out the base's commands and ensuring the latter's stability it must also at times effect change in the base when the plan requires it. The main function that the superstructure fulfils is to enforce consumption and, as the executor of the plan, to foster 'needs' for the base's products. Secondly, the constitution of value in all commodities - including cultural products since these are in the last instance commodities - is changed. It is particularly because of these two changes that Pollock's theory is of such importance for the work on aesthetics undertaken by the School's other theorists.

Before going on to analyse the degree to which his colleagues accepted the theory of state capitalism it is first necessary to pinpoint the implications that Pollock's theory has for a critique of political economy. To do so, the effect which the loss of the market and the change in the relation between base and superstructure have on the theory of value must be assessed, for such a theory forms the kernel of Marx's work.

Commodity exchange is based, according to Marx, on the presence of 'use values' and 'exchange values' in commodities, the former guaranteeing the latter's existence and the latter defining the product as a commodity. The nature of 'use value' and 'exchange value' is altered by the loss of the market Pollock's analysis envisaged. The 'use value' of the commodity is now defined by the producer, and this definition is reinforced not only by the influence of the superstructure's mechanisms of psychic domination but also by the controlled availability of products. The need on which a 'use value' is based no longer corresponds to a need a person experiences, as was

held to be the case by Marx. The function a commodity has for its producer is its 'exchange value' and since the producer determines needs, this 'exchange-value' replaces the 'use-values' in the commodity. That is to say, the consumer now purchases a commodity not for its 'use value', but for the 'exchange value' it represents, i.e. the worth he has been told it has. Pollock's theory of state capitalism thus not only destroys any dialectical theory of social change, it alters the very basis of a Marxist economic analysis.

Pollock's alteration of the Marxist theory has dire consequences for a Marxist theory of art and culture. As we have just seen, in a perverse sense the 'exchange value' is now the 'use value' that the consumer wishes to acquire by purchasing the commodity; perverse for the term 'use' now only refers to the profit the producer gains from the sale and because the arbitrary need the consumer experiences can no longer be judged to be his own. Pollock concluded quite accurately from this that the gratification individuals were offered by a commodity ensnared them completely:

The released individual is thus caught in a physiological and psychological structure which serves to guarantee and perpetuate his oppression. 13

In this context cultural products (understood here to be 'high culture' and 'mass culture', not as products of lived praxis, but something presented from above) would be subject to the same alteration in the constitution of value, that is unless they are viewed as having nothing in common with commodities. Culture and hence art, in other words, is now produced to perpetuate domination or to foster particular needs in the consumer. Any dialectical nature cultural products might have had, any 'use value' they might have possessed, is eradicated: they become purely ideological in nature. To the aesthetic theorist who is seeking to find a progressive element in art, such an analysis offers little alternative other than to flee into a world detached from the social structure, a position untenable for a Marxist.

It is difficult to ascertain prima facie to what extent the theorists of the



'School' were conscious of the structural change in capitalism suggested by Pollock. Because of the delegatory nature of Institut(e) work Adorno, Horkheimer, Löwenthal and Marcuse only ever made indirect references to the concept of state capitalism, and even then such indications were couched in the non-economic language of either aesthetics or ideology critique. Nevertheless, a discussion of Pollock's theory of state capitalism clearly formed a backdrop to their writings and as such its influence is undeniable. In the light of this it would seem all the more important to pay some attention to Pollock's work when discussing the aesthetic theories of the other members of the School, for, since his theory of state capitalism was central to the positions his colleagues held, Pollock's work must also be crucial for our understanding of their work. By assessing the degree to which each of them accepted his theory it is possible to determine basic differences between the work of Adorno, Horkheimer, Löwenthal and Marcuse which would otherwise go unnoticed. The concept of state capitalism will therefore be used as the point of all comparison in the elaboration of the aesthetic positions.

However, as we have seen, the theory of state capitalism is itself not without its problems and this could have had two possible effects on the work of Pollock's colleagues. On the one hand, the theoretical inadequacies of Pollock's theory may have been transposed into the writings of those colleagues who accepted the theory, i.e. certain weaknesses and emphases inherent in the respective aesthetic positions of the School's core members may be attributed to the problems posed by Pollock's theory. On the other, Adorno, Horkheimer, Löwenthal and Marcuse may have reflected on the theory's deficiencies and explicitly attempted to surmount them by altering some of Pollock's presuppositions. Regardless of whichever transpires to be the case (and they may both hold true), at this stage of the analysis what can be said is that the limitations inherent in the concept of state capitalism assuredly pose problems for aesthetic and cultural theories based on it. The validity of Pollock's theory today could be challenged by pointing to the fact that under

late capitalism a market appears to persist and that all Western economies are to a greater or lesser extent crisis-ridden. Nevertheless, the fact that Pollock had a theory of the base at all shows the inaccuracy of the criticism commonly levelled at the School, namely that its aesthetic and cultural theories involved no conception of the base.<sup>14</sup> Doubt must also be cast on the equally prevalent criticism that the School's various theorists are elitist or esoteric,<sup>15</sup> since it can be argued that in a totalitarian society thought is forced to buy abstract-theoretical rather than praxis-oriented. Such forms of criticism are superficial for they ignore the roots of the theories they wish to criticize.

Criticism of School aesthetics must, therefore, address itself to a different problem, that is to say, it must trace Pollock's theory in the work of the other theorists and determine the consequences which the flaws in the concept of state capitalism have for the different aesthetic theories. An understanding of the School's underlying theory of society thus presents a clearer basis for a comprehension and criticism of its judgements as well as providing a position from which the concepts the theorists developed can be rejuvenated in a manner more appropriate to a contemporary analysis of capitalism.

C H A P T E R 3 : HORKHEIMER AND THE FORMATION OF CRITICAL THEORY

In his influential essay 'Traditionelle und kritische Theorie' Horkheimer argued that a theory could remain valid despite changes in its constituent elements.<sup>1</sup> In keeping with this statement, his social philosophy treated each object of study as something which contained within it the distinguishing marks of the society in which it had originated, be that thing a philosophical idea or a concrete 'fact'. Equally, if the object was perceived to have changed, then the theory attempting to grasp it had also to change so as to remain able to give an adequate description of the object. What Horkheimer meant by this was that Marxism itself had to be regarded as an historical object of which certain parts were in need of revision or alteration if it was to be able both to keep in step with social change and to take such change into account in the theory of society which Marxism constructed and on which, in turn, it was centred. Horkheimer hoped that by being open to such flexibility, social theory could reflect on major changes and yet avoid becoming epistemologically relativist, i.e. so long as Marxism did not become a static body of thought its main, incisive analysis of society could persist. In accordance with this view, the main framework of theory that Horkheimer constructed in the course of his directorship of the Institut(e) stayed stable whereas the emphases within it and the nature of some of its parts changed considerably.

In the light of the above it is surprising that there has been a tendency among scholars to treat Horkheimer's writings as an unchanging body of thought, namely as a critique of ideology. The failing of this approach is that it cannot observe or account for the changes within Horkheimer's theoretical opus, but sees this instead as a continuous elaboration of one theme which then, suddenly, was transformed in 1941. Horkheimer's essays do not bear this out, for, if studied with Pollock's findings in mind, they clearly fall into three chronological phases. In this context Pollock's work on

planned economies assumes critical importance for any understanding of Horkheimer's philosophy, because Pollock had, crucially, judged society to have undergone a significant transformation from monopoly capitalism to state capitalism. If Horkheimer followed his own thinking on the historical nature of theory and agreed with Pollock's assessment of capitalism, then he would have had to change those parts of his theory that no longer described adequately the new state of affairs.

A close study of his essays reveals that precisely such a change was made. The three phases in Horkheimer's work (1931-1937, 1937, and 1938-1942) match the stages in his acceptance of Pollock's proposals. In his pre-1937 essays Horkheimer rejected Pollock's suggestion that a capitalist 'planned' society was possible; by 1937 he was less certain of his ground and maintained that a theory had to be able to adapt itself to a changing situation; and by 1941 he saw fit to retract his initial rejection entirely and write a foreword to Pollock's state capitalism essay, for Pollock's insistence on the connection between National Socialist Germany, New Deal America and the concept of state capitalism seemed to Horkheimer to hold true.

This chapter will therefore proceed to describe Horkheimer's philosophy by outlining chronologically the changes that occurred within it. Moreover, since it was Horkheimer who laid down the theoretical lines to be adopted in the School's research work, the changes in his thought are of exceptional significance for an understanding of the work undertaken by Adorno, Löwenthal and Marcuse. If these changes can be shown to have been influenced clearly by Pollock's work, then we must expect the aesthetic theories devised by the latter three thinkers also to reflect the influence of the concept of state capitalism.

#### 1931 - 1937: Early Essays for the Zeitschrift

In the essays he wrote prior to 1937,<sup>2</sup> Horkheimer proceeded from the premise that capitalist society, as exposed by the critique of political economy, was not rational. Such a society was founded on an antagonism, for its central

pillar - the exchange principle - divided society into two groups: owners of the means of production and owners of labour power. By preventing the majority of the population from exercising any control over the means of production (and by extension over their own destinies) society functioned only in the interests of a minority of its members and was thus irrational, given that potentially it could provide for the wellbeing of all.

Horkheimer concluded from this description of class society that the concepts which class society used in order to describe itself must also be irrational. By irrational he meant that the concepts used by bourgeois philosophy did not correspond to the objects they sought to portray, for the designation of these objects never reflected what they could potentially be in a future 'rational' society. In labelling as 'rational' 'that which is what it can be', Horkheimer made use of Hegelian logic. Hegel had suggested that a difference existed between what a person thought an object was and what it really could be or indeed was. Whereas Plato had assumed that this state of not reaching the full 'form' of an object was eternal, Hegel (and with him Horkheimer) believed the discrepancy could be overcome if society were to be governed by Reason. Hegel had maintained that since all objects would exist in a rational totality, they would be what they had always inherently been able to be. However, Hegel's philosophy lost its critical edge at this juncture, for he advocated that such a state of Reason already existed under what he termed 'civil society'. Here Horkheimer parted company with Hegel and followed the path taken by Marx, for he defined 'rational' as the state in which man is what he potentially could be, i.e. when all people share equally in the wealth of society.

Horkheimer's definition of rationality and the epistemology he founded on it fulfilled two important functions. They provided him with the basis for a critique of contemporary bourgeois thought and also allowed a different society to be conceived of. The frame of reference of the methodology Marx had used in his Critique of Political Economy was extended to include not only basic economic and social structures, but also patterns of thought. Hork-

heimer set out to show by means of this epistemology that bourgeois science's claim to be objective was untrue, for it followed that the objects science tried to describe did not match the concepts used to describe them as long as society - and with it science as part of that society - was rational. Bourgeois thought ignored the object's inner necessity by deeming society, and with it its sum parts, to be rational disregarding the potentiality latent in each object. Horkheimer argued that such thought was ideological precisely in that it assumed a one-to-one correspondence, i.e. an identity, between their concepts and the objects these are intended to encapsulate, whereas the object could not in fact be reduced to what they were in the irrational society.

Horkheimer concluded that the truth of society could be portrayed by means of an exposition of this claim that an object's appearance was identical with what it was. In contrast, for Horkheimer, society's truth lay in its 'non-identity' with what it appeared as in the present. Horkheimer's work could thus be adequately labelled 'non-identity theory', in that by making use of Hegel's 'determinate negation' it attempted to confront an object's current material state of development with that object's inherent possibilities by uncovering the false interpretation given the object by contemporary science and philosophy. In addressing the potentiality of an object, non-identity theory undertook to indicate how the barriers preventing the unfolding of this potentiality could be lifted. Horkheimer's method followed the Marxist notion of 'critique' by being both a critique of the present state of a social phenomenon and simultaneously a construction of an alternative state for that object.

In a manner akin to his critique of modern thought (specifically of positivism and metaphysics) Horkheimer determined that historical materialism as a body of thought was in danger of committing a similar error. He took the radical step of proposing that Marxism in its contemporary form no longer embraced its object of inquiry adequately. Indeed, historical materialism's

concepts needed to be reformulated if they were to account for changes in society that had occurred in the 20th century. In this sense, non-identity theory was critical towards itself in that it was ever aware of its own historical nature (a fact which has led some to question its validity<sup>3</sup> ). As a consequence, its concepts were designed to reflect as accurately as possible the contemporary form of societal antagonisms and the manner in which these developed by measuring them against a rationality based on an assessment of society's 'inner necessity'.

In line with this methodology Horkheimer used non-identity theory predominantly to analyse on the one hand the potential for change to a more rational society (by means of a study of the inhibiting factors preventing such change), and, on the other, contemporary philosophy. From these two lines of inquiry he then derived what 'true' theory should be, for the analysis of society would reveal whether a historical materialist theory needed to be up-dated in any way. Non-identity theory in the manner in which Horkheimer developed it in his early essays can thus be said to be simultaneously an ideology critique of modes of thought prevalent at the time and a critique of society itself.

Although it follows from the above that a critique of society was central to his methodology, in his early essays in the Zeitschrift Horkheimer never addressed this area specifically, preferring to remark upon society in passing. Reconstructing from these fugitive observations it can be deduced that Horkheimer conceived of society as being 'in transition' ("Übergangsgesellschaft") Economic indicators suggested to his mind that liberal capitalism was in the process of changing into international monopoly capitalism, whereby the emphasis on the international character of monopoly capitalism marked a divergence from Pollock's work. While regarding this transition to be complete in economic terms, Horkheimer judged that the change in cultural institutions and people's beliefs had not, as yet, been fully effected.

This conception of society is from the outset, fraught with contradictions, not least because Horkheimer offered no rigorous definition of what he meant by international monopoly capitalism. He viewed the monopolies as competing

against one another on the world market, akin to Lenin's conception of imperialism, and yet, from his frequent reference to crises, it is evident that he believed the international market still to exist. These crises arose because vested interest groups disregarded the potential inherent in the productive forces, shackling these rather to their personal gain. (In this context Horkheimer classed science as a productive force) He concluded:

Nie stand die Armut der Menschen in schreienderem Gegensatz zu ihrem möglichen Reichtum als gegenwärtig, nie waren alle Kräfte grausamer gefesselt als in diesen Generationen, wo die Kinder hungern und die Hände der Väter Bomben drehen. 4

Unlike Pollock, Horkheimer saw the only possible change such a social formation could undergo as being the move to a completely different, planned society. Consequently, he could not conceive of, let alone countenance, society already being based on a plan, for he associated a plan with a rational, positive future in which all people partook of the fruits of production.

In part, Horkheimer coupled his remarks on the economic shape of international monopoly capitalism with a brief outline of the socio-political structure it had created. The market-dominated society, he maintained, had consisted of isolated 'monads' which had competed with one another, either for capital or for work. Horkheimer drew a distinction between liberal capitalism and monopoly capitalism at this point, for he noted a shift in the order of this domination of man by man (and of nature by man). He did not consider this to have constituted a change in the ideology of abstract individualism liberal capitalism had preached, but argued instead that this showed the balance between the social classes to have changed. The concentration of capital now occurring meant that an ever-decreasing number of dominators controlled an ever-increasing number of people,<sup>5</sup> with the consequence that society under international monopoly capitalism became a truly mass society.<sup>6</sup> The masses - monadic units of labour power - became dominated directly ('Befehls Gewalt') by the political institutions of society functioning as



caretakers for the dominant interest groups. This conception is similar in nature, structure and logic to Pollock's concept of state capitalism, but with the difference that Horkheimer did not envisage the state having to intervene by plan so as to enable this process to continue.

From the above we must infer that Horkheimer judged the relation between the socio-political sphere and the economic sphere (i.e. between base and superstructure) to have changed. The superstructure now functioned on behalf of the base quite directly in the form of domination and ensured the latter's continuance. That is to say, it became a reflection of the base and was thus reduced to the undialectical form vulgar Marxists always assumed it had taken. Horkheimer suggested that this ideological apparatus had to be maintained if continual stabilization of the base were to be achieved:

Erst wenn die Verhältnisse so weit fortgeschritten sind, die Interessengegensätze eine solche Schärfe erreicht haben, daß auch ein durchschnittliches Auge den Schein durchdringen kann pflegt sich ein eigener ideologischer Apparat mit selbstbewußten Tendenzen auszubilden. 7

However, rather than outlining the structure such an apparatus would have to adopt Horkheimer concentrated on listing its effects.

To do so he introduced a novel element into Marxian social theory. Ever since his inaugural address he had maintained that it was only by use of psycho-analytical categories that the mediation of the base in the superstructure could be understood and it is precisely such categories that he set out to use in order to reveal the concrete psychic forms that monopoly capitalism's ideology appealed to and utilized.

The most forceful manner in which 'false consciousness' was embedded in people's minds, he argued, was by persuading them to internalise psychic drives.<sup>8</sup> This internalisation was therefore the cornerstone of the conformity shown to international monopoly capitalism's political system and consequently the most basic form of domination on which it was founded. Such domination also distinguished the era of international monopoly capitalism from past ages in psycho-social terms. Whereas in the past people had internalised psychic drives as a response to external stimuli in order to attain some religious or nationalist goal, they now internalised their wishes for

gratification without being offered some 'higher happiness' in return.

On the basis of this analysis Horkheimer ascertained that the authoritarian state - the label he gave to the political form of international monopoly capitalism - had to be centred on the cult of a 'leader'. This cult encouraged the population to transpose their sublimated drives onto the figure of the leader and, by proxy, the state, and thus not to experience dissatisfaction at their renunciation of sensuous, earthly pleasure. This use of psychoanalytical categories enabled Horkheimer to unearth a dual purpose behind the authoritarian state's nurturing of such drive-internalisation. Not only were the masses kept under control thus guaranteeing the economic position of the dominant social group, but also society was divested of any obligation to offer its members material happiness. In this fashion mankind was deprived of the ability to complain at its suffering, for the masses no longer had a psychological need to improve their economic status. As a consequence there was little reason for Horkheimer to consider social change a likely occurrence.

This description of current drive internalisation poses difficulties for Horkheimer's analysis of society. If, as a result of drive internalisation, people cannot recognize there being a better world inherent in the present form of society then surely there is no need for the exhaustive ideological apparatus Horkheimer had determined was necessary, for people would never be able to penetrate the web of deceit monopoly capitalism had woven around itself. This would only not hold true if the ideological apparatus were judged to have brought this stage of drive internalisation about in the first place. However, Horkheimer is unclear on precisely this point.

Horkheimer underpinned his indictment of international monopoly capitalism with his other major concern, namely the application of non-identity theory to bourgeois philosophy. This he investigated for its ideological content, for, viewing philosophy as the bulwark of the thought of any particular era, he found it logical that any ideological content he would uncover

was just as important for an overview of contemporary ideology as was the discussion of drive internalisation. He turned his attention specifically to positivism and metaphysics, treating both systems of thought as representations of ideological thought in the transition from liberal to international monopoly capitalism.<sup>9</sup>

Horkheimer claimed that positivism reduced society to its given empirical reality and was as a consequence ideological. He based his argument on the assumption that positivism regarded every object as empirically measurable and thus quantitatively verifiable. In so doing positivism divided reality into a quantity of essentially identical entities because these could all be reduced to one standard of measurement. Positivism thus implied that society was unchanging for such quantification ignored any historically-changing qualities inherent in objects. Furthermore, by basing verification - supposedly the standard of truth - on the repetition of an event, positivism had to assume that the world was a constant, harmonious entity. Additionally, the weight placed on repetition debased all things and events to the level of their immediate function overlooking any qualities they might have over and above that present function. As a consequence of the approach it took, Horkheimer regarded positivism as a method of calculation ('Verstand') rather than reasoning.

By emphasizing the manner in which positivism failed to describe the real world, i.e. its non-identity with its claims, Horkheimer highlighted what positivism could not perceive and thus was able to outline how positivism eulogized the reality of international monopoly capitalism and denuded that reality of any potential for change. In this sense positivism was deeply ideological and served not as a science to aid people as a whole but to abet the powers that governed society.

Metaphysics, Horkheimer proposed, tended to obscure reality in a similar manner. Unable to find a meaning in reality, metaphysics planted a meaning behind reality in the shape of some unifying concept that transcended the antagonisms of class society. In so doing, metaphysics assumed that substance,

i.e reality, was substanceless in its substantiality. As a body of thought metaphysics had therefore to be considered solipsistic for it turned reality in upon itself, perceiving an ontos within the self beyond history. Horkheimer argued that metaphysics' postulation of a single meaning beyond all antagonisms was quietistic and conformist in that it condemned everything to always remain unchanged in essence, for changes in reality would not effect the unifying concept behind reality. Metaphysics thus deprived itself of any basis from which it could criticize social injustice. Metaphysics in its contemporary forms of Existentialism, 'Lebensphilosophie' and Neokantianism was, Horkheimer contended, just as ideological as positivism for it too was content with society as it was and not only did not view change as possible, it also considered social change essentially pointless.

Unlike positivism or metaphysics, Horkheimer proposed, his variant of historical materialism established on the foundation of non-identity theory was a correct theory of society. This was the case because his theory preserved humanity's real interests in that it viewed objects as being potentially rational in the future, e.g. the productive forces could be used for the good of all and science would be freed from its servitude to a domatory social system. Reason could be established in society by means of a system of planning which would guarantee that technical knowledge and the potential of the productive forces would be used fruitfully for the benefit of all.<sup>10</sup> In his early essays Horkheimer therefore rejected Pollock's concept of state capitalist planning for he envisaged the plan providing the basis for the transition to a future classless society. In this sense the theory itself could lay claim to being rational and therefore true.

Horkheimer founded this criticism of international monopoly capitalism on a quite concrete form of verification, namely whether individuals could act on the critique and change society. The possible connection that could be established between theory and action was sufficient in Horkheimer's view to demonstrate the correctness of the theory. The fact that individuals were

able to interact with reality to bring about social change was made possible by non-identity theory's exposure of both the ideological constellations of international monopoly capitalist society and the objective possibilities for a new society which that society nevertheless contained. Horkheimer maintained that the 'majority of the population' (his term for the proletariat) need only understand the existence of this potentiality and its subconscious awareness of the nature of capitalism would be activated. His work at this point seems to mirror Lukács' belief that the proletariat somehow innately comprehends capitalism. Unlike Pollock he was optimistic in that he believed such a change to be possible. And yet, the presence of drive internalisation that Horkheimer had described would surely prevent this social class from reaching such a consciousness.

In summary, it can be said that in the first phase of his work not only did Horkheimer show how non-identity theory could be verified, but he also claimed that ethically it had to be put into practice, for only via the transition to a new society could what was to his mind an otherwise doomed society survive. In this context Horkheimer referred to those elements of the liberal capitalist superstructure eradicated or endangered by its monopoly capitalist successor, namely the ideals of humanity promulgated during the Enlightenment: liberty, fraternity and equality. These could, he proposed optimistically, be transformed ('umfunktioniert') by being given real rather than ideological meaning as the key properties of a rational society, since they would designate integral features of reality. In this new society there would no longer be any destructive drives caused by repressed, internalised energy, for society would not be based on domination and would therefore no longer exact such internalisation from its members. Horkheimer thus claimed that non-identity theory was both true and partisan (to the majority of the population and therefore to humanity as a whole) and that it was optimistic in that it centred itself on proposals for a new, free society.

1937: 'Traditionelle und kritische Theorie'

The second phase of Horkheimer's work consists of one essay for the Zeitschrift

namely 'Traditionelle und kritische Theorie', often cited as the 'manifesto' of the Frankfurt School. 'Traditionelle und kritische Theorie'<sup>11</sup> does not signal a break with Horkheimer's earlier writings but rather a shift in subject matter. It provides a thorough elaboration of non-identity theory's categories and reveals an underlying difference in tone to the earlier essays. While attention must be paid to these new developments, because the ideas this programmatic essay contains are undoubtedly relevant to the Institut(e)'s work as a whole, it is worth concentrating on the precise nature of critical theory as Horkheimer presented it in the essay. However, there is some difficulty in depicting critical theory, for in the essay the portrayal of such a theory is interwoven with an analysis of what Horkheimer called 'traditional theory'. By this he meant science in the Cartesian tradition, vulgar Marxism and the various philosophies of late liberal capitalism he had analysed in his earlier essays. By including vulgar Marxism in the analysis Horkheimer made it clear that he wished historical materialism to reflect on itself rather than to accept its epistemology as timeless and unchanging. Owing to this overlap with his earlier work in the following discussion of 'Traditionelle und kritische Theorie' and its significance for the Institut(e) only a brief summary of the salient points in Horkheimer's critique of 'traditional theory' will be offered in order to highlight the properties Horkheimer accorded to critical theory.

In 'Traditionelle und kritische Theorie' Horkheimer took up the fusion of non-identity theory and the framework of a Marxist critique of political economy where he had left it in the earlier essays. He maintained that such an approach was necessary not only to show traditional theory's limitations but also to identify the changes in society that had to be taken into account by contemporary Marxism. Surprisingly, it has been suggested that Horkheimer's earlier essays were 'materialist' (since they were optimistic in their expectation of social change) but that his later work turned away from such a mode of thought after the advent of a fully-fledged Fascist state in Germany. This

interpretation of 'Traditionelle und kritische Theorie' only provides a partial account of the shift in emphasis to which the essay testifies. Whereas his earlier essays discussed either explicitly or implicitly the superstructure of the 'transitional' period from liberal to monopoly capitalism, its relation to the economic base of society and the way in which the two interacted and infected the individual, in 'Traditionelle und kritische Theorie' Horkheimer sought to analyse the nature of monopoly capitalism itself and its implications for a critique of political economy. He devised 'critical theory' in the light of the conclusions he drew from this analysis.

Horkheimer suggested that traditional theory contented itself simply with the collection of data in the form of so-called 'facts'. These facts were then ordered according to mathematical algorithms. In other words, 'facts', be these things or persons, were reduced to mechanical functions from which theorems were then derived. Traditional theory therefore had to be viewed merely as a system of interactive theorems which regard the world as blind material that is only 'knowable' if ordered in accordance with such theorems, and is thus bereft of any human influence: Reality was thereby reduced to the function of a linear logic.<sup>12</sup> As a consequence, a complete division arose between traditional theory and the reality it sought to describe, for everything in that reality became regarded as a 'rationalized' object of a theory which considered itself not to be transcendent of reality in its ordering of 'facts'. In this manner, Horkheimer maintained, induction was granted an absolute epistemological status.

Traditional theory therefore was solely a matter of rendering 'facts' tangible ('bepfaßbar'), it could only be interested in both calculation and the measurable function of each object, i.e. it regarded things merely in terms of quantity and not quality; things were what their quantity was. Horkheimer asserted that this quantity did not differ in essence from the exchange value of commodities. Traditional theory was in this sense ideo-

logical in that it was self-deceptive; it ignored its own social conditioning. It was also ideological for it disguised science's relationship to the productive process and the role this process played in the formation of ideology. Traditional theory was additionally ideological for it grounded itself in a supposedly 'objective' observer who was 'interest-free' or 'value-free'. Horkheimer pointed out that such a conception of the scientist was untrue, for not only were facts prejudged in their existence by social forces dominant at a particular time, but the same forces also influenced the scientist himself. Traditional theory coupled this conception of a 'value-free' scientist to an ideological advocacy of the 'naturalness' of all laws, whereas many were social in origin. Both the market society and man's relation to nature were not, however, natural in essence but historical and therefore changeable. By viewing all laws as natural, Horkheimer argued, traditional theory degraded the 'transcendent' observer and with him mankind to the passive role of merely measuring occurrences, not causing them. In so doing, Horkheimer continued incisively, traditional theory resigned in the face of human praxis and indirectly championed conformism to the status quo of monopoly capitalism and its productive apparatus.

In contradistinction to traditional theory, Horkheimer proposed, critical theory assumed all facts - including the very formulation of problems - to be determined in some way by the social structure of which they were part.<sup>13</sup> Such a theory did not, therefore, consider that the theorist, the theory or the facts existed in a vacuum; all were elements of the social process. In critical theory there was, consequently, no autonomous observer. Equally, it could not found itself on logical induction in that it regarded perception as socially-mediated, not as ahistorical and abstract. Horkheimer located this observation in the very nature of language:

Es (das Reden) richtet sich gegen die Annahme eines absoluten, übergeschichtlichen Subjekts oder gegen die Auswechselbarkeit der Subjekte, als ob man sich aus dem gegenwärtigen historischen Augenblick hinaus und ganz im Ernst in jeden beliebigen hineinversetzen könnte. 14

Where critical theory agreed with the traditionalists was in believing that



that nothing could be changed within the existing social structure. Horkheimer demonstrated, however, that if the concept of reason were understood historically, then the very structure of society could be changed into a new, rational social formation.<sup>15</sup> He did not mean that a change in ideas could bring about a change in society, but only that a new concept of reason could function as the basis of a new society. In such a society the present duality of thought and object, which traditional theory took as its starting point, would, he submitted, be factually overcome.

By showing how a future, rational society could be created which obviated all misery the critical theorist avoided, Horkheimer maintained, becoming bound to the interests of one social class<sup>16</sup> and was thus able to retain independence from the socially-dominant forces. Significantly, Horkheimer did not presume that such an exposition of a future society involved allegiance to the proletariat or that this class was the subject-object of all knowledge and of true history, as had Lukács. The theorist was not, as a consequence, bound to a particular historical outlook of the working class.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, Horkheimer's construction ensures that what the theorist speaks of is true and positive, for it shows the possibility of a just society based on the intellectual and technical means available. In this sense, critical theory cannot be classified as utopian for Horkheimer spoke of a real freedom and of the real spontaneity of mankind, by which mankind's 'inner' necessity would be fulfilled.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, Horkheimer suggested that the only remaining constraints on mankind in the future society would be the need to produce to survive physically.

In order to analyse the irrationality of present society Horkheimer used 'critical concepts' in the manner of non-identity theory - but at the level of a critique of knowledge itself, not of particular philosophies. To do so he transformed ('umbilden') the meanings of conventional concepts by showing their inherent limits and thus forced them to switch over ('umschlagen') into concepts critical of the present. He argued, for instance that an exhaustive concept of reason could not be fully conceptualised, for society had not yet become rational and there was thus no means of

knowing what shape full rationality would take. What could be said, however, was that the traditional concept of reason, like its object, was man-made in origin and therefore historically limited in validity. If this insight were taken up into the initial postulation of the concept, then the notion of reason would receive a critical edge, because it presented the potentiality within itself: it would indicate the need for a new, truly rational society.

In establishing a tension between concepts (such as 'labour' or 'value') and what they were taken to mean by traditional theory, critical theory thus passed judgement on present society. This judgement itself had to change as society changed in history; nevertheless, the analysis of the underlying nature remained, Horkheimer thought, unaltered as long as the economic structure of society were to stay constant. Critical concepts thus presented a continually unfolding picture of the social totality:

Allgemeine Kriterien für die kritische Theorie als Ganzes gibt es nicht; denn sie beruhen immer auf der Wiederholung von Ereignissen und somit auf einer sich selbst reproduzierenden Totalität. 19

Critical theory could therefore be termed imaginative for it was ever-changing and yet always created a constructive image of a real, rational future. In this latter sense alone can it be deemed transcendent.

At the heart of its critique of knowledge, critical theory deployed a critique of the object of knowledge, society. It refrained from reducing facts to the status of exemplars - as traditional theory did - for not only did it highlight the irrational nature of concepts, it also specified that the very objects or facts which the concepts described were equally irrational. Because capitalism was based on repression the nature of all objects within it was moulded by that oppression. Significantly, Horkheimer argued, that nevertheless most objects always retained an element of reason, since they originated in man's struggle with nature for self-preservation, which was by definition the basis of all rationality. Because the struggle had hitherto been based on the oppression of men by men the objects thus produced

had assumed an irrational form - one from which they could, however, be freed, Critical theory preserved these objects' rational content, Horkheimer claimed, by emphasizing their 'inner' necessity and as a consequence was able to show how their irrationality could be discarded in a future society. In other words, this future orientation inherent in critical theory not only served to prevent the theorist from becoming bound to a historical class position, but to ground the critique of knowledge and that of social material.

The extent to which this conception of a future, truly human society played a pivotal role in critical theory can be seen by Horkheimer's description of the relation between nature and mankind. This was intended to demonstrate the contradiction between what mankind could be and what it was under monopoly capitalism. Horkheimer maintained that because nature was chained under monopoly capitalism to mankind's needs by means of the domination of men, relations between people had become completely externalized, i.e. people regarded and treated each other as objects and were no longer able to recognize that they were themselves nature. Horkheimer's position resembled that of Lukács at this juncture for he viewed this externalisation to have become 'second nature' to people(although; unlike Lukács, he used psychological categories to underpin this category). The workers' immediate experience of the work process, Horkheimer suggested, was suppressed by this second nature as a result of various psychological mechanisms, so that people were unable to perceive the alienated character of the fruits of their labour. However, he parted company with Lukács in suggesting that the continued presence of this second nature meant that the proletariat could no longer be viewed as a harbinger of change, i.e. as a revolutionary agent per se. It is this point that has led some commentators to regard Horkheimer's writings as un-Marxist, despite the fact that he had pointed out that:

Wenn auch die Elemente der zukünftigen Kultur schon vorhanden sind, so bedarf es doch einer bewußten Neukonstruktion der ökonomischen Verhältnisse. 20

In the light of this remark one must conclude that if Horkheimer was un-Marxist at this stage in his writings this was because he was no longer believed Marx's political analysis to be accurate.

Horkheimer proposed that in order to realign Marx's political standpoint with the contemporary state of affairs, critical theory had to strive to penetrate to the level of the real facts if the ideology that cemented the otherwise deeply sundered social fabric together was to be counted. Only with such knowledge at its disposal could humanity, he asserted, at some point constitute itself as the subject of society and undertake a new construction, not a modification, of the economy which was at the centre of society. This new, less optimistic view both of the political power of the working class and of the manner in which the economy could function in a future society would seem to indicate that Horkheimer had started to take Pollock's work into account, for more orthodox Marxist economists merely suggested that the same productive forces could be used by the working class to lay the foundations for socialism.<sup>21</sup> Using the same productive forces would simply mean, in Horkheimer's eyes, continuing the domination of mankind under a different social structure and would be no guarantee of freedom, for a planned, structured use of such productive forces had resulted only in a new form of capitalism, namely its state variant. In other words, in 'Traditionelle und kritische Theorie' Horkheimer came to the conclusion that the domination of nature and man by man lay deeply rooted in the productive forces themselves.

Whereas this conclusion was quite unheard of in Marxism, Horkheimer's description of monopoly capitalism's economy was completely in line with mainstream Marxism at the time. In 'Traditionelle und kritische Theorie' he made a series of observations on the economy which did not tally with Pollock's work. Society, Horkheimer maintained, was based on the exchange principle, according to which goods were produced and exchanged as commodities, i.e. for profit and not for the good of all.<sup>22</sup> Because, he continued, this

principle led to a sharpening of social relations and to the creation of an oppressive culture, society could not be deemed rational. Whereas this general analysis still accorded with Pollock's views, Horkheimer disregarded Pollock's proposal that crises could be surmounted by capitalism:

...wie die Tauschwirtschaft bei der gegebenen und sich freilich unter ihrem Einfluß verändernden Beschaffenheit von Menschen und Dingen/.../ ohne daß ihre eigenen, von der fachlichen Nationalökonomie dargestellten Prinzipien durchbrochen würden, notwendig zur Verschärfung der gesellschaftlichen Gegensätze führen muß, die in der gegenwärtigen geschichtlichen Epoche zu Kriegen und Revolutionen treibt. 23

Horkheimer clearly still believed that the economic base of society could not be structured by a plan in such a manner as to prevent the development of crises, whereas Pollock held that the political sphere could keep crises in check and had thus become the motor of society. Horkheimer continued to speak of the economic base in classical Marxist terms:

Die Festigkeit der Theorie rührt daher, daß bei allem Wandel der Gesellschaft doch ihre grundlegende Struktur, das Klassenverhältnis in seiner einfachsten Gestalt, und damit auch die Idee seiner Aufhebung identisch bleibt. 24

Nevertheless, by insisting that socialisation could not be adequately explained simply by citing the direct overall influence of the economy, he managed to avoid collapsing critical theory into an economic version of Marxism.<sup>25</sup>

It remains unclear whether Horkheimer intended his readers to understand the "sharpening" of which he spoke to have occurred within the institutions of the superstructure as well or not. If this were indeed his intention then his analysis would in a sense accept one of Pollock's tenets, namely that the superstructure had been altered to such an extent that social change was possible within the political sphere. Since Horkheimer claimed that as long as the exchange principle dominated the substructure, changes in society could be traced in social institutions and in society's ideology, any acceptance of Pollock's thesis would be reflected in Horkheimer's analysis of such changes. A portrayal of the changes he detected is therefore central to an understanding of the alteration in the emphasis of non-identity theory that 'Traditionelle und kritische Theorie' represented.

Under monopoly capitalism, Horkheimer claimed, power and influence over the whole of society had become vested in the administration and judiciary, both of which were controlled by an increasingly small number of industrial and political leaders and their followers.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, the independent owners of capital (who formed the backbone of liberal capitalism) had ceased to exist. Horkheimer supposed that a managerial bureaucracy supervised the sphere of production so that individual owners of capital no longer played any direct part in this process; even their role as owners of capital had been usurped, namely by the banks. Horkheimer argued that by partial nationalisation ('Verstaatlichung') state intervention in the economy had aided this decline in the social influence of the majority of independent owners of capital.

Horkheimer propounded the view that this change in the social hierarchy occurred simultaneously with the advent of a new ideology, namely the idolisation of the 'great personality', which, in turn, lent support to the new leaders or managers of society.<sup>27</sup> This ideology also espoused the virtue of a 'community of all', the 'Volk', and in so doing overthrew the last vestiges of a liberal ideology of individualism. If there were no independent owners of capital left in the authoritarian state and if for similar reasons individual rights had been suspended, then, Horkheimer averred, not only had monopoly capitalism reached a stage of maturity and eradicated liberalism, but it had also erected a 'closed society'. At this point his analysis once again verged on adopting Pollock's notion of state capitalism.

Horkheimer interpreted the existence of a closed society to mean that it was now possible to derive people's attitudes directly from 'mass' beliefs disseminated to them by the ruling bureaucracy.<sup>28</sup> In other words, attitudes could no longer be derived meaningfully from a specific economic and therefore class position. Rather critical theory had to assume that class consciousness existed only in the broadest terms of there being a class of dominators and a class of the dominated. Indeed, the dominated individuals probably did not even have an awareness of their true interests for value systems were no longer individual in any meaningful sense but instead were cultivated from

above. Critical theory thus analysed the superstructure as being solely responsible for the formation of attitudes of conformity in the population. The superstructure had been delegated the role of such mass persuasion precisely because the stability of the base had to be preserved in a time when crises continually threatened it. This pessimistic assessment of individuality was to have dire consequences for critical theory.

Whereas the existence of the individual in liberal capitalism had allowed the critical theorist to postulate a possible new society by means of determinate negation based on the praxis of individuals, monopoly capitalism not only invalidated the very basis of such an analysis of ideology critique itself, in so doing it also deprived critical theory of any addressee.

Critical theory avoided allegiance to any one particular class position not only for epistemological reasons but also because it believed such class positions to have ceased to exist.

Horkheimer had started from the assumption that critical theory had to be altered to take account of the changes it detected in society. His assertion that the ruling bureaucracy directed culture, a conception which reveals a close connection Pollock's work, indicates that in his view a change in the relation between base and superstructure had come about which critical theory had to take into account. Indeed, he stated towards the end of

'Traditionelle und kritische Theorie':

Der Begriff der Abhängigkeit des Kulturellen vom Ökonomischen hat sich daher verändert /.../ Die Erklärungen sozialer Phänomene werden einfacher und zugleich komplizierter. Einfacher, weil das Ökonomische unmittelbarer und bewußter die Menschen bestimmt und die relative Widerstandskraft und Substantialität der Kultursphären im Schwinden begriffen ist, komplizierter, weil die entfesselte ökonomische Dynamik, zu deren bloßen Medien die meisten Individuen erniedrigt sind, in raschem Tempo immer neue Gestalten und Verhängnisse zeitigt. 29

Horkheimer had - in his earlier essays - conceived of the superstructure (the configuration which culture inhabits) as being semi-independent of the base. Although its content was determined primarily by the economic sphere, it was judged to interact with the latter, influencing the manner in which the base functioned.<sup>30</sup> That is to say, it had a positive side, for it could

preserve positive ideals within its domain which could be realized in the founding of a new society. However, Horkheimer held the superstructure's function and determination to have changed in the era of the authoritarian state, for it was no longer independent of the economic base. Rather, the superstructure appeared to be completely determined and defined by the latter's daily needs. While the superstructure acted in independence of immediate economic needs and constraints in its enforcement of conformity, this very task was itself dictated by the base. This being the case, depicting the irrationality of present objects became easier, but presenting a portrait of how their non-identity could be overcome became more difficult, for it could no longer be anchored in the closed society.

Horkheimer's analysis of society in 'Traditionelle und kritische Theorie' is thus remarkably similar to that ventured by Pollock. Only one major difference separated the two men's respective positions. Horkheimer was still not prepared to accept that the base was thoroughly organised and no longer prone to crises, i.e. he wished to retain a theory of value, the theoretical basis for a negation of society at a time when there was nobody to act on it. Nevertheless, the change Horkheimer noted in society was of sufficient importance for him to challenge a purely economic theory of society and to try and reground an historical materialist epistemology (hence the global overtones of the essay). However, he clearly felt that it no longer sufficed for critical theory simply to identify the potential for a new society in the old, the task he had undertaken optimistically in his earlier essays, for critical theory was now bereft both of an addressee and of any basis for determinate negation. All critical theory could do, Horkheimer declared, was to speculate that, as the economy now visibly functioned only in favour of a small minority, the chance was greater than before that people might notice this bias.<sup>31</sup> The reason that this had not as yet taken place Horkheimer attributed circuitously to the presence of the authoritarian state's repressive cultural apparatus. The exact nature of the authoritarian state and its cultural apparatus and the implications



these had for ideology critique and non-identity theory were to be the subject of investigation in the essays he wrote after 1937.

1938 - 1942

In the third phase of Horkheimer's writings for the Zeitschrift/Studies, his essays follow the trend established by 'Traditionelle und kritische Theorie', in that they vacate the position adopted in the early articles and move increasingly into line with Pollock's work. In the discussion of this third phase two essays will be referred to which were published in a special mimeographed edition of the Studies in 1942, 'Autoritärer Staat' and 'Vernunft und Selbsterhaltung'. Although these fall outside the parameters we have set, they are vital to an understanding of the turn critical theory takes in this third phase. Following Horkheimer's attempt to construct a systematic epistemology that took into account, explained and criticized the character of the base and superstructure of monopoly capitalism, the third phase tied into the discussions on society being conducted at that time in the Institut(e) at Morningside Heights. These centred on Pollock's suggestion that National Socialist Germany constituted an example of state capitalism, and that the new order of fascism could only be understood in the light of this.

Although the nine essays Horkheimer wrote in this period will be treated as one body of thought, there is a noticeable difference in tone between the seven essays written for the Zeitschrift/Studies and the two from the mimeographed edition.<sup>32</sup> This is attributable to the different functions the two sets of essays have. The first group presents an attempt to determine the factual and ideational structure of the authoritarian state in a manner stylistically reminiscent of Horkheimer's earlier work (although the last of these partly goes beyond this frame of reference). The two later articles apply critical theory to the authoritarian state's social structure. At the same time they examine to what extent the concepts used in non-identity theory still have any critical edge and question whether indeed a stage of

history had been reached where it was no longer possible to construct antithetical concepts that both described material reality and simultaneously indicated a future society.

In the last of these essays, 'Vernunft und Selbsterhaltung', Horkheimer established that non-identity theory was faced with an internal barrier posed by a change in its material and which its concepts could not overcome. As a consequence he started to develop a new critical concept that regained the transcendent element non-identity theory had lost, namely the concept of domination understood as instrumental reason. This does not mean to say that Horkheimer abandoned a Marxist conception of society, but rather he now placed the domination of nature by means of the domination of men as opposed to the domination of men by economic processes in the foreground of his social theory.

The first two essays of this period demonstrate the change to a totalitarian state that Horkheimer meanwhile believed had taken place; the skepticism of Montaigne and the loss of economic function the Jews had experienced are both used to describe symbolically this change, the former from the point of view of the superstructure, the latter from that of the base. Horkheimer portrayed contemporary culture by studying the manner in which skepticism had changed in function under the authoritarian state<sup>33</sup> from that which it had exercised in liberal bourgeois culture. Skepticism, Horkheimer maintained, as practised in the authoritarian state, was similar to the usage of such thought in Absolutist times, for it declared the certain existence and intelligibility only of the self, thus favouring a retreat from the world into the inner self. This self-centredness relieved the individual of any obligation to make value judgements and therefore paved the way for a passive acceptance of the prevailing order of society. The skepticism of Absolutism was thus analogous to the ideology of the authoritarian state, Horkheimer suggested, for they both degraded individual inquiry and cognition to the status of social conformity. In this manner the concept of skepticism is taken in Horkheimer's later work to symbolize the nature of the authoritarian

state's superstructure.

That the concept of skepticism only had symbolic validity and that the authoritarian state's social structure could not be equated with the ideologies by which it rationalised itself was a point underlined in all Horkheimer's essays of the third period. Horkheimer remarked, for example: "Wer aber vom Kapitalismus nicht reden will, sollte auch vom Faschismus schweigen."<sup>34</sup> In other words, a criticism of ideologies alone was - regardless of the change in society that may have come about - not a critique of that society in the strict sense of the word, unless it were to be coupled with a criticism of the base for ideologies could not be regarded as prime causes of change.

In order to provide the basis for a critique of contemporary society Horkheimer undertook to examine why the authoritarian state had become necessary. Importantly, he judged Pollock's concept of state capitalism to be the contemporary form of the authoritarian state: "Der Staatskapitalismus ist der autoritäre Staat der Gegenwart."<sup>35</sup> He chose to speak of the 'authoritarian state' for this term included the USSR as well as Western Europe and the U.S.A., all societies he considered forms of statism, and he thus extended the frame of reference of Pollock's concept. The most rational form of statism, Horkheimer suggested, would be 'state socialism'. He distinguished this, however, from the social structure prevalent in the USSR, for he argued that there wage-earners and the profit-motive continued to exist in a manner as oppressive as the role they played in capitalist societies. The most irrational form of statism Horkheimer, like Pollock, held to be fascism, which he understood to be the contemporary form of state capitalism, i.e. he attributed fascism's occurrence in Europe purely to capitalism's needs. Without fascism, capitalism would not be able to continue to exist.<sup>36</sup> The base had necessitated a complete change in the content of the superstructure.

This acceptance of Pollock's work is to be encountered in the space Hork-

heimer reserved in his later essays for an analysis of the causation underlying the genesis of fascism. In late bourgeois society, he claimed, investment was no longer followed by an automatic increase in profit. At the same time, the number of workers decreased as a result of the technological developments that created mass production, a process that had gradually led to unemployment and social dissatisfaction as well as the production of socially unnecessary goods in the attempt to reap profits anew. These reasons are almost identical to those Pollock gave as the origins of state capitalism. Horkheimer suggested, as Pollock had also done, that these factors had led to the authoritarian state being brought into existence in order to control social unrest and to extend society's power over all individuals. The state of state capitalism was akin to that of monopoly capitalism; it was composed of political and bureaucratic elites under one leader. The difference between the two lay, in Horkheimer's opinion, in the fact that to achieve the regulation of the economy for which they had been appointed, the rulers exploited the 'masses' in a planned manner according to prior agreement. In this fashion the authoritarian state directed the economy, guaranteeing the acquiescence of the labour force, the presence of consumers, the continued realisation of profit and the requisite investment necessary for technological progress.

In keeping with Pollock's theory Horkheimer maintained furthermore that the authoritarian state dispensed with a market, thus eliminating crises caused by over-production or underconsumption. (Horkheimer argued that consequently the power of money declined, a detail missing in Pollock's work.) The logical basis of this argument was that the economy no longer possessed an independent dynamic of its own. For interaction between economic and political spheres had become complete. The superstructure used the political and bureaucratic power vested in it by the base to organize thoroughly the composition of the latter; in other words the superstructure controlled and regulated the base. The two were, to Horkheimer's mind, at once distinct spheres and yet simultaneously form a unity. The dialectic of base and superstructure suggested

in Horkheimer's earlier essays is now synthesized in a manner he could only view with great concern.

Despite the fact that in this conception competition could occur only on the world market, Horkheimer proposed that state capitalist society must be described as being in permanent crisis for the productive forces were utterly subjugated to the planners and not unleashed for the good of all. In this fashion Horkheimer attempted to smuggle a standard of critical measurement into the analysis of state capitalism so as to avoid Pollock's all too linear conception. He therefore concentrated on delineating a concept he believed lay at the heart of the authoritarian state and that revealed it as an antagonistic unity.

The false equality of liberal capitalism was now forced, Horkheimer proposed, to show what its true basis was, namely domination. This was to be seen in the fact that the authoritarian state commanded the population<sup>37</sup> and enforced brutal relations of production in that it coerced labour into submitting to industry's needs. Conformism to this society was the price each individual had to pay for physical survival. To assure the uninterrupted success of such conformism the state kept society in a condition of 'permanent mobilization', using external or internal dangers as a pretext for this.<sup>38</sup> Individuals now existed, Horkheimer claimed, solely to react to such commands; they were degraded to the status of being 'single people' rather than individuals,<sup>39</sup> for individuality in terms of a cohesive personality was destroyed by this need to conform. Equality and individuality thus had meaning only in terms of each person being an abstract unit of labour power. Everyone had an equal right to try and assert their own social value or usefulness to the planners, the latter being the only social group with a (usurped) right to exist. Consequently, mankind became a collective appendage to the social process rather than being its centre.<sup>40</sup> Human life had become a coefficient of economic value, survival being brought about not by an interaction of the individual and society but by the former's con-

cluding its peace with the state and bowing to its directives. What is more, the individual could contemplate only immediate survival and as a consequence was deprived of a sense of the past or the future so necessary for the construction of an image of a new society.

Having thus pursued Pollock's findings through to their logical conclusion, namely that individuality had been destroyed, Horkheimer suggested that as a result human beings no longer possessed any psychological unity. Under the authoritarian state, Horkheimer proposed, people had ceased to develop a personality in the sense of a self-consciousness; rather the retention of a specific character by a person had become purely accidental. This process was furthered by the authoritarian state's abolition of the distinction between 'private' and 'public' spheres. The hallmark of this distinction had been debate in one's free time in the now redundant market place. In the absence of both, Horkheimer argued, a decline in reflective and discursive thought, in the Freudian 'ego', had set in. The direct intervention of the state in the form of commands in the private sphere fragmented the psychological personality already weakened by the loss of the public sphere. The state, or the 'collective', by which Horkheimer understood a large peer group, usurped the role of the family in socialisation. In this manner psychological values were instilled directly in the individual by the state. People were thus 'administered' and their 'ego' preformed biologically, for the collective, having overthrown the family, now took charge of the Freudian 'super-ego'.<sup>41</sup> All objects in the child's environment were pre-ordered by the state before the child could reach consciousness.

Horkheimer concluded that freedom - especially freedom of thought - had to be judged a thing of the past. Accordingly, ideology could no longer be regarded as a constellation of ideas promoted by the dominators publicly, but now had to be considered a set of values inculcated in the psychic structure of each person. The concept of freedom used by critical theory had thus to be changed to signify freedom from society. Equally, the critique of ideology had to be refounded using psychological categories and yet

these had become somewhat meaningless in anything but a metaphorical sense in that the psychological constitution of the individual had been found to be so drastically curbed.

Conformism and complete obliteration of any form of freedom, Horkheimer emphasized, were also sustained psychologically in another manner. Each person was forced to live in fear, in fear of the state, a fear which, moreover, bound them still further to the state. To counteract the fear of their dispensability - for they were but economic units of labour - each person identified with the state, cultivating within themselves a 'fear of freedom' as Erich Fromm termed it. To ensure the continual presence of this fear, Horkheimer argued, the state nurtured within people the belief that there could be no happiness in any other time or space than the present, so that the fear of losing what the person still possessed came to completely dominate their thought. Horkheimer remarked: "The collapse of reason and the collapse of individuality are one and the same."<sup>42</sup> The loss of any freedom of thought meant that there could be no rationality of the individual, and consequently no rationality to which critical theory could appeal.

Although Horkheimer was forced by his own logic to concede that two of the main planks of critical theory - its standards of rationality and of ideology critique - now seemed somewhat redundant, he was not prepared to abandon his theory. He undertook instead to search for elements in the authoritarian state's social structure which retained some particle of reason, i.e. elements that somehow contained an 'inner' necessity realizable in a future society. His last two essays, 'Autoritärer Staat' and 'Vernunft und Selbsterhaltung' form the backbone of this project.

He began by attempting to determine whether the economic base of the authoritarian state offered any potential for change. Under state capitalism, he claimed, social change was in fact more possible than ever before, because economic questions had simply become questions of technical mastery and of efficient planning. A positive plan, he argued, could emerge which

which abolished the universality of domination and repression and established in its stead a free community of individuals.

Although critical theory thus regained a conception of an alternative, rational society, it simultaneously forfeited the ability to foresee social change. In the presence of a plan the economy could not be expected to collapse as such as a consequence there was no reason why a positive society should be brought about. Economic crises, for example, could now only be anticipated in the case of the planners being so inefficient as to cause a decrease in productivity on such a large scale that it effected everyone's daily lives. Even this, Horkheimer pointed out, was a tenuous basis for change, for in the absence of a market terms such as productivity no longer had any meaning. Furthermore, such an economic crisis would have no real effect on the durability and stability of such a society because only world market fluctuations could create a major internal economic crisis of sufficient proportions to serve as an impetus for change.

Horkheimer took great pains to establish that revolutionary change could not be effected within the existing social formation. A qualitative change signified for him a leap out of the linear history of a society into a completely new society, Refashioning the existing social structure, e.g. by electing proletarian planners, would not therefore create qualitative change. Nevertheless, Horkheimer maintained paradoxically, state capitalism was the last stage of capitalist history before this leap because of the resources it had developed for planning in a future society. These two statements are mutually contradictory. By failing to see the very economy of capitalism as capitalist - although he claimed that the productive forces were by definition dominatory - Horkheimer traps himself in a vicious circle. He can only assert that proletarian planners could not effect a qualitative change in society because he has deprived himself of the ability to state what economic basis a new society would have. Worse still, he implies that the new society would use the resources developed by the old, dominatory society. This is reflected in his empty assertion that critical theory could



not pinpoint when a leap into the new would occur but only that it was possible; it also could not anticipate what such a leap would be like.

The idea of a leap into a new society is itself very tenuous logically, for it would only be possible if people attain a consciousness of the ideological nature of reality. Horkheimer submitted that such an awareness was indeed possible, because each person was now forced to work only for their own survival. However, this claim is incompatible with his own analysis of the demise of individuality. Horkheimer tried to make a virtue out of this necessity by suggesting that the notion that one was working for one's fellow beings no longer existed and that this freed thought:

Vereinzelt sind alle. Die verdrossene Sehnsucht der atomisierten Massen und der bewußte Wille der Illegalen weist in dieselbe Richtung. 43

Somehow Horkheimer hoped that material immiseration might free the individual's outlook from its imprisonment in ideological generalities and psychological fragmentation. In the final instance, nevertheless, this vestige of hope was dashed, for Horkheimer had himself to accept that any awareness gained would remain ineffectual. The base and superstructure had become welded into a hermetically sealed unity which permitted no one so much as a chink through which to see out towards a better, more human society.<sup>44</sup>

Horkheimer claimed that in addition to their material immiseration another factor might cause people to conceive of social change. The harsh reality of state capitalist production relations, he proposed, was now experienced directly and not, as before, masked by a veil of illusion. The owners of the means of production were now clearly represented by the leaders of society and ideology was revealed to be mere 'appearance'. However, Horkheimer qualified this source of hope by suggesting that any potential for change this might entail would be negated by the fact that fascism needed no appearance. Fascism was able to survive without an ideology precisely because of its form of domination. The brutal existence it meted out to the population sufficed as ideology. Perversely, the masses were blinded by their very freedom from ideology, i.e. by their instrumentalisation in the work process and by the fact that their existence was totally dependent on

economic chance:

In der Planwirtschaft werden die Menschen noch unbeschränkter vom Produktionsmittel beherrscht als auf dem Umweg über den Markt. 45

Whereas Horkheimer argued that the authoritarian state could be countered if people were able to identify and speak of what life was like, he had nevertheless to concede that only critical theory itself was able to articulate the possibility of the new, i.e. the unspoken truth of the old.

The circuitous logic both of Horkheimer's conception of a new society and his grounding of social change is mirrored in the other main area studied in his later essays. Despite his exhortative assertions on the absence of an ideology, paradoxically Horkheimer nevertheless described the function of a specific ideological apparatus in the authoritarian state, namely 'mass culture'. He distinguished 'mass culture' from culture as the sum total of social processes and from art, which he considered to be the narrow meaning of culture. 'Mass culture', as a concept, was applicable in his eyes to most variants of the authoritarian state as is evidenced by the fact that he provided examples selected from Western Europe and the U.S.A. (although not from the USSR). Mass culture's main function, he stipulated, was to supervise leisure time and to manipulate people's pleasure in the guise of offering them 'popular entertainment'. Since there was no market, the supply of such 'entertainment' (the word has negative connotations in Horkheimer's work) and demands for it could be regulated by the authoritarian state's controllers. Popularity, or what people wanted or disliked, was a predetermined property. If popularity was directed from above then the concepts of form and content normally used to analyse culture had become redundant, for mass culture had to be studied not as art, but as a system of mechanisms of psychological persuasion. Horkheimer propounded the view that the study of mass culture had therefore to become the study of the creation of values, of ideology. He neglected, however, to analyse specifically how these effects were achieved and restricted himself instead to sketching a theoretical outline of the shape these mechanisms took.

Horkheimer decided that mass culture invaded the private sphere in two ways. First of all, it infected and impeded the individual's psycho-social development at so early a stage that no 'inner' self could be constituted, with the result that the mind - the refuge that had offered the possibility of thinking differently - was destroyed as an independent entity. This left no space for the imagination to act as a harbour for non-conformist thought and thus cut the imagination off from reality and from any ability to project a different society. Additionally, mass culture's system of language contributed to this destruction of the private sphere. The language it used consisted of signs intended for immediate orientation, not for communication.<sup>46</sup> The individual had to endeavour to utilize these signs so as to be able to conform. People were, as a consequence, deprived of any level of social communication for not only did they identify with mass culture in order to survive, but in so doing were no longer able to communicate with each other. Thus, the ability to discuss and change things via true communication was lost.

Horkheimer considered mass culture to be the opposite of art, for mass culture promulgated a completely untrue view of the world and destroyed any vision of a different world. Horkheimer centred this argument on mass culture's concern with 'marketable' literature, radio and cinema,<sup>47</sup> because he held these to go against the grain of art. Since he believed the market to have been abolished, this notion of 'marketable' cultural products is somewhat obscure. One must assume that Horkheimer intended the concept to serve as an antonym to that of traditional bourgeois art, which was not mass-produced and therefore was not produced solely to be sold. (It is debatable whether this was indeed the case). Horkheimer may also have wished to use the concept to highlight the repetitive character of mass culture's products and thus undermine its claim of uniqueness for its products.<sup>48</sup>

The approach Horkheimer adopted with his concept of mass culture has decisive limitations, for he drifts into generalisations which he fails to back up with an analysis of what constituted mass culture or the 'culture industry'

as he termed it, or of how this actually functioned. Rather, he asserted the specificity of his analysis with statements such as the following:

"What today is called popular entertainment is actually demands evoked, manipulated and by implication deteriorated by the cultural industries."<sup>49</sup>

Equally, Horkheimer neither differentiated between mass culture's form under German Fascism and the shape it took in the USA, nor did he describe the role the planners played in it. The basis of the ideological apparatus and its real connection to the purposes of the superstructure, of which it had become so vital a part, is left unelucidated. Theory cannot, however, ignore the relation to the superstructure or regard mass culture purely as an empirical quantity and thus as unsuited to a philosophical discussion of the role of mass culture. Horkheimer's brief remarks on the marketable character of mass culture hardly provide the basis for a theoretical discussion of mass culture.

Since Horkheimer judged the relation between base and superstructure - and thus also that between mass culture and the base - to be hermetically sealed we can deduce that he believed mass culture's products to just be the extended arm of the authoritarian state. They were in his eyes simply commodities and admitted of no intimation of a different state, because they served only the use of the dominators, both in form and content: they were mere appearance without any essence. However, such a conclusion is hardly in the vein of non-identity theory, nor of ideology critique, for we do not know from Horkheimer's analysis either how ideology is imparted, or indeed what stereotypy or identification is encouraged in the consumers of mass cultural products. Thus, mass culture would seem to resist the theoretical instruments Horkheimer had used to assess society, for all he was able to decide was that mass culture somehow generated conformism. His analysis - and with it this last variant of critical theory - remained morphological; it described mass culture's shape, but without subjecting that form to 'critique' in the sense in which he had used the term until then.

In his last two essays of the period, Horkheimer investigated the form in which people under state capitalism were repressed by mass culture. Mass culture, he presumed, was so effective a means of enforcing conformism because it constituted a 'seamless' ('lückenlos') portrait of reality, preventing people from seeing reality in any other way.<sup>50</sup> As a consequence, the mass dissemination of information mass culture effected had a wholly negative character. Horkheimer stated of its effect: "Die Menschen werden allseitig ausgebildet und verstümmelt."<sup>51</sup> He sought to ascertain whether in this harshest form of the domination of nature by means of the domination of man there was any modicum of reason left, i.e. any basis that could restore a critical, dialectical edge to his analysis. Only imagination, he determined, could penetrate through to the kernel of state capitalist domination. Whereas change now depended solely on the human will necessary to put it into practice - the condition for it being at hand - thought was either crippled by mass culture or exiled to the realm of pure thought and was unable to grasp the possibility. Regardless of these external and internal constraints on it, Horkheimer was adamant that imagination was the only possible fount of freedom and reason. However, the fear inculcated in all individuals of their dispensability prevented the imagination from having any effect. Horkheimer observed that: "Die Intention auf Freiheit ist beschädigt."<sup>52</sup> If freedom was in jeopardy as an idea and only to be resurrected in the imagination, then the concept of reason that had been the sine qua non of critical theory, and indeed non-identity theory, was also in danger of losing any validity it might have possessed.

Horkheimer was only too aware of this problem. His last essays written for the Institut(e) accord a central place to the refounding of a philosophical concept of reason. Reason, he suggested, was the balance struck between individual and societal interests. (This was the way the concept had been understood in Kantian and Hegelian epistemologies.) By means of reason the individual mastered socially rebellious feelings and yet also ensured its self-preservation: a balance was reached between a person's individuality

and their social character. Whereas Freud's psycho-anthropological interpretation of society relied on the eternal necessity of such a repression of feelings, Horkheimer envisaged a state where such self-mastery need not be negative. He submitted, however, that historically speaking society had always dominated the individual. Although the advent of bourgeois society had partially re-weighted this relationship, bourgeois society had remained a class society whose members did not, therefore, all participate in reason. Without going into the details of Horkheimer's elaboration of this point (where he leans heavily on Weberian sociology), it suffices to say that he proposed that self-preservation, the basis of reason, became voluntary conformism in bourgeois society, without all individuals receiving an equal share of social wealth as reward for their conformity. Reason could thus be used to demonstrate philosophically and in psycho-social terms (such as the Protestant work ethic) the irrationality, and with it the ideological nature, of society.

The concept lost its **heuristic** power when used to analyse fascism, however, for self-preservation had become complete compliance to the state; the individual was faced by a heteronomous apparatus of immediate domination: "Die Ideologie liegt... in der Beschaffenheit der Menschen selbst..."<sup>53</sup>

The balance between individual and society had been decided in complete favour of the latter, and thus destroyed. Psychological introjection in response to external stimuli was no longer necessary; indeed, people no longer needed to develop a conscience. Furthermore, any notion of a future - even in terms of possession and inheritance - became redundant if the individual could be exterminated at any moment.<sup>54</sup> Self-preservation was transformed from being an attempt to achieve happiness to being a question only of survival, as part of an inhuman culture. Self-preservation had itself been reduced to irrationality.

With the demise of the individual's autonomy in social, psychological and philosophical terms, reason as a concept thus becomes pointless. Horkheimer reiterated what he had stated a few years before, now not as a proposition,

but as a statement of fact: "Der Verfall der Vernunft und der des Individuums sind eines."<sup>55</sup> There was neither an agent left to enact reason by changing society nor did individuals possess a consciousness of self which could serve as the basis for dissatisfaction with society. It was consequently questionable, Horkheimer suggested, whether society still retained any inner elements of reason at all. He therefore termed the authoritarian state 'the end of reason' and proposed: "The new order of Fascism is Reason revealing itself as un-reason."<sup>56</sup> His last two essays thus affirmed the position adopted in Pollock's work by judging fascism both to be founded on a new social structure and to be based on the same rationality as had originally formed the foundation of capitalism.

In Horkheimer's opinion if individuals were left free time to recognise their own real dispensability then society's 'un-reason' would become obvious to them. Whereas this statement accords with the second phase in his work, the conclusions he drew from it were new. The authoritarian state, he maintained, endeavoured to prevent this happening by replacing the anachronistic ideology of money and individual possession with an ideology of technology. The rationality that during the Enlightenment had attempted to harness nature to mankind's - and liberal capitalism's - needs became completely one-sided in that it ignored its human origins. Enlightenment rationality revealed its true character, namely a 'purposive rationality' ('Zweckrationalität') which treated means (e.g. technology) as ends in themselves. An historical stage had been reached with the unfolding of this ideological rationality, Horkheimer asserted, in which either barbarism would continue to reign indefinitely or else a truly free society would prevail.<sup>57</sup>

Critical theory could only react to the collapse of reason by criticizing this concept itself, by uncovering how and why it had become one-sided. In this manner critical theory sought to preserve the independence so necessary if the grasp of the closed, planned society was to be resisted. Only by repeatedly identifying the antagonisms of a social reality that purported

to have none could critical theory (and by implication the unrealized ideals of the Enlightenment) be kept alive. Horkheimer attempted to achieve this by continually reasserting rhetorically the possibility of reason being put into practice to create a society not founded on virulent social divisions and in which a liberating identity of individual and society could reign.

He relied on a concept of happiness in order to expose the inadequacies of a concept of reason centred on a purposive, inhuman rationality (a notion indebted to Marcuse's work on hedonism<sup>58</sup>). Happiness as a concept could be used to exhort the need for social change because it indicated how and where people were unhappy and was speculative in that it could only overlap with reality, i.e. be true, at a later stage of history. Although Horkheimer was vague as to what precisely constituted happiness - repeatedly asserting that happiness would exist in a society founded on true reason - the concept nevertheless remained true to the spirit of non-identity theory, even in an age where such a theory was no longer possible.

The only definition of happiness Horkheimer offered that broke out of this circularity and sought to be more concrete was his claim that bourgeois art symbolized and exemplified happiness. The marriage of art and happiness was not only one of convenience, but also one of necessity, for only in past bourgeois art was an image of 'interest-free' individuals still extant, although even this portrait of the future was threatened by mass culture. Bourgeois art was founded, Horkheimer suggested, on an aesthetics of absolute individuality, free from social norms, which lent the characters depicted the power to withstand (in the fictive world of art) the prevailing economic system.<sup>59</sup> This element of resistance was further emphasized by the real contradiction that had existed between the individual and bourgeois society. Bourgeois art could thus be said to provide an image of a concrete utopia, in that it claimed, even in 'unhappy' cases, to somehow effect a reconciliation of society and the individual.

Whether bourgeois art can indeed offer such norms and such an image must



remain a moot point here, although it should be said that Horkheimer thus expected art to carry the burden of the completely unaesthetic problems thrown up by social theory and philosophy - and solve them. Horkheimer attributed this capacity of bourgeois art to the character of fundamental 'unmarketability' which in his view it possessed. He maintained that Joyce and Picasso, for example, were able to portray the gulf between the 'monadic' individual and its barbaric surroundings precisely because their art - since it did not try to communicate a direct picture of reality - was unmarketable. It is debatable whether this view is indeed materialist and, as a consequence, it is also questionable whether it can be sited at the centre of a materialist theory of rationality, for Horkheimer in effect attributed the quality of art to its position vis-à-vis the market. He tried to found his argument on the claim that art (by which one must assume he meant post-bourgeois art, if there is such a thing) used an incomprehensible language to consolidate its unmarketability, an argument very similar to Adorno's writings on the subject at the time.<sup>60</sup> Such artworks, Horkheimer suggested, only appeared discordant in construction because they had to be cut off from reality in order still to be art. The undertone of despair he detected in such art he took to be an indication of this isolation.<sup>61</sup> Art might forfeit a large audience in so preserving its individuality, but, Horkheimer insisted, by providing "a shocking awareness"<sup>62</sup> of despair, art was able to prefigure symbolically the freedom necessary to restore real individuality.

Horkheimer might intend to embrace the content of such artworks with the above judgement, but his remarks do not actually transcend the bounds of an analysis of the properties of the artwork's form. Perhaps it is precisely owing to this formalism that Horkheimer was able to juxtapose art to mass culture. Yet, Horkheimer was left unable even to approach art as an object. A materialist aesthetics based on non-identity theory is from the outset faced with a contradiction, for although it might wish to describe

art, it cannot do so, but instead reduces art to some indeterminate abstract properties inherent in artistic form. This being the case, then, there are inherent problems in such an approach's claim to refound critical theory; theory becomes a materialism of form, of the history of forms devoid of any content that is negatable. Just as Pollock's conception of Marxist political economy lacked an analysis of production, so Horkheimer's endeavour to erect a philosophy which could encapsulate the points Pollock had made is similarly deficient. That is to say, Horkheimer's critical theory becomes reduced to a morphology, for it can no longer address itself to the physical character and production of the objects in question, as this would be to run the danger of equating the objects with their content at present and of thus depriving them of any future.

The later application of non-identity theory in the wake of the changes Horkheimer made to it can best be described as a morphology because, owing to its philosophical nature, it concentrated on specifying and reflecting on changes in the form and structure both of society and of the individual in such a society. The wish to retain a theoretical distance from the planned society forced Horkheimer's thought to remain at the level of morphological abstraction. Only by establishing with socio-philosophical concepts the form of the lowest common denominator of society, Horkheimer maintained, could critique function in the manner in which Marx had used it. Economic categories could not be used in this project for the capitalist means of production could no longer be held to contain elements on which to base a future society and thus did not form the dialectical basis of that society.

The theoretical distance Horkheimer created between his concepts and the objects they were to describe permitted the factual data to be broken down into theoretical concepts and negated, rather than ordered in the manner of positivist science. Horkheimer attempted to devise such concepts when analysing the ideologies of the transition to international monopoly capitalism (the essays written from 1932-37), to unify these concepts into a system by constructing a critical theory of society as a whole (1937) and

to detail the consequences the advent of the authoritarian state had for the nature of critical theory (1938-42). This morphology and the degree of reflexive objectivity it offered made it possible for Horkheimer to remain consistent within an 'immanent' analysis, and yet transcend the logical boundaries such an analysis erected. As a consequence, the logic of Horkheimer's work stayed remarkably unchanged during the period from 1931-1942, despite the vast change in its material once Pollock's work had been taken into account .

If viewed as a morphology, his work over the three periods forms a unity that follows these three stages. The leitmotiv throughout is the concern to uphold a concept of reason as a critical quality existent in society, however condemned to failure this task might have appeared to be by 1942. Helmut Dubiel has maintained that critical theory remained an unfulfilled programme in terms of its social investigations.<sup>63</sup> However, if one interprets the essays of the last period as an attempt to posit determinate negation within the static planned society Pollock had designated, then this is not the case. That this project of constructing a critical theory of society even after the transition to state capitalism culminated in a morphological dead-end compels one to conclude that Horkheimer's very logic was problematic, as we have shown to be indeed the case in his analysis of bourgeois art. A study of aesthetic quality is ignored in favour of the formalpositing of art in state capitalist society. Once Horkheimer had accepted that state capitalism did in fact exist - a social form that had no inherent potential for change that Horkheimer could detect - his work entered this morphological cul-de-sac.

In summary, the method he made use of followed the guidelines he himself laid down for the Institut(e) in 1941<sup>64</sup> and must be borne in mind when comparing the work of the other Institut(e) members to critical theory. First of all, he specified that all concepts were historically formed. Furthermore, they were critically formed and therefore did not shy away

from passing value judgements. Equally, such concepts were societal concepts reached by induction; they unearthed the universal in the particular, e.g. the promise of happiness contained in a particular piece of art. Lastly, such concepts were 'integrative', in that it was possible to deduce the changing pattern of society from the problems which the continued applicability of the concept encountered. If non-identity theory were not a materialist morphology, it would not, as Horkheimer did, be able to extrapolate these changes in the form of society from the nature of the form itself. The problem in this conception lies in the nature the form of capitalism was assumed to have in the first place, a problem which, as we have seen, both Pollock and Horkheimer shared. It is at this juncture that Horkheimer's programme remained unfulfilled, for he had not ascertained how state capitalism could be negated in conceptual terms. He had only established what concepts were no longer relevant to critical theory owing to their impairment by state capitalist society, and he drew assuredly pessimistic conclusions from this assessment. The critical concepts necessary for such a conceptualisation, and thus for the fulfilment of the project of critical theory, were what he and Adorno endeavoured to provide in the major work they were to publish in 1947, namely Dialektik der Aufklärung. It remains in the next three chapters to trace whether or not the work of Horkheimer's colleagues, in particular their work on aesthetics, followed his lead and progressed through two earlier stages of his thought to a reluctant acceptance of Pollock's analysis of society.

C H A P T E R 4 : A D O R N O : T H E A R T W O R K A N D M A S S S O C I E T Y

Comparing and correlating Adorno's work with that of Horkheimer and Pollock is not overly easy, because Adorno was only a member of the Institut(e) for the last three years of its life at Morningside Heights in New York. Nevertheless, Adorno had been in informal contact with Horkheimer and his colleagues ever since the Institut(e)'s inception at Frankfurt University, where he had studied with Horkheimer; indeed, the two men had intended to write a book on dialectics together. Adorno's informal contact to the Institut(e) was strengthened by his contributing a major article to the first issue of the Zeitschrift, and another to the 1936 edition. This allows one to presume the existence of some theoretical affinity between Adorno's work and that of the Institut(e). Whether Adorno can be considered a leading proponent of critical theory, as many studies have claimed, remains to be seen.

A major obstacle to any firm inclusion of Adorno among the ranks of early critical theorists would be the intellectual influence his friend and erstwhile mentor, Walter Benjamin, had on him, which, as research in this area has shown conclusively, cannot be underestimated.<sup>1</sup> Neither can the early influence and continued contact with the teacher of Adorno's youth, Siegfried Kracauer, be neglected when studying Adorno's thought (regardless of the theoretical differences that were later to come between the two men). As a consequence, any affinity between Adorno's early work and non-identity theory cannot be taken to imply a subsumption of his work under that label. Common interests do not render different works identical; such a similarity can only be assumed to have existed after Adorno commenced work at the Institut(e).

It is somewhat opportune for the purposes of our correlation that Adorno joined the Institut(e) in 1938, for it is precisely at this time that non-identity theory had started to undergo a fundamental change.<sup>2</sup> If it can be shown that Adorno's work after 1938 follows the course of this change

then this will serve to underline once again the importance of Pollock's work for the construction of critical theory. In order to clarify this connection between Adorno and the Institut(e) it will be necessary to contrast Adorno's work prior to his entry into the Institut(e) with that produced afterwards. The body of ideas of the two periods will therefore be set off against each other but not in a strictly chronological fashion, for factors such as Adorno's individual intellectual development and the role played by external influences render dating highly imprecise, and other sources, such as his correspondence, reveal little to aid such a chronology.

Adorno underwent academic training as a philosopher, but he also had enjoyed a thorough musical education and consequently his writings tend to mediate musical theory with his underlying philosophy. This methodology resulted in a series of seemingly disparate articles which, taken as a whole, provide the framework for an aesthetics, and yet serve as an obstacle to a comparison of Adorno's work with Horkheimer's overtly philosophical writings. In order to take this dual character of Adorno's work into account his general epistemology will be abstracted from these essays and outlined before we proceed to an analysis of his aesthetics before and after 1938. The main difficulty in this approach is that Adorno understood himself to be a Marxist, as the result of which his aesthetics is inextricably bound up with his general theory of society. In the discussion of his aesthetics the two fields will therefore have to be separated artificially, except in cases where specific aesthetic propositions are not deduced from social theory and exist in an epistemological realm of their own.

Adorno's epistemology was based on what he called 'constellations' of ideas. He assumed that a concept devised to describe something was not to be limited to a monocausal description of that object, for this would, he maintained, limit the potentiality of the object to what it was at one particular time or to how it was seen to be then. Such an approach would implicitly

suggest an ontos for the object, one that is exactly similar to what the subject-observer held that object to be. Instead of adopting this methodology, one promulgated by positivists and vulgar Marxists alike, Adorno designed his concepts to embody a set of ways of seeing an object; an analogy to this would be the different viewpoints simultaneously incorporated in Cézanne's paintings. These 'constellations' permit objects to be conceived of in a number of states, varying from what the object was in the past to what it might be in the future.

Adorno used such 'constellations' to describe not just objects but concepts themselves. In this respect, there is a striking similarity in epistemological intent between Adorno's approach and non-identity theory. Adorno referred to this attempt to create a mediating avenue between concepts and what concepts are at a particular time as the "immanente Theorie der Dialektik",<sup>3</sup> for it studied the interior of each object rather than its external shape. It thus bears an affinity not only to non-identity theory but also to Siegfried Kracauer's work. In a letter of the 25th of May, 1930 discussing his Die Angestellten Kracauer wrote to Adorno that:

Ich halte die Arbeit methodologisch insofern für wichtig, als sie eine Art der Aussage konstituiert, eine, die nicht etwa zwischen allgemeiner Theorie und spezieller Praxis jongliert, sondern eine eigene strukturierte Betrachtungsart darstellt. Wenn Du willst, ist sie ein Beispiel für materielle Dialektik.

Adorno was not convinced of the novelty or singularity of Kracauer's approach and he responded on the 26th of May, 1930 (i.e. by return of post):

Zur Angestelltenarbeit zunächst, Dein Begriff von materieller Dialektik ist mir darum sehr interessant, weil in meinem Kierkegaard (his book on Kierkegaard) ein ganz analoger vorkommt unter dem Namen intermittierende Dialektik, d.h. eine, die nicht in geschlossenen Denkabstimmungen abläuft, sondern unterbrochen wird von der nicht sich einfügenden Realität, in ihr gleichsam Atem holt und jedesmal frisch anhebt. Alle meine Marxismus-Debatten drehen sich darum und ich operiere wie Du gegen den geschlossenen Dialektikbegriff mit dem Argument, daß er kraft der Totalitätskategorie als einer bloßen Denkbestimmung idealistisch sei.

This intermittent dialectic situated itself between the subject and the concept or object and is thus materialistically founded both in concrete material and in the history of that material.

Adorno argued consistently that such an 'intermittent' dialectic had to

be used when studying cultural phenomena, for cultural characteristics could not be understood as being reducible to one cause alone. For example, they could not be deduced simply from the economic substructure. Rather, the material determinacy of the object could only be grasped adequately, if it were to be regarded as a mediate part of what Adorno referred to as the 'social totality' ('Gesamtprozeß'); i.e. each object was over-determined but could not be restricted to that state either. The object had to be comprehended by placing it in the context both of the culture of which it was a part and of the history of that culture. This meant that each and every social fact could only be understood if it were viewed from the point of general laws but not reduced to these (which are, in turn, abstracted from the social process, as Marx had done in his Critique of Political Economy). In other words, objects always remained 'under-determined'.

Adorno's aesthetics was, therefore, always conceived of as part of a more general social theory and yet the aesthetic objects themselves had an equivalent influence to that of the social theory. The concrete, material character of an artwork and its general laws as well as those of the society in which it existed were essentially inseparable determinants of it. Adorno attempted by use of 'intermittent' dialectics to highlight this intermediate character of art and to provide a critique founded in it. To do so he had to define the notion of 'concreteness' more closely. Adorno held that an object's concreteness was not exhausted by its appearance in reality, but also embraced its formation by immanent constituent elements and their history, i.e. the technics or thought resident within it. At this point, Adorno's method and his theory of what objects are coincide, for the definition of concreteness returns theory to its starting point, namely that objects are intermediate in epistemological character. This notion is of particular importance for Adorno's aesthetics, where it plays a central role.

Adorno deduced a concept of ideology from this method, labelling ideology an 'illusion of truth', i.e. something that claimed to be true but was not.



This was a wider, less rigorous definition than that given by Marx, or indeed than Horkheimer's characterization of ideology as 'false consciousness' - and undoubtedly more akin to Lukács' broad notion of 'second nature'. This illustrates a difference between the sphere of applicability of 'intermittent' dialectics and that of non-identity theory. From Adorno's use of the term it is clear that he did not intend his concept of ideology to preclude the Marxist understanding of it, but to extend such an interpretation. His interpretation of ideology hinged on his concept of concreteness, and it is here that its relation to the notion of 'second nature' becomes apparent. If only the immediate social existence of an object could be seen, then it had to be considered ideological, for its current state appeared as its nature. The object could be termed ideological if it only permitted this appearance to be seen. If the concept's or object's immanent construction predominated then it was true, for its mode of production - its becoming - exposed the potentiality of its concrete material. However, if a person nevertheless concentrated only on an object's immediate appearance, then it perceived the object in an ideological manner, without that object necessarily being so. Art as an object could therefore be true, even when viewed ideologically.

Adorno developed a concept of freedom based on this conception of concreteness and ideology. Something that followed its inherent material and laws represented freedom, for it was free both of and from socially-imposed meaning. When referring to art Adorno termed this process the fulfilment of an object's autonomous 'laws of form' ('Formgesetz'). he designated these laws 'sedimented Spirit', by which he meant that they had developed in the course of art's history in accordance with both what the artistic material itself demanded and with the artist's attempt to shape this matter. Form, and with it artistic freedom, was the concretisation of these two criteria.

Significantly, adherence to these laws of form means that art aspires to something more than not being ideological. Adorno claimed that it allowed

art to portray social truth - as long as art refrained from reproducing social reality as it was. Just as Adorno's use of 'intermittent' dialectics opposed Lukács' notion of the possible identity of subject and object of history (this being for Adorno, as for Horkheimer, logically impossible), so too did Adorno's concept of art run completely counter to Lukács' aesthetics. Indeed, Adorno's work seems to take such an opposition to Lukács as its starting point in a manner similar to the conception of bourgeois philosophy at the centre of Horkheimer's non-identity theory.

Whereas his concept of freedom joined together aesthetic and social theory, Adorno also derived some general statements specific to art from his notion of concreteness and, by extension, from his epistemology. He suggested that at one level art (be this music, literature or painting) was a product of labour and therefore each piece of art constituted an artwork. Furthermore, because production was subject to capitalist aims, artworks were - like all products - commodities. In his early work, Adorno did not envisage that such a form of production was necessarily negative per se, for he argued that a degree of alienation was always embodied in the externalized human labour expended in producing an artwork. This was not to say that the artwork as a commodity could not exist without its fetish character, i.e. without its appearance ('Schein'), by virtue of which its fictiveness appeared real.<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, that fictiveness remained in the realm of fiction. If this appearance predominated, then the artwork had to be considered ideological. In addition to its fetish character, its commodity existence allowed the artwork to create 'autonomy' for itself. Adorno defined this property as being the specific historical 'thing-form' ('Dingform') of the artwork under capitalism; 'autonomy' enabled the artwork to be both fictive and real.

At a different level, Adorno gauged artworks to be constructed from material that was both social in nature and had its own history. An artwork could, of course, be immediately social in its material, if only social preferences at that particular historical point were reflected in the artwork. However, such an artwork was ideological because the producer ignored the 'immanent

necessity' of the socially produced material. This category of the immanent necessity' is similar to that used by Horkheimer in determining the potential of certain objects, for Adorno meant the term to designate that the material itself possessed a certain logic. This logic, Adorno maintained, had accumulated or 'sedimented' during the course of history and had to be followed if the artwork was not to betray art and bow down to tendential social demands.<sup>5</sup> By combining these two levels of analysis, the one describing the present commodity form of artworks, the other pinpointing the wider socio-historical nature of artistic material, Adorno constructed an ideology critique of 'modern' or bourgeois art. If the artwork did not follow the artistic logic but submitted to social requirements imposed on it, then it was ideological. Adorno's methodology differs from Horkheimer's at this point, for rather than contrasting art's current shape with what it claims to be - which would be to follow non-identity theory - Adorno examined the ideological properties within the artwork, or, in his words, which are 'immanent' to the artwork.

Adorno described artworks as 'crystals'. By this he meant that they refract an image of society as it was at the time of their production, because the artwork was always a mediation of its internal material and what the artist at a particular historical moment made of that material. In this sense, artworks did not reflect society directly, as Lukács had maintained,<sup>6</sup> for not only were they composed of material not reducible to that time but they also inhabited an intermediate realm between fiction and reality. Accordingly, artworks could be read as 'cyphers' of society, offering a very specific form of knowledge, neither purely social nor 'aesthetic'. Furthermore, the artwork was a cypher from another point of view, for it revealed society's intellectual and artistic preferences owing to its function within that society.

Adorno incorporated both these descriptions of the artwork in a more general statement, namely that the artwork presented a mirror image of society, highlighting society's contradictions, because each artwork was a highly mediate,

concentrated representation of society at one given point. It had a mediate character in that the artist synthesized the logic of the artistic material and that of society as a whole (the artist's use of artistic material was mediated through his membership of society) by means of his own subjective perception of society. Under capitalism, art held a mirror up to society, for it exacerbated the conflict between individual and society as a result of its individuality of expression in describing social reality. Thus, Adorno's concepts of the crystal- and cypher-like properties of art allowed him to conjecture that art possessed cognitive qualities. These labels, and the hypothesis Adorno then put forward on the basis of them, are similar to Benjamin's idea of a 'dialectical picture'. Adorno's conception follows Benjamin's example by situating art's cognitive qualities in its presentation of the antinomy of subordination and sublation. The autonomous artwork portrayed, or so Adorno judged, society's contradictions and the alienation of the individual in such a society. Yet, art simultaneously sublated these contradictions in the catharsis of aesthetic form that cast them in a mould beyond immediate social constraints and change, reconciling opposites in a synthesis of artistic and social material. Thus, the artwork was able, Adorno believed, to show capitalism's ills and also - abstractly - point beyond them.

On the basis of these remarks on art and society, Adorno sketched an outline for an historical materialist aesthetics, although he never developed this in a systematic fashion.<sup>7</sup> First and foremost, he tightened his definition of ideology in the artwork by specifying that the fact that art was 'fictional' and therefore 'harmless' (what he termed the appearance of art) did not in itself mean that it was ideological. This appearance was necessary so as to prevent art from being of the same order as the social world, something which would compel art to forfeit its cognitive qualities. Adorno did not mean by this that art was socially transcendent, but that art in itself constituted essentially a specific order of social reality. The thrust of

his argument is again aimed at Lukács' aesthetics of realism, for Adorno concluded that although this appearance might cause the artwork to be affirmative of the capitalist reality, the autonomous artwork could nevertheless be antagonistic to such a reality in its composition.

The obverse of this argument is contained in an important aperçu Adorno made. Just because artworks were historical entities, Adorno suggested, was no reason to suppose that an artwork's meaning was reducible to its historical genesis. Rather, the meaning of an artwork and in an artwork could change over the course of time.<sup>8</sup> Equally, meaning could not be attributed solely to the socio-historical background in which an artwork first appeared for, in keeping with non-identity theory's concerns, Adorno rejected the existence of an ontological or metaphysical concept of meaning. Precisely Lukács' work of the time can, of course, be criticized for possessing such ontological undercurrents, in that he sought to claim a static meaning for certain novels, such as those of Tolstoy.

Adorno coupled this historicization of meaning with an analysis of the artwork's form. Just as meaning was historical if artworks are read as crystals, so too the modes of production, reproduction and consumption of artworks had to be regarded as historical. Adorno located this historicalness within the nature of form itself, by which, it must be pointed out, he did not merely mean 'form' as the opposite of content. He understood form as the artwork's concrete shape, and this included its physical content, i.e. the words, musical notes or colours, from which an artwork is formed.<sup>9</sup> Artistic form, Adorno proceeded to argue, was historical in that it preserved an image of the past social history out of which that form had developed, a history, moreover, which had been and continued to be founded on oppression and suffering ('Leiden'). This suffering was taken up in the very constitution of artistic form which thus presented a symbolic and 'melancholic' portrayal of capitalist society's contradictoriness. Clearly, this conception of form is founded on a view of the autonomous artwork and would

have to be changed if applied to forms other than bourgeois art. The question must be posed at this point as to whether Adorno's concept of art is, in fact, ahistorical for it takes bourgeois art to be art per se.

This problematic conception becomes evident in Adorno's conception of artistic 'blindness'. Form, Adorno proposed, was by its very nature, a conscious externalization of society's antagonisms: it was itself a picture of a social microcosm. However, in this capacity the artwork ran the danger of becoming 'blind', that is to say, formal considerations alone are constitutive of the artwork. Art could be emancipatory only if it avoided such blindness, by lending expression to its material, i.e. by recognizing explicitly its connection to the past development of form and by furthering this development. In other words, artworks had to reflect the social reality in which they were embedded and the influence of this on the way in which the material form was presented. Only bourgeois artworks possess such a degree of reflection, it must be remarked, for they alone, Adorno claimed, were no longer tainted by the stigma of the iconic properties originally implanted in them. Adorno's concept of blindness borders on his notion of ideology in the sense that an artwork which presents no internally rational, transparent construction blinds any knowledge of its historicalness and thus fakes a transcendality it does not in fact possess.

If, to Adorno's mind, form was the basis of artistic expression, then it also had to be the bearer of meaning (as form is historical per se, so too must be its meaning). Form, Adorno argued, assumed certain transcendental qualities because it was a carrier of past social suffering, suffering indicated by the division of labour on which the production of form is based. Nevertheless, the meaning of each individual genre could be such that it was not appropriate for use because it was no longer compatible with either authorial intention or the reality it was to be used to describe. Thus, genres, the subsector of form, were all equally historical and therefore possibly ideological.<sup>10</sup>

Adorno proposed that in order to avoid such blindness, the form (and each particular genre) to be adopted by the artist had to be evaluated in terms of what is meant in the present. Adorno seems to have formulated a dictum for aesthetics which is the obverse of the guideline Benjamin laid down for literary historians:

Denn es handelt sich ja nicht darum, die Werke des Schrifttums im Zusammenhang ihrer Zeit darzustellen, sondern in der Zeit, da sie entstanden, die Zeit, die sie erkennt - das ist die unsere - zu Darstellung zu bringen. 11

By relating the historical and transhistorical properties of art to each other in this manner, Adorno avoided the major problem that had faced Lukács. Lukács had maintained that the ideology of an artwork depended on the author's (class) position in society and thus had to go to great lengths to explain why bourgeois writers, such as Tolstoy, could produce ideologically positive works. Instead of having to posit some ontological quality in a particular genre - the manner in which Lukács extricated himself from his predicament - Adorno was able to conclude that class position or social position was of little relevance to whether the work bore ideological qualities or not. Ideology was rather a question of how the artist handled the historicalness of genres and form.

Ideology in art, in the sense of blindness that Adorno gave it, referred to the inability to use the technics of artistic production correctly, i.e. to further their development. Adorno cited Stravinsky's music as a case in point, for the latter, he claimed, had tried to resuscitate past folkloristic patterns at a time when musical form had progressed beyond folkloristic form. Stravinsky's intention - to portray the alienation innate in contemporary musical communication - might be laudable, but his use of musical form was ideological. Adorno also listed instances of an opposite, but equally ideological, approach to that of Stravinsky, namely when works which at their time of production were progressive, had since become ideological, i.e. the form they used was now false. Adorno contended, for example, that early bourgeois novels were now ideological because they projected an image of harmony, individuality and individual historical development,

whereas society now opposed the validity of these images.

Throughout, Adorno's aesthetics and particularly his analysis of form was predicated on an audience or readership that was not passive. Adorno assumed that a 'mediation' of audience and artwork occurred, by which he meant that in order to understand an artwork, it was not enough for the audience to contemplate it (as Kant had advocated), but rather they had to retrace intellectually ('nachvollziehen') what the artwork had tried to accomplish. It followed that access to the truth or knowledge an artwork offered was not pre-given by the artwork's mere existence, but had to be intellectually and emotionally acquired by the receiver thinking the artwork through. To some observers this assumption smacks of elitism,<sup>12</sup> because they interpret it as signifying that Adorno held only those blessed with an education in high culture capable of appreciating art. This criticism, however, misses precisely the point Adorno was trying to make, namely that passive consumption and the artwork that promoted it were ideological and had to be challenged wherever they were encountered. Moreover, Adorno did not conjecture that such an audience had ever existed on a wide scale; indeed, its non-existence was considered part of the suffering that artworks expressed. What Adorno did maintain, however, was that certain knowledge was necessary if bourgeois art was to be fully comprehended. In this context, Adorno lamented the fact that art's truth content - that is to say art's purpose itself - was in the process of decay. He attributed this process to changes in society, for any changes in society would effect art's truth, since this was defined as resulting from the relation between art and society. Our discussion must therefore now turn to the manner in which Adorno conceived of this relation and to the question of whether this conception changed in the course of the lifetime of the Zeitschrift/Studies.

Adorno was concerned in his first essays for the Zeitschrift with the nature of artworks in two particular periods, during liberal and monopoly capitalism. Adorno investigated the transition from the first era to the second in terms of the constitution and position of the artwork in the respective



societies, in particular with regard to the effect the emergence of the autonomous artwork that had existed under liberal capitalism. In his essay 'Zur gesellschaftlichen Lage der Musik',<sup>13</sup> Adorno distinguished between market and anti-market music, two categories which are both fundamental and innovative. With the commencement of monopoly capitalism and the evolution of powerful consortia and a large propaganda apparatus, musical production, distribution and consumption were caught up in the process of capitalism. Consequently, some artworks lost their autonomy and were produced by the monopolies as commodities purely for their exchange value; i.e. they were not manufactured for their artistic merit or to further artistic form, but solely to advance the needs of the market.<sup>14</sup> In terms of aesthetics, the monopoly form of capitalism was understood by Adorno to be an extension of liberal capitalism and yet as distinct from it, because although autonomous artworks existed in both epochs, under monopoly capitalism their existence began to be threatened.

If an objectification of needs and desires had led to art's genesis, then class interests had succeeded in halting this process by using those needs in order to produce and sell artworks as commodities. Because artworks were now solely commodities, complete alienation occurred between the listener and the music for the needs were no longer related to the consumer in any meaningful manner. Adorno devised the terms market and anti-market music to describe this process, one advantage of them being that they avoided the value judgement inherent in the labels 'light' and 'serious' music. He suggested that market music, since it was produced for consumption, obeyed laws external to art. Hence, Adorno used as a measure for true, anti-market art the degree to which it was constructed only according to the artistic laws of form.

Schönberg's music was held by Adorno to epitomise anti-market music and by extension all anti-market art. Schönberg's music functions in Adorno's earlier writings both as an illustration of anti-market art and as an

example - of a prescriptive nature - for art to follow if it were to prevent itself from being degraded to market art. Adorno argued that by use of dissonance Schönberg surrendered all communication with the listener and thus broke with the bourgeois ideal of the artwork. Schönberg's Expressionist music articulated the unconscious as the only real area of communication left untouched by the monopolies. The music's renunciation of communication in the conventional sense served therefore to prevent its absorption by the monopolies. Further, Schönberg's music had an internal structure which overcame current alienation subjectively within the music, for the music expressed an internal, structured subjective rationality which ran against the grain of the capitalist rationality that was imposed from without. Despite the fact that this is achieved at the price of a total external alienation of the artwork, Adorno judged Schönberg's music to be a valid attempt to reconquer the terrain of the autonomous artwork, namely by creating its own laws, autonomous from those of society. Adorno supposed that by avoiding the paths trodden by market music, Schönberg's works expressed the misery of the individual in an alienated world without, however, glorifying the misery and paucity of non-communication.

Adorno outlined two different attempts to circumvent conformity to the literary market in his discussion of George and Hofmannsthal's correspondence, out of which he reconstructed their respective social views.<sup>15</sup> George, Adorno claimed, resorted to an esoterism of form in order to protect meaning from forgetfulness and tried to recreate a pre-alienated state that opposed social reality by means of an idiosyncratic use of language. George desired success and renown without having to subject himself to the market condition of the time. Yet, regardless of this anti-market stance, George's imposition of an esoteric meaning in fact breached the form of his poetry, for the language was unable to bear the weight of the 'inner' meanings it was intended to carry and became reduced to a fetish. As such it had market appeal.

Hofmannsthal, Adorno proposed, also rejected bourgeois values, but nevertheless was also eventually engulfed by the literary market. Hofmannsthal's

reliance on individuality and convention in order to subvert bourgeois art, while avoiding George's restriction of linguistic and literary meaning, compelled him to counter realism not with pure 'innerness' but with pure 'outerness'. He tried to drive a wedge between art and life by transferring art into a static dimension of timelessness. Hofmannsthal's endeavours were fruitless, because, to create such a distancing from life, he had had to rely on reifying objects of reality in order to generate meaning. Indeed, in the final instance, Adorno concluded that neither writer had succeeded in both obeying the laws of form and escaping the throttling grip of the market.

Adorno's aesthetics of this period was prescriptive in its portrait of anti-market music, while at the same time providing an analysis of the transition to monopoly capitalism and the manner in which this new social form placed constraints on the production and reproduction of artworks. Adorno suggested, for example, that with the increase in technology and the rise in commodification, freedom in the interpretative performance of music (Adorno termed it 'reproductive' freedom) disappeared. He elucidated this loss by means of a sketch of the interpreter's and conductor's contemporary functions. These no longer performed as they thought the music demanded of them (i.e. in accordance with the necessity of artistic material and form), but rather they provided a codified semic system suited and tailored to the wishes of the listeners. The interpreting musician was stylized as a virtuoso, so as to give the music a semblance of individuality, creating a sham of communication with an otherwise completely estranged audience. The conductor fulfilled a similar function. Adorno went so far as to judge that this gradual loss of freedom could be traced into the very composition of radio music.

In this context, Adorno developed two other concepts to characterize the new ideological properties of market art: consumption and enjoyment ('Genuß'). The power music held over people increased, Adorno submitted,

the more consumption corresponded to factual needs. Under monopoly capitalism personal satisfaction and enjoyment were only possible during one's 'free time'. Market music was therefore ideological precisely because it contented people without exposing the contradictions of the society in which they lived. Such music was composed and then presented in such a manner that it did not require 'understanding'; passive consumption sufficed as continual repetition of music on the airwaves facilitated identification with a piece. The hallmark of market music was accordingly not a fostering of truth content, but the prevalence of stereotypification within its composition and the use of a variety of mechanisms to promote identification, consumption and enjoyment, since, by definition, it did not appeal to the individual's faculties of judgement.

Adorno took jazz to embody all the properties of marketed art. He stated in his second major essay for the Zeitschrift that: "Jazz ist nicht was er ist. ..er ist, wozu man ihn braucht."<sup>16</sup> The form of jazz was in this sense 'pre-formed' by monopoly capitalism's demands for art products with an exchange value. Jazz's supposedly spontaneous mode of production was belied in other words by its dependence on its marketability and the fact that it was completely produced by the art-business ('Kunstgewerb').<sup>17</sup> The immediacy it offered its audience was false, for such immediacy was based on musical repetition by virtue of which jazz could be sold; its repeated use of ever-recurring syncopated patterns furthered the same end rather than advancing the musical means of production. As music, Adorno declared, jazz was manipulative.

In keeping with the general thrust of non-identity theory, Adorno made use of psychoanalytical categories to unravel the forms in which jazz encouraged identification with itself and thus promoted its sale. Jazz's consumption, he claimed, relied on ritualism, on a feeling of false collectivity, on a false channeling of sexual satisfaction and on a false form of social opposition, all of which trapped the listeners within monopoly capitalism's reality. In this context, Adorno's concepts of consumption and enjoyment

become critical, negative concepts, in that, by denoting what jazz was, they showed how it was not art and therefore how it forfeited autonomous art's reflections on the antagonistic nature of society. The two concepts thus preserved ex negativo the real non-identity of society and also criticized reality, for they highlighted the manner in which the marketed commodity provided only an appearance of freedom from social constraint and thus fostered an ideological view of society.

However, Adorno had to alter radically this dualism of market and anti-market music on attempting to systematize his analysis. He was forced to abandon this bipolar opposition in all further investigations of the mass-produced artwork, for the main effect of the monopolies and of technically mass-produced artworks was precisely to eliminate the market. In his later essays, Adorno followed Horkheimer and Pollock's lead and assumed that production determined consumption. Before proceeding to elaborate on this shift, some attention must be paid to Adorno's Versuch über Wagner,<sup>18</sup> which was written in between these two periods in Adorno's work and pinpointed an inherent tendency to technologisation within the bourgeois artwork itself. Adorno coupled this analysis with an investigation of a phenomenon that had become of central importance to the Institut(e), namely totalitarianism. The difference between Adorno's work and that of Horkheimer and Pollock was that he traced totalitarianism's existence in an earlier period: in late nineteenth century art.

The monograph on Wagner can be seen as a thorough application of Adorno's ideology critique of art to the work of one artist<sup>19</sup> and it also illustrates his belief that any artwork that overemphasized technique to the detriment of the laws of form was innately regressive in aesthetic terms. At the same time, by acknowledging and identifying the contradictions facing the bourgeois artwork, the monograph goes some way towards countering the charge that Adorno hypostatized the bourgeois artwork as art per se.<sup>20</sup>

Two examples serve to outline this twin concern: Adorno's interpretation of

the 'beat' in Wagner's music and his concept of the 'phantasmagoria'. According to Adorno, gesture in Wagner's music was based technically on the music's beat, which functioned as a palliative for the audience to whom the lyrics would otherwise have remained foreign. As a result, the beat dominated Wagner's music (even though this was illogical in musical terms). Wagner had to use this device to promote identification with his music, but in so doing objectified the music, which became designed merely for external effects; the music treated the audience as an object to be manipulated in a certain way. In this context, Adorno suggested that gesture in Wagner's music was to be considered both as a reflection of the general predicament of alienation facing all bourgeois artworks and as an attempt to overcome this separation by technical, but not aesthetic means. This overemphasis on technical means resulted in an incompatibility of the musical components which falsified all expression in the music; on account of this, musical progression, the basis of real expression, disappeared. The beat, being subjected to non-musical purposes, no longer conveyed time and progression, rendering the music static and bereft of the ability to generate musical novelty.

Adorno concluded from this study of musical time in the Ring cycle that Wagner's 'Gesamtkunstwerk' rejected form per se, manipulating as it did different musical types purely for their effect. In a sense, Adorno submitted, Wagner had thus prefigured the transition from liberal to monopoly capitalism (i.e. by the manner in which Wagner bent down to market rules and tried to achieve effects, rather than instilling knowledge in the music). The only principle of form Wagner made use of was what Adorno labelled the phantasmagoria.<sup>21</sup> With this he signified the process whereby a product hid the manner in which it had been produced by appearing as a 'natural' thing. The music Wagner had composed thus had no substance, but rather resembled a 'Blendwerk', dazzling listeners with its brightness in order to prevent them from perceiving how hollow it was. That is to say, Adorno

saw technics in Wagner's music as weaving an opaque veil round the commodity character of the music. With regard to the phantasmagoria Adorno stated:

In ihr wird der ästhetische Schein vom Charakter der Ware ergriffen. Als Ware ist sie illusionär; die absolute Wirklichkeit des Unwirklichen ist keine andere als die des Phänomens, das nicht bloß seine eigene Genesis in Arbeit beschwörend fortzubannen trachtet, sondern in eine damit, vom Tauschwert beherrscht, geflissentlich seinen Gebrauchswert als echte Realität, als 'keine Imitation' pointieren muß, nur um den Tauschwert durchzusetzen. 22

Wagner, in other words, succeeded in marketing the hollowness of his music by means of its very hollowness.

Adorno drew a further conclusion as to the nature of Wagner's music from his analysis of the phantasmagoria. By evoking progression and occurrence when in fact none existed, the phantasmagoria froze time in the music; the supposedly new was in fact old. In this manner an ideology of immutability was founded within the artwork itself. This could be seen, Adorno suggested, in the constitution of the characters in the Ring cycle, who only attained satisfaction within the world as it was, but could not change anything; they were free, in complete unfreedom. Inadvertently, Wagner had thus highlighted the crisis that befell bourgeois individuality in the transition to monopoly capitalism. Adorno's analysis of the 'technical artwork' in its infancy thus indicates the roots of totalitarian ideologies in liberal capitalism, for Wagnerian music was shown as already orienting itself towards effect-production and anti-individualism.

Adorno did not extend this analysis to embrace a systematic appraisal of contemporary mass-produced music until after his arrival in New York in 1938. He then took on the task of devising such a systematic framework in 'Über den Fetischcharakter in der Musik und die Regression des Hörens',<sup>23</sup> his first essay written as an Institut(e) member, and continued this project with greater precision in his articles on popular music, Theodor Veblen and Oswald Spengler. This project involved, on the one hand, an evaluation of the change in the function of the artwork and, on the other, the generation of categories to describe this change.

Adorno asserted that the commodification of the artwork and its incorporation into mass production stripped art of its mythological content and thus threatened art's very substance. His close friend Walter Benjamin had proposed that this loss of "aura" was a positive development. Adorno, however, maintained firmly that this process led to the artwork losing its 'promesse de bonheur', the seemingly magical quality which enabled art to transcend reality; the artwork lost its autonomy and was reduced to nothing more than a commodity. The demythologization of an artwork therefore functioned only to augment its immediate consumption by a mass audience desirous of psychological gratification. Consequently, the appearance of beauty which the demythologized artwork offered so as to promote momentary *senuous* gratification could not be equated with real beauty, which created a mediate form of *senuous* pleasure. If the artwork was produced for immediate consumption, then it was absolved from the obligation to offer the observer any other specific quality - such as real beauty - than its consumability.

Accordingly, Adorno refused to treat mass music as a mediate, specifically artistic reflection of reality, i.e. as art. Indeed, to his mind mass music had no value in musical terms, for it did nothing to further musical development. Rather, such music's exchange value replaced artistic necessity, the appearance of realness. Thus mass music lacked the source of autonomous art's ability to be part of society and yet also to expose the truth about that society. Adorno stated that in mass music "der Schein von Lust und Unmittelbarkeit bemächtigt sich des Tauscherts selber."<sup>24</sup> Since mass music's meaning was expended in its consumption, its form no longer contained the remembrance of past suffering necessary as the foundation for artistic truth.

The other side of this commodification of art was the effect it had on the individual listener; mass music, Adorno suggested, enforced what he termed 'commodity listening'. He argued on the basis of an analysis of the music's composition that autonomous listening was destroyed by mass music, for it



allowed the listener no standard with which to judge it, other than the cathartic function it fulfilled. Production, in other words, affected consumption. Mass music was, in this respect, innately repressive, a fact Adorno traced into the very composition of the different musical elements, in that he found these not to be determined by an overall logic, but by the psychosomatic effects they were intended to have. The listener was encouraged, Adorno maintained, to respond to these effects and in so doing mistook the immediate pleasure they offered for artistic truth. Since monopolies produced only such music, one could either identify with the music or else renounce listening to music altogether.

Adorno developed three concepts to describe these changes in the production and consumption of music. Mass music, he proposed, hinged on stereotypy, for it substituted repetitious musical patterns for musical progression, depriving the listener of any spontaneity and reducing listening to a system of aural responses to pre-digested types. Accordingly, nothing in mass music was unique or left to chance. Indeed, the very production of mass music was governed by standardization, in that centralized economic organizations in the form Pollock had foreseen, produced and reproduced what Adorno termed 'planned music'. Successful 'tunes' were repeated frequently or imitated in order to ensure the music's sale. In this sense, competition, as Pollock had suggested, was suspended to facilitate mass production. Adorno stated that such production was marked by its pseudo-individuation, i.e. the process by which standardized, stereotyped production was concealed from the listener behind a cloak of individual achievement. Presented with the option of listening to one of a number of different star performers or hits, the listener was led to believe that a musical choice existed, with the result that the pre-digested nature of the music was overlooked.

Adorno's analysis of mass music reflected Pollock's work even in its portrayal of musical representation. The market was unnecessary, Adorno claimed, for mass music was 'plugged' so ubiquitously that all choice was lost,

including even that between different stereotypes. Music now existed only as a phantasmagoria that was 'ever-similar' (a term Adorno borrowed from Nietzschean philosophy). This phantasmagoric music never changed - just as the planned society was itself static - and, as a result, the listener was left no intimation of change in the fabric of the music. This staticism was reflected in the fact that musical quality and novelty had become anachronistic properties, for quality was now judged solely in terms of the quantity sold, i.e. of planned sales.

Adorno judged that, owing to the structure of its production and consumption mass music was in both form and content ideological in two ways. Compared to autonomous art, it was ideological because it did not provide any mediate knowledge of society. This first observation is similar to Horkheimer's analysis of the authoritarian state, for it was founded on the presumption that no determinate negation was possible in the present; the present could only be shown to be ideological by contrasting it with the past. At a second, psychological level, mass music had the effect of training listeners to recognize musical patterns ordained from above and to identify with these in order to enjoy their leisure time. This brought about a psychological dependence similar to that Horkheimer had outlined as existing between the person and the authoritarian state, for mass music demolished effectively the barrier between the individual's wishes and those of the monopolies. Adorno thus conceived of mass music as being a paradigm for the totalitarian ideology that functioned as the plinth on which the authoritarian state was erected. Totalitarianism was inherent in the music itself since the music forced listeners to acknowledge it as 'good' music by depriving them of any criteria for comparison and judgement. In so doing it bound them psychologically to the music. In view of this ideological nature of mass music Adorno concluded that the cultural monolith based on planned sales promoted and consolidated totalitarianism in contemporary society (by using precisely those technical advances from which Benjamin had expected political progress).

This analysis of mass-produced music bears more than just a similarity to Pollock's conception of state capitalism. Close examination reveals Adorno's analytical framework to be based on the same theoretical assumptions. This is particularly manifest in Adorno's treatment of art as a social cypher, for he held this property of art to change dramatically with the advent of mass music. Mass-produced music had no internal truth, an absence paralleling the loss of any rationality in society, but it did reveal a truth about society, namely its static character. Central to Adorno's understanding of such music was the assumption, which he shared with Horkheimer and Pollock, that after an initial stage of establishing successful forms, production determined consumption. Logically, direct determination can only be expected to occur if the capitalist mode of distribution is considered to have changed. Adorno took this into account in his analysis of mass music, where he found the market - the sphere of distribution and choice - to have been eradicated.

Adorno's thesis of mass music's totalitarian nature is only explicable if understood in the context of the market place having been abolished. His conception of mass music hinged on the liquidation of autonomous thought that resulted from the disappearance of the market. The 'commodity listening' which replaced critical listening and freedom of choice culminated in the perpetuation of a one-dimensional, totalitarian society. Pollock saw this social structure as essentially static and Adorno would seem to endorse this position both by his own use of the term 'ever-similar' and by conceiving of mass music as having no internal dialectic. Equally, Adorno's supposition that mass music was completely ideological reflected the purely ideological position which, in Pollock's model, the superstructure inhabited in state capitalist society. Similarly, Adorno adopted Pollock's belief that the superstructure had started to intervene in the base since he maintained that mass music functioned to create a psychological dependence on state capitalist production. In Adorno's eyes, mass music thus served to tie the base to the superstructure and to ensure that the

base's products found ready buyers. Adorno pointed explicitly both to his work's affinity to Pollock's social analysis and to the real implications of Pollock's 1941 article on state capitalism in a letter to Horkheimer of the 30th July, 1941, concerning the publication of 'On Popular Music' and Horkheimer's 'Art and Mass Culture':

Es wäre vielleicht gut, auf der einen Seite die Verschiedenheit der Standpunkte mit Bezug auf den Staatskapitalismus hervorzuheben, auf der anderen Seite aber die Einheitsmomente und besonders die Beziehung von Ihrem und meinem Aufsatz zum Staatskapitalismus kurz anzudeuten, um den Einwand abzufangen, das Heft befasse sich zu sehr mit dem Überbau. Vielleicht kann man sogar sagen, daß der alte Begriff des Überbaus im Staatskapitalismus nicht mehr gelte, d.h. daß es für diese Epoche wesentlich ist, daß sie keine 'Ideologie' mehr hat und daß eben darum die Fragen des Bewußtseins eine Dignität gewinnen, die sie nicht hatten, solange die Kultur das verdecken mußte, was heute frei ist. Je totaler der Staatskapitalismus und je planvoller, um so ernster wird sie - sowie ja auch in der Frühzeit des Bürger-tums ihr Ernst ganz anders war als im Liberalismus. Dieser neue Ernst der Kultur und ihre Liquidation durch die manipulierten Formen des Massenbewußtseins stehen mit einander in der tiefsten Beziehung. 25

This emphasis on the fact that society no longer required an explicit ideology is also to be found in Adorno's studies of music, for these do not concentrate on those forms which are explicitly ideological in content, i.e. fascist ones. This allows one to conclude further that Adorno made use of the broader concept of the authoritarian state in line with Horkheimer's writings, particularly as Adorno's analysis tends to try and reveal the innate totalitarianism of the very technics developed by state capitalism. Adorno reiterated this point in his article on Aldous Huxley, where he spoke not of Fascist Germany's totalitarianism, but of that inherent in American society:

Anstelle der Wildnis...ist eine Zivilisation getreten, die als System das ganze Leben einfängt, ohne dem unreglementierten Bewußtsein auch nur jene Schlupflöcher zu gewähren, welche die europäische Schlamperei bis ins Zeitalter der großen Konzerne offenhielt. 26

Because he approached the question of authoritarianism or state capitalism from the angle of the technics of mass music's production and consumption Adorno's analysis went decidedly further than Pollock's work had. Adorno regarded the technics of mass production as inherently totalitarian and contrasted them to the technics of bourgeois art, which he considered progressive. Indeed, he adhered to the notion of the autonomous artwork as being

the determinate negation of mass-produced art. Before going into the significance of this contrast in greater depth it is necessary to clarify how Adorno analysed mass art's technics. In his discussion of Brave New World, Adorno criticized Aldous Huxley for having regarded mankind's needs as somehow static. In contrast, Adorno held needs to be a reflection of material production and to develop in line with mankind's ability to produce. Adorno specified that needs, although by nature dynamic, appeared under mass culture to be static owing to their preformation by the monopolies; commodities had come to prevent people from deviating from a norm for consumption imposed by mass culture. Needs under state capitalism were, therefore, implicitly false, as was the happiness their fulfilment purportedly offered.

Adorno drew two conclusions from this reflection on the falsification of needs. Firstly, he maintained that alienation had changed qualitatively from what it had been during liberal capitalism, for it now consisted of being bound within the constraints of the dominant social structure's preformed needs. Secondly, the technics which produced such needs could not be regarded as positive. Not only did Adorno thus consider technology to be historically specific, but he went so far as to state that technics under mass culture were equatable with social domination. In keeping with Horkheimer's work, Adorno assumed that this domination inherent in state capitalist technics testified to that society's continued antagonistic nature,<sup>27</sup> for if society were harmonious then there would be no need for domination. This argument not only provided Adorno with a method of proving the underlying dialectical nature of totalitarianism where reality did not allow such to be perceived, but it also implied that either a non-dominative technics existed or that contemporary technics could be put to a purpose other than domination and thus fulfil new needs.

Although this argument marks a step forward from Pollock's concept of technics, in that Adorno attempted to locate dialectical tension within

state capitalist society, it is, nevertheless, contradictory. Adorno argued that technics as the general means of production under state capitalism formed the basis of social domination and yet, at the same time, he advocated that technics, if not applied to dominative ends, could present the foundation for a future, classless society.<sup>28</sup> It is unclear whether he meant that the technics of mass production were per se dominative, or whether it was only their application that generated domination. This contradiction could only be resolved if Adorno were to propose that a qualitatively different form of technics were to exist side by side with the technics of domination which could then serve as the grounding for the leap into a new society. Any conception of a non-dominative technics external to state capitalism would, however, breach Adorno's dialectical methodology.

It can be inferred from a study of his concept of technics as used in his analysis of mass culture that Adorno judged state capitalist technics to be completely dominative in character. Throughout his essays for the Zeitschrift/Studies Adorno implied that it was not just their use which was repressive, but that the very technics of mass culture were repressive and they could not therefore be used as the foundation for a new society. Adorno's conception of dominative technics paralleled Pollock's analysis of state capitalist production, for Adorno viewed these technics as essentially static, incapable of generating change. This is borne out indirectly by Adorno's positing of autonomous artworks (in the later essays he reterms these 'authentic') as the only antithesis to mass culture. He grounded this in the suggestion that only in such artworks did the means (technics) predicate the end (the 'promesse de bonheur') and vice versa.<sup>29</sup>

Adorno distinguished in this context between what he termed the general social means of production, which determine the form of mass culture's ideological products, and the artistic means of production, i.e. the artistic material's forming according to artistic laws. What was new about state capitalism was that the specifically artistic means of production were subjugated by the general social means of production, a process which

destroyed the autonomous artwork and transformed it into a commodity. In other words, Adorno considered the general social means of production under state capitalism to be innately repressive, for otherwise he would not have been able to contrast them to artistic technics. What this opposition means, however, is that a non-dominative form of technics must continue to exist under state capitalism. Adorno must therefore have supposed that artistic technics resided in a specific socio-historical realm of their own (although this realm might be altered by overall social change, e.g. the loss of autonomy forced artworks to change if they were to remain autonomous), for otherwise they would be subsumed under the general social means of production. Adorno was thus able to suggest that a future society could indeed be founded on a completely different sort of technics, one which was, moreover, inherent in state capitalist society, namely in artistic production. He remarked:

Wenn die klassenlose Gesellschaft das Ende der Kunst verspricht, indem sie die Spannung von Wirklichem und Möglichem aufhebt, so verspricht sie zugleich auch den Anfang der Kunst, das Unnütze, dessen Anschauung auf die Versöhnung mit der Natur tendiert, weil es nicht länger im Dienste des Nutzens für die Ausbeuter steht. 30

Art could serve as the foundation for a non-dominative relation between man and nature, and thus by extension, for production, because its purpose was not to encourage its own mass sale, but rather to create beauty.

Mass culture's monopoly nature and its destruction of the critical individual deprived art of its basis and threatened the existence of artistic technics.

In order to embrace this state of affairs conceptually, Adorno had to rethink the relation between art and society and between aesthetics and epistemology. The epistemological mainstay of Adorno's aesthetics remained, however, unaltered, namely the analysis of artworks as crystals. The change in the degree and quality of alienation brought about by state capitalism caused Adorno to alter his conception of the manner in which the artwork presented a mediate reflection of reality by adding a prescriptive dimension to it. He proposed that the artwork had to develop and heed only its own technics in its portrayal of reality if it was to avoid becoming blind and

was adamant that the artwork had not to bow to the deformation of its audience's ability to understand it if this was to the detriment of its artistic quality.

Adorno connected this new imperative strand in his aesthetics to the new role which he envisaged artworks had to play in society. He argued that in epistemological terms 'authentic' artworks fulfilled an important function under state capitalism over and above the mode of production they demonstrated, for they continued to evoke a memory of past suffering. Promoting such a remembrance of pain became the central function of artworks, for they thus prevented thought being reduced to an ahistorical knowledge only of what was, as Horkheimer had suggested was tending to become the case. Remembrance, Adorno hoped, forced a foot in the jamb of a rapidly closing gateway into a possible new history.

The concept of novelty came to play an increasing role in Adorno's thought. Only novelty, he believed, encapsulated the qualitative difference to the present that a new society had to aspire to achieve. Adorno proposed that the concept be placed at the core of historical materialism, because, by illustrating the non-identity of the present and the future, novelty provided the determinate negation of the 'ever-similar' society. Adorno asserted that the new had to develop out of the old, but that it could not be of the old, i.e. the new was not to be considered a metaphysical notion, but was rooted within concrete reality. In this sense, artistic technics provided an image of novelty and thus formed the basis for a determinate negation of state capitalism. Art also fulfilled the requirements Adorno made of novelty in another way. Authentic artworks appertained to real happiness in contrast to the suffering of 'prehistory' that they highlighted. Equally, artworks presented traces of freedom in prehistory upon which new needs could be founded to challenge the false 'ever-similar' needs with which the population had been inculcated by mass culture.

In Adorno's opinion, artworks thus comprised a counter to totalitarianism as long as they obeyed only the laws of form, rather than forsaking the specific



artistic dimension of reality. In adhering to the laws of artistic form artworks avoided the fate of mass cultural products, namely that of reproducing totalitarianism's reified reality. Artistic form became of exceptional importance to Adorno, for it alone, he judged, could expose the social preformation of the material it treated. For example, individualism in music could show loneliness to be a social creation and thus revealed the nature of the music to be man-made. By extension, art uncovered the fact that society was also man-made and therefore could be changed. Form emphasized this point because it showed subjective expression to be something separate from the external meanings attributed to objects.

Adorno contended that one did not have only to look to past, autonomous art in order to negate the present, for he maintained that authentic artworks could still be produced in the era of mass culture's hegemony. He grounded this thesis in the proposal that the loss of artistic autonomy, i.e. the loss of the mythical and magical semblance artworks had created to allow their form to be specifically artistic, need not imply the end of art. This loss of what Benjamin termed the artwork's 'aura' need not therefore affect artistic form. A serious obstacle faced Adorno in making this supposition, in that if 'non-auratic' art retreated to the safety of pure form then it was in danger of becoming blind, devoid of any reflections on the society in which it had originated.

Adorno avoided this pitfall as is illustrated by the definition of the 'integral artwork' that he gave in his discussion of Schönberg in Philosophie der Neuen Musik.<sup>32</sup> Schönberg's atonal music functioned by thoroughly organizing the material by means of a completely structured form and therefore fulfilled the conditions Adorno laid down for artistic form; it was a codetermination of parts and whole. The ensuing piece of art, which Adorno labelled an 'integrally organised' artwork,<sup>33</sup> was 'non-auratic' because it broke with the 'context of its effect ('Wirkungszusammenhang'), i.e. it could not be used. The atonal music was thus concordant with the categories Adorno had developed to pinpoint art's role under state capital-

ism in that such music still allowed the new to be created from art's parts without the new being reducible to them, thus saving real expression from its deformation by the technically-managed world. Adorno concluded, therefore, that atonal music's production of the new prevented it from lapsing into artistic blindness. What remains unclear, however, was how Adorno considered Schönberg's music could persevere if mass culture was as powerful as Adorno held it to be.

Adorno ignored the consequent illogicality of his construction and specified that atonality opposed the totalitarian world in another fashion. He suggested that such art was 'breachless' ('bruchlos') in form and was not class-assertive since neither parts nor whole dominated in the music. As a result the inner consistency of the artwork presented an image of 'classlessness'. This emphasis on the internal construction and production of the artwork constituting its meaning does not solve the question of whether such artworks are not, in fact, blind, since their meaning remains bound within the artwork. The validity of the new in atonal music should therefore be regarded as being of limited character, for internal production alone is insufficient to ground a social meaning in the new.

Adorno got around this difficulty by making a virtue of necessity. He averred that the integral artwork was indeed blind, because it avoided transmitting a social meaning. In this manner the artwork criticized society ex negativo, by lending expression to the objective degradation of its own material. That is to say, the integral artwork stressed - by renouncing all social meaning - that its own inability to communicate was a result of the general state of society. Adorno stated that "die Unmenschlichkeit der Kunst muß die der Welt überbieten um des Menschlichen willen."<sup>34</sup>

By virtue of this renunciation, the integral artwork generated novelty at a further level, that of psychological shocks. Adorno understood these to be elements of purely subjective, and therefore socially incomprehensible, meaning which rebelled against any identification or comprehension by the beholder. In other words, these shocks forged a realm of communication that

challenged the 'ever-similar' by providing an example of something completely dissimilar. The shock in this sense was the new inherent in the old, for it broke conventional experience ('Erlebnis') and demanded a reflectory mode of experience ('Erfahrung') from its audience. In so doing, the integral artwork reflected on society, its blindness revealed the artwork actually not to be blind. Adorno maintained that precisely this state of not being blind in its very blindness highlighted contemporary art's historical specificity. The shock functioned in Adorno's conception to fuse the specifically artistic and the general social dimensions of the integral artwork, which was thus able to exhibit the quality Adorno had declared the artwork had to possess if it were to be considered authentic.

The concepts of 'novelty', the 'integral artwork' and 'shocks' describe and parallel the fact that base and superstructure have become unified, for they show this unification to be the underlying cause for the incommunicative stance artworks adopt.<sup>35</sup> In that they could not communicate, such artworks were isolated and yet this very isolation, Adorno argued, amounted to hope. On the one hand, it exposed the enforced isolation of artworks and, on the other, it illustrated how incorporation into the system of alienation could be hindered. Adorno therefore prescribed that under state capitalism the artwork had to cast off all use value and exist alienated from society in order to fulfil its duties as art and preserve hope for a new society. Only by such drastic means, he believed, could art prevent its absorption by mass culture.

Adorno claimed that until such a time as the contradiction between the productive forces particular to art and the mass cultural product ceased to be obscured by an ideology of the 'ever-similar', avantgarde art had to remain 'functionless'. Artworks had, in other words, to hibernate until such a time as their techniques and imaginative powers could be taken up in the foundation of a free society. Adorno declared that by dint of this attitude - inimical to any audience but true to the historical artistic material - the avantgarde artwork was able to approximate to knowledge. It

was only an approximation of knowledge, for the artwork could not offer its audience a conceptual truth. Nevertheless, because the integral artwork reflected on its opposition to society and took this relation into account in its form, it could provide knowledge about that society. The artwork condemned society as false and presented a reconciliatory identity of subject and object as possible only in the future. In other words, Adorno judged avantgarde artworks to approximate to a knowledge of society because they contained an image of the totalitarian world inaccessible to conceptual thought.

Adorno's statements on Schönberg and on mass culture were based on the analytical framework for aesthetics drawn up in his early writings; i.e. he still operated with a conception of the historical character of artistic material, of the role of artistic technics and of the artwork as cypher. The changes in the relation between art and society that Adorno detected by means of these fundamental propositions reflects both chronologically and epistemologically an acknowledgement that the structure of capitalism itself has been reshaped. Whereas in 'Zur gesellschaftlichen Lage der Musik' Schönberg's music had been lauded for resisting the market, in Philosophie der Neuen Musik Adorno put forward the same composer's work as an example of the integral artwork, the only artistic form able to avoid state capitalist domination. Accordingly, Adorno's aesthetics became prescriptive as well as analytical in that it proclaimed that 'non-auratic' artworks had to seek to protect and preserve an image of subjectivity.

It has been suggested that Adorno studied only the sphere of consumption and that this amounts to a major theoretical flaw in his aesthetics.<sup>36</sup> This criticism is correct in so far as Adorno did not analyse the distribution of artworks, but it is incorrect in that Adorno could not analyse the mode of distribution since, following Pollock's suggestion, he believed the mechanisms of the market to have been suspended. In fact, the above criticism is doubly inaccurate. Adorno studied both the production and composition of

artworks and based his analysis of consumption on this study. This investigative framework was indebted to Pollock's theory of society, according to which production was considered to determine consumption and the base to determine the superstructure. Where Adorno parted company with Horkheimer and Pollock was in the attention he devoted to the historically specific nature of technics. A new society, Adorno proposed, would have to be founded on a genuinely new technics and could not be constructed by political decisions that had the interests of the population at heart simply being applied to state capitalism's sphere of production. In this respect, Adorno was just as pessimistic as Horkheimer and Pollock had been in assessing the chances of social transformation for he could forward no reason as to why people should wish to demand the use of new technics.

In his later essays in the Zeitschrift/Studies Adorno adopted Pollock's interpretation of the relation between base and superstructure. As a result of the concentration of capital the base dictated, or so Adorno assumed, in its very mode of production the shape of the superstructure, and yet relied on increased superstructural activity for its own continued existence. The main example of this conception in Adorno's articles was his proposal that technological development in mass culture occurred either to satisfy needs mass culture had created or to foster conformism to state capitalism. Consequently, Adorno's analysis of the relation between art, mass culture and society indirectly revealed much of this change in the base, for it detailed the base's domination of culture and mass culture's allotted role.

With this analysis of mass culture Adorno brought to light the change in the mode of production that Pollock has assumed had taken place. However, this initial advance was itself limited, for Adorno's approach matched in vagueness Horkheimer and Pollock's general remarks on the nature of capitalist production. Adorno did not study the mode of production specifically, but conceived of production only in terms of the opposition between mass culture and the authentic artwork. The actual structural configuration of radio, film and film-music was left unspecified behind his general categorie

of stereotypy, standardization and pseudo-individuation. Adorno simply contrasted mass culture to authentic art rather than determining the precise ideological content of mass music by, for example, analysing it as closely as he had investigated Wagner's or, indeed, Schönberg's music. Adorno's essays are marred by this absence of any detailed analysis. His concept of ideological technics - at first sight a promising addition to the analysis of state capitalism - must consequently be regarded as over-generalized. Adorno's work runs the danger of only being able to state - somewhat blandly - that mass culture was ideological because it was not art.

As a whole, then, Adorno proffered an analysis that was no more binding than that of Benjamin, whose work on mass culture Adorno had sought to counter. Adorno neither provided an adequate account of the creation of value in mass cultural (and artistic) production, nor did he theorize on the social force that wish manipulation amounted to. Adorno's work treated such manipulation as a given property no longer in need of analysis much as he also discounted the validity of popularity or reception as aesthetic judgements without actually studying these. Adorno's case is further weakened by the fact that he tried to justify excluding integral artworks from a study of commodities by arguing that they inhabited a separate dimension of reality. Yet, such artworks exist only in reality, i.e. the world of commodities, and therefore must in some sense be commodities.

This lack of empirical analysis becomes a serious weakness in Adorno's elaboration of the integral artwork, just as it was in Pollock's 'ideal-typical' analysis. The question as to whether integral artworks are themselves affected by their mass production in the form of long-playing records or paperbacks is left unanswered; indeed, it is ignored. Such an analysis might not establish objective aesthetic criteria for evaluating the artwork, but its omission prevented Adorno from even conceiving of the physical existence of integral artworks. One can only conclude that Adorno believed

these artworks to retain their autonomy regardless of their physical incorporation into state capitalism. Accordingly, Adorno's tenet that artworks had to be integral if they were to avoid incorporation into mass culture must be reformulated to read that 'artworks have to be integral to counteract the effects of their incorporation'.

The absence of an analysis of value production and of the precise constitution of the cultural monopolies renders Adorno's conception overly abstract. This imprecision leaves Adorno open to the charge that his work is merely a statement of preference for integral artworks, rather than a binding proof that only such artworks can now be considered to be art. Yet, ironically, it is precisely a concrete analysis of incorporation that would lend credence to the power Adorno accorded the integral artwork in his aesthetic and social theory. His concepts of ideology, concreteness and technics were, nevertheless, more powerful in content than those present in Lukács' and Benjamin's respective aesthetics of the time. In particular, Adorno's concept of technics offers an advance over the work of these two other theorists, as it did also over Horkheimer and Pollock's work. However, these advances are annulled by the fact that Adorno's aesthetic theory - as elaborated in his later essays - came to be based on Pollock's work. Adorno thus followed the path marked out by Horkheimer's conceptualization of the authoritarian state, namely a severe doubt as to whether capitalist society could be changed. Indeed, this underlying pessimism infected his appraisal of integral artworks, for he judged these to no longer contain a 'promesse de bonheur', i.e. an image of the future, but at most to symbolize in their integral construction a different form of production.

C H A P T E R 5 : M A R C U S E : P H I L O S O P H Y A N D A C R I T I C A L T H E O R Y O F S O C I E T Y

Comparing Marcuse's work in the period from 1932 to 1942 with Horkheimer's thought of the same period is a more straightforward task than was reconstructing the link between Adorno's writings and Horkheimer's work, and yet it is also a complex undertaking. On the one hand, Marcuse joined the Institut(e) in 1932 shortly after Horkheimer had become Director and thus was in closer contact with other Institut(e) staff than was Adorno. Furthermore, Marcuse wrote numerous articles both on philosophical matters and on the history of ideas for the Zeitschrift/Studies, subjects much closer to Horkheimer's work than were Adorno's few articles. Indeed, Marcuse authored an essay on philosophy and critical theory to complement that by Horkheimer.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, Marcuse came to Frankfurt from Freiburg where he had studied under Heidegger. Although by 1929 he had rejected a purely existentialist approach,<sup>2</sup> his monograph on Hegel and his first essay for the Zeitschrift both testify to his not having shaken off entirely this early influence on his thought. Moreover, despite having written his doctorate on the German 'Künstlerroman', he did not publish more than one essay on aesthetics during the period under investigation, so that any explication of his aesthetics and cultural theory has to be pasted together from his fugitive and disparate remarks on art and culture in general. Thus, his aesthetics cannot be examined and compared to Horkheimer's work in the manner in which Adorno's can be. Lastly, it has been suggested that Marcuse's writings evidence more similarities to Franz Neumann's conception of fascism than to that developed by Pollock.<sup>3</sup> If this is the case, then attempting to uncover whether Marcuse's work was influenced by the shifts in Horkheimer's thought would be a fruitless pursuit.

In order to assess whether Marcuse's work does follow the three stages in Horkheimer's thought - and by implication Pollock's theory of society - a chronological study will be made of the relation between Marcuse's social theory and the philosophical concepts that he developed to explain 'being-



in-the-world' ('Dasein') in terms both of its constitution by the sphere of production and its interpretation in culture. If this relation is found to itself undergo change then it should be possible to investigate whether this transformation occurred as a result of a reception of Pollock's concept of state capitalism or was attributable to other influences. In the course of this study specific attention will be paid to Marcuse's statements on the nature of culture and on aesthetics so as to assess whether aesthetic concepts play a mediating role between philosophy and social theory as was the case with Adorno's work. Marcuse's monographs on Hegel of 1933 and 1941 will, however, be omitted from the discussion.<sup>4</sup> Although they provide border markers for the period in question and would therefore seem well-suited to being used in an assessment of profound changes in Marcuse's work over this time-span, their content is specifically philosophical and the detailed analysis that would be appropriate to a proper discussion would lead away from the main themes of this chapter.

Marcuse's early work at the Institut(e) concentrated on devising both philosophical and sociological concepts to describe contemporary society. In his first essay for the Zeitschrift 'Der Kampf gegen den Liberalismus in der totalitären Staatsauffassung'<sup>5</sup> Marcuse sketched an outline of the totalitarian state and its ideology. In accordance with orthodox Marxist analyses of the time he contended that liberal capitalism had evolved into monopoly capitalism. However, he also differed with these analyses for he suggested that this new form of society could only survive with support from a totalitarian state an "alle Machtmittel mobilisierende Staatsgewalt"<sup>6</sup> able to decide "in allen Dimensionen des Daseins über die Existenz."<sup>7</sup>

Marcuse proposed that monopoly capitalism needed the totalitarian state because an open contradiction had arisen in society's economic substructure between production relations and productive forces. Ideally, all the population's needs could be satisfied by the productive forces, but this would require a break with capitalist production relations. Unlike Pollock, Marcuse did not believe that capitalism could prevent this happening by means

of planning. Rather, he concluded that this development in the base brought about a change in ideology. In this context he drew a much more direct line between base and superstructure than had Horkheimer, by claiming that the totalitarian state's function was to mask this otherwise clearly perceivable contradiction.

To do so it relied on a very specific ideology which was radically different from a liberal ideology of individualism. The ideology that the totalitarian state was forced to adopt revealed much of that state's nature. Marcuse determined at a much earlier stage than Horkheimer that totalitarian ideology fulfilled liberal capitalism's real intentions because it attacked bourgeois individualism which was now redundant on account of the presence of monopolies. The ideology dispensed with the idea of private freedom, thus renouncing any foundation in a rationality of the individual. As a consequence, not only did the new ideology reflect the structural change in society and participate in effecting such a change, it was also overtly irrational. The function of ideology had therefore changed, for the new totalitarian ideology no longer needed to fabricate illusions but rather openly devalued reality.

The totalitarian state, Marcuse proposed, firstly used a universalizing ideology that fostered open brutality in the name of the 'Volk' and secondly inculcated an existentialism of poverty in the population. The purpose of these two strands of totalitarian ideology was, he gauged, to further the 'total activation and politicization' of life. Whereas Pollock had assumed that state capitalism was only faced with problems of political legitimation, Marcuse suggested that the totalitarian ideology did not attempt to legitimate the totalitarian state but served to prevent any other social structure replacing it, for such an ideology eroded the very basis of autonomous thought, namely individuality. This conception differed from Pollock's in two other respects; Marcuse considered that the totalitarian ideology dominated and controlled production - unlike Pollock who

had believed the two to be interlinked. Marcuse also continually contrasted the totalitarian state to a planned society, which to his mind was, by definition, socialist.

This view that society was not only totalitarian monopoly capitalist but simultaneously contained the potentiality of a free socialist society informed the philosophical concepts which Marcuse went on to develop in his early essays for the Zeitschrift.<sup>8</sup> These concepts were designed to embrace the totalitarian state and to point out how it could be transformed and thus indicate a state beyond it. Marcuse endeavoured to accomplish this by making the concepts' primary purpose that of showing how they were limited by the division between 'civilization' (the sphere of production) on the one hand and 'culture' (the thought and institutions based on it) on the other. Each of these concepts he outlined in his various essays for the Zeitschrift was informed by this epistemological concern and by the singular importance he attached to this division.

The four main concepts he constructed fall into two natural pairs, both hierarchically equal in the place they inhabit in his work: essence and reason, interest and happiness ('Wesen', 'Vernunft', 'Interesse', 'Glück').

The major part of his work for the Institut(e) was taken up with the development of these philosophical concepts and collectively they embody an attempt to create an historical materialist philosophy. This task included advancing a distinct methodology when analysing previous philosophies in order to ascertain what parts of them were redeemable in terms of a contemporary critique. Just as Horkheimer's methodology was important to his designing a critical concept of reason, so too the way in which Marcuse developed his materialist concepts is equally as important as their content.

From a study of the use by classical and idealist philosophies of the concept of essence Marcuse constructed a materialist version of the same concept. He ascertained that all previous efforts to define this concept had remained idealist or abstract, despite the material core he found to exist in the essence of being. In order to avoid this predicament, one

present even in phenomenological investigation. Marcuse turned the problem on its head. He argued that the contradiction between essence and appearance was a real contradiction, not a mental construct or Plato's 'eidos'. He defined appearance as the historical 'for itself' of essence, i.e. it was the appearance of essence in one particular social form. Essence could consequently be specified to be the basis of all concrete existence; and it was thus possible to measure contemporary existence against the potential of a better existence resident within it, i.e. its essence. The past of essence functioned as the basis of a critique of existence, since this past had formed the productive forces from which the future could be projected out of the present. In this manner, Marcuse conceived of essence as a material state whose potential had not yet been realised but rather was hidden behind appearance. Essence would, to use Horkheimer's words, be shown to be non-identical with itself. What was more, such material essence was closely bound up with the happiness of the population in that the potentiality inherent in essence by definition could not be used for particular interests, be these totalitarian or capitalist. Marcuse thus designed the concept of essence to designate the level of social production, of labour, achieved in a given society.<sup>9</sup> However, he did not equate appearance simply with ideology, as had Lukács, for something of appearance - as appearing essence - was always true.

Marcuse's definition of essence is related to Marx's conception that the appropriation of labour by means of commodity production is the lowest common denominator of capitalism. Marcuse's notion of essence permitted him to specify that the contemporary stage of production could fulfil the needs of the population; the only necessity then facing men would be their struggle against nature rather than against one another. A rational, planned society that served only mankind's interests would provide the basis for such a use of the productive forces. Marcuse spoke of a "Menschheit, welche die Gestaltung des gesellschaftlichen Lebensprozesses planmäßig selbst in die Hand nimmt",<sup>10</sup> and the result of such planning would be a socialist

society.

Marcuse concluded that the difference between essence and appearance could only be bridged by appearance being changed, i.e. by praxis. Indeed, he constructed the concept of 'essence' precisely so that he could describe society as being potentially more than its sum parts. The concept therefore provided the important link between theory and praxis, for it spotlighted society's changeability. In this respect Marcuse's methodology differed from non-identity theory. Whereas Horkheimer sought to expose the ideological nature of philosophy, Marcuse's work tried to develop past philosophical concepts and use them as a platform from which both to describe capitalist society and to point beyond it to how it could be changed.<sup>11</sup> Marcuse therefore also parted company with Pollock's work, in that he considered change not only to be possible but envisaged the result to be a socialist society.

Traditionally, philosophy conceived the principle ordering essence to be reason. Marcuse argued, however, that appearance was not structured by reason in monopoly capitalism, for this society was totalitarian and thus irrational. He discussed the concept of reason in the manner adopted to evaluate the notion of essence, i.e. by investigating the past usage of the concept, notably the part it played in Hegelian philosophy. Hegel had maintained that a concept of reason was crucial to epistemology for it explained the relation of freedom to nature. Nature (and with it society) could be regarded as a medium for freedom because, or so Hegel had submitted, it was ordered by reason in the form of 'Spirit'. Marcuse objected to what he regarded as Hegel's inference that the struggle between nature and society was ordered rationally. Just as Marcuse insisted on a materialist concept of essence, so likewise he averred that reason had to be conceptualised as a concept and not only an ideational, philosophical ordering of reality. That is to say, the concept had to be materially grounded and linked to praxis. Its relevance, he maintained, lay precisely in this positioning, for reason could then show that reality was not rational. In other words, the concept demonstrated its own non-existence in reality, for

there it still had to be established. Marcuse's concept of reason is therefore 'critical' in a dual manner. Not only can the concept be used to assess the general freedom from necessity of a given society, but also - since social freedom is based on individual freedom - it describes the extent of individual freedom that society allows. The concept of reason is true in that it represents the possibilities inherent in essence. Both his notions of truth and reason are construed as abstract, for they are mediated by the appearance of capitalist society. Once society is founded on the potentiality of essence, reason would shed its abstractness and become concrete.

In contrast to this possible future society, state capitalism could be shown to be an irrational social form, despite its being ordered by a plan, if this plan were to be proven to be irrational. However, Marcuse was unable to pass such a judgement using the concept of reason, because it would undermine the necessary connection he sought to establish between reason and planned praxis. For, if an irrational planned social form could be imposed on essence, what justification was there for supposing that an inherent logical link existed between reason and a socialist society?

Marcuse developed two concepts to support this linking of reason and praxis: interest and happiness. The materialist foundation of the concepts of essence and reason led Marcuse to question why appearance was not essence by addressing the cui bono of contemporary society. Since contemporary appearance did not serve the general interests of mankind as a whole but, in the guise of the totalitarian state, suppressed the potential of essence, Marcuse concluded that it must obey only a 'particular' interest. The concept of interest thus located the link between theory and praxis by showing not only that change was necessary because society was controlled only in the interest of a few and therefore irrational, but also that a different society was contained in society's essence. In other words, Marcuse maintained that a society functioning in the general interest where the only form of necessity would be the struggle against nature, was feasible if the

forces of production were to be put to a different use.

At this point Marcuse's argument provides solutions to two of the Institut(e)'s main concerns. The concept of interest challenges an economic Marxism that centres on a monolinear notion of progress by exposing its irrationality in a way not unlike Horkheimer's definition of non-identity. For Marcuse, progress is only made when the particular interest governing society has been overthrown. The development of the forces of production cannot therefore be considered automatically to create such a change. Furthermore, Marcuse connected this observation to a discussion of the ideological nature of the productive forces. To the extent that dominant particular interests are also rooted in science and technology, these forces cannot be regarded as an a priori for the foundation of a new society, i.e. science and technology must be held to be ideological.<sup>12</sup> The concept of interest additionally enabled Marcuse to deduce that a complete division of the economy and the political sphere was only possible in a free society because only then could the political sphere - acting in the general interest - regulate and direct the economy rationally. If governed by a particular interest economic gain was usurped by a few and the two spheres were interlocked. In this manner Marcuse's philosophy provides a negative determination of the fettering of the productive forces under the totalitarian state.

The concept of interest could also be employed on another plane. It permitted a concept of real interest to be posited, by which Marcuse understood real to signify the general happiness of mankind. Real interest is consequently not just a critical standard against which present reality can be measured but also a philosophical notion that allows a state to be thought of where reason and general happiness coincide. This dual quality is more than a sublation of Hegel's idealist concept of reason, for it generates an image of a future state, which although by definition unspecific, is nevertheless materialistically founded. The difference in methodological intention between Horkheimer and Marcuse is illustrated succinctly by this point. Whereas Horkheimer endeavoured to expose the ideological

nature of traditional philosophy, Marcuse constructed a philosophy that claimed to explain the ideological nature of the social structure itself, be it 'planned' or not.

To be able to define real interest as the coincidence of reason and general happiness Marcuse had to elaborate the concept of happiness in greater detail. He approached this task by analysing the conflicting notions of Cyrenaic and Epicurean hedonism. Cyrenaic hedonism, he found, had been substantially conformist whereas the Epicurean variant he judged to be critical, for it had tried to find ways of avoiding unhappiness, a task that had involved criticizing social constraints on happiness. The idea of hedonism thus offered philosophy an all-important connection to immediate physical happiness, although he qualified this statement by contending that this remained an ideological bond if such happiness were linked only to a particular person. Happiness, he maintained, had to be founded in general interest, i.e. in reason.

If the concept of happiness is used to designate both the extent to which happiness does not at present exist, and the possibility that it could be established in the future, then the concept can be used critically to underpin Marcuse's notions of interest and reason. Marcuse proceeded to assert that current happiness seemed accidental, for people's expenditure of labour did not guarantee them happiness on account of that labour being caught up in the production of exchange- and surplus- value. Signally, under the totalitarian state enjoyment had to be detached from exchange-value in order to avoid the tension that would result from the population realizing that their labour did not guarantee happiness. As a consequence of this dissociation of labour and happiness, Marcuse proposed, enjoyment was an abstract notion that could not provide an understanding of society. Because enjoyment could, however, be liberating, in that it could point beyond the given relations of production, various devices such as film and organised amusement were used by totalitarianism to distract people from realizing



that real enjoyment was possible. Marcuse insisted, however, that future happiness could not be grounded in contemporary needs. In an argument similar to that put forward by Adorno he ascertained that needs under totalitarianism were created manipulatively and could not as a result be taken to be a real measure of what people required. In this context, because of its connection to the future, the concept of happiness provided Marcuse with the physical, materialist base for the future society he had projected abstractly in the concepts of essence, reason and interest. As he remarked:

Ohne die Freiheit und das Glück in den gesellschaftlichen Beziehungen der Menschen bleibt auch die größte Steigerung der Produktion und die Abschaffung des individuellen Eigentums an den Produktionsmittel noch der alten Ungerechtigkeit verhaftet. 13

General happiness could only be established by a change in the economic-political process, i.e. in the distribution and production of social wealth. In this manner Marcuse avoided dissolving the concept of happiness into either a philosophical anthropology or an economic theory of society.<sup>14</sup> His assertion that both economic and political change were necessary underlines this fact. Marcuse did not, in other words, envisage a simple progression to socialism founded on totalitarian monopoly capitalism's means of production. This suggestion marks a shift away from his original conception of planned socialism, although it does not amount to a complete theoretical acceptance of the concept of state capitalism. What his emphasis on economic and political change does imply, however, is that the planned society originally encapsulated in his concept of essence must be qualitatively different with regard to the structure of work itself, i.e. it cannot be a planned variant of capitalist production.

Despite their common interest in studying the inherent meanings of concepts, the methodologies Marcuse and Horkheimer adopted and developed differed greatly from one another. Marcuse did not attempt to expose the ideological connotations of contemporary philosophy as non-identity theory undertook to do. Rather, he derived from a brief history of the concept the value it might have for a current historical materialist philosophy, i.e. the manner

in which it could be used fruitfully in such a philosophy. The ensuing concepts were intended not only to describe reality but also simultaneously to contain the basis for a future society. In this respect, Marcuse's concepts cannot simply be labelled 'ideology critique'. The concepts were indeed meant to earmark the ideology inherent in social reality and yet equally they were intended to specify the degree to which the basis of that social reality could be changed so as to create out of it a new, socialist society. Consequently, Marcuse's concepts were designed to outline that praxis necessary to change the existing social structure, in the sense that they were meant to be used as a theory by future praxis. Marcuse's philosophy can therefore be described as a sublative ideology critique not of thought, but of society.

During his time at the Institut(e), however, Marcuse increasingly came to see 'thought' as a refuge for ideas which could no longer be put into practice. When confronted with the totalitarian state the truth of philosophical concepts could only be posited in an ideational sphere; it could not be detected in contemporary social appearance, i.e. in the physical reality of totalitarianism. Marcuse tried to compensate for this by conceiving of imagination as a faculty that was necessary if truth was to be preserved. Since the totalitarian state debarred praxis from occurring truth could, Marcuse argued, only be conceptualised mentally. Philosophy therefore became an even more important discipline and had to incorporate within it imagination and the ability to 'project' a vision into the future. In this context Marcuse's work on culture and aesthetics came to play a key role in his thought.

In the 1937 issue of the Zeitschrift/Studies Marcuse devoted a lengthy essay to the function of culture and aesthetics in society, 'Über den affirmativen Charakter der Kultur'. Marcuse founded the concept of affirmative culture in the division of culture and civilization (between productive forces and production relations) that informed the epistemology he had used to develop his philosophical concepts. The term itself was

devised by Horkheimer who, with reference to his essay 'Egoismus und Freiheitsbewegung', remarked in a letter to Benjamin of the 27th of October, 1936:

Es wird Sie interessieren, daß Marcuse, angeregt durch die Stelle, auf die Sie verweisen, den Plan eines Aufsatzes über den Kulturbegriff gefaßt hat. 15

The passage in question read as follows:

Der affirmative Charakter der Kultur, gemäß welchem über der wirklichen Welt das Sein einer ewig besseren behauptet wurde... 16

Marcuse defined affirmative culture more precisely, however:

Unter affirmativer Kultur sei jene der bürgerlichen Epoche des Abendlandes verstanden welche im Lauf ihrer eigenen Entwicklung dazu geführt hat, die geistig-seelische Welt als ein selbständiges Wertbereich von der Zivilisation abzulösen und über sie zu erhöhen. Ihr entscheidender Zug ist die Behauptung einer allgemein verpflichtenden, unbedingt zu bejahenden, ewig besseren, wertvolleren Welt, welche von der tatsächlichen Welt des alltäglichen Daseinskampfes wesentlich verschieden ist, die aber jedes Individuum, von innen her, ohne jede Tatsächlichkeit zu verändern, für sich realisieren kann. 17

Affirmative culture thus formed the structure in which Adorno had situated autonomous art. In contrast to Adorno, however, Marcuse specified that affirmative culture was an ideological opiate that excused society from providing earthly happiness. In this fashion such culture reproduced the abstract reason unrelated to general happiness practised in capitalist society and also fostered the monadification of the populace.

Affirmative culture offered an abstract, purely mental semblance of satisfaction anchored in nebulous notions such as the 'soul'. Despite the fact that the notion of the 'soul' centred on the individual and thus to a limited extent cut through the impersonality of capitalist economic relations, Marcuse argued that emphasis on the 'soul' diverted attention away from the capitalist form of production and thus from social change. Marcuse concluded from this:

So konnte die Seele als ein nützlicher Faktor in der Technik der Massenbeherrschung eingehen, als, in der Epoche der autoritären Staaten, alle verfügbaren Kräfte gegen eine wirkliche Veränderung des gesellschaftlichen Daseins mobilgemacht werden mußte. 18

Although art in particular articulated ideals at the same time as it legitimized the absence of real happiness in society, these had little effect for

Marcuse suggested: "Was in der Kunst geschieht, verpflichtet zu nichts."<sup>19</sup>

However, he underlined that in its articulation of ideals, affirmative culture had to be regarded as possessing a positive, non-ideological side, i.e. affirmative culture was dialectical.

It was especially in art, Marcuse asserted, that one ideal in particular was preserved, namely that of potential future real happiness, Stendhal's 'promesse de bonheur'. In the face of the complete division of civilization and culture, Marcuse proposed, "wird das Glück zum Reservatbereich, damit es überhaupt noch da sein kann."<sup>20</sup> The happiness which could no longer be located in society could therefore only be posited in the faculty of imagination and found its symbolic portrayal in art. Although Marcuse postulated that the positive meanings which were critical of reality were symbolically and textually perceivable, he omitted to itemize how this occurred and why an artwork's structure permitted such symbolic construction. Indeed, the question has been raised whether it is possible to regard beauty as a symbolic property at all, since beauty inhabits a plane beyond symbolism.<sup>21</sup> Beauty, for Marcuse the essence of art, offered, he suggested, a picture of happiness. The enjoyment of beauty therefore pointed forward to the possibility of real sensuous happiness, to a state where civilization and culture reunite and become 'beautiful'. In this context Marcuse gauged that the notion of the 'soul', which at first sight appeared to be negative, actually had a positive side, because it had no exchange-value and thus indicated a future state where real happiness would be unyoked from exchange-value oriented production. In summary, by appealing by means of its beauty to the individual's sensory perception, affirmative art retained a concept of individual rationality unlike the false rationality of the sphere of production. Marcuse's conception of art therefore functions as a paradigm for real interest and general happiness at a time when these are no longer accessible in reality. As such his argument involves certain latent assumptions on aesthetics which must be examined more closely.

Marcuse's conception of affirmative art implies that the meaning of an artwork

is historical and can change. Whereas the piece of art may have originally been laudatory of bourgeois civilization, through the passage of time it may have taken on a critical edge, for example, by exposing the inhuman side of contemporary civilization. Whether or not the beauty of an artwork can now be understood in this new sense depends on the existence of a public which can appreciate such beauty. There is thus a paradoxical element in Marcuse's construction, for it was just such a public which he had insisted totalitarianism was eroding. Equally, the presence of negative as well as positive levels of meaning in the artwork signifies that artworks can be used against the very ideals they harbour, for example by a mass cultural apparatus.

With the concept of affirmative culture Marcuse presented a dialectical appraisal of autonomous art's contemporary function. That is to say, he used the term to encapsulate an ideology critique of past art, for under totalitarianism autonomous art had become an impossibility. However, the conception lacks any degree of differentiation and is limited to one historical moment, in that it fails to take into consideration the different forms of reception and forms of art extant in the 19th century, thus ignoring the tension between 'traditional' and 'avant-garde' forms of art. Only 'bourgeois' culture and forms are included in the analysis, neither proletarian art forms nor the later Dadaist and Surrealist branches of artistic production are accounted for or evaluated. Furthermore, unlike Adorno, and unlike Benjamin's essay on artworks and mechanical reproducibility,<sup>22</sup> Marcuse did not undertake to suggest forms the future production of art should take, but merely looked at past art. Neither did he put forward an aesthetics of the artwork, as Adorno had done with reference to Hegel's aesthetics.

Marcuse's concept of affirmative culture embraces art as representative of bourgeois culture in total, and yet the bourgeois culture so represented is that of liberal capitalism and not of monopoly capitalism. In this respect Marcuse must have regarded affirmative artworks as essentially

dissynchronous. It was in order to construct such a tension between autonomous, affirmative art and contemporary society that Marcuse cast the term 'affirmative' so unspecifically and chose to ignore avant-garde artworks and concentrate on 'classics'.<sup>23</sup> In other words, the concept was not intended to include the avant-garde, for the notion of affirmative culture had to be rooted in the past, namely in liberal capitalism. For similar reasons, Marcuse's aesthetics could not suggest what forms art should take if it were to project an emancipatory potential. Because the happiness it symbolically represented was no longer apparent in totalitarian society, it could not be represented in terms of that society. In other words, in a closed society non-identity could only be posited - or indeed preserved - by resorting to past images. Such a non-identity is methodologically distinct from that theorized by Horkheimer, for it no longer locates non-identity in the present.

Art, Marcuse proposed, salvaged the non-identical in its 'promesse de bonheur', in beauty, in the imagination. Methodologically, this conception differs from his writings on philosophy for, by refusing to show any way forward and analysing past products and past production, Marcuse's aesthetics is passive rather than offering a link to praxis. In order to avoid the threat of mental blockage posed by the civilization of the totalitarian state, Marcuse encouraged passivity in order to preserve an image of the future, rather than action in order to change society. Art's ideals may offer a bridge to the future, but they thus remain sublated by the perceiver at an ideational level.<sup>24</sup> Activity, Marcuse concluded, would involve criticism of the ideality of those very ideals and therefore endanger their existence. Only through such a criticism could these ideals content be put into practice in accordance with Marx's eleventh thesis on Feuerbach. However, in Marcuse's conception art is held to preserve the ideals of his philosophical concepts in a visible form, but in a manner in which they cannot be put into practice. Their truth can only be upheld in 'refuge', in the imagination. Thus in its conceptualisation Marcuse's

work on art went against the tenor of the philosophical notions he had developed, but constituted an attempt to preserve this philosophy's truth content, much as Adorno and Horkheimer's work in the late 1930s came to discount the possibility of change once they had accepted Pollock's thesis on state capitalism.

Marcuse argued that the preservation of the ideals by art was particularly necessary, for under the total mobilization of the totalitarian state the production of affirmative art was suspended. Culture had become the servant of the dominatory. In other words, Marcuse conceived of the superstructure changing in function to cater directly for the needs of the base although it is not clear whether this means that the totalitarian economy is different from that of monopoly capitalism. What is certain is that the concept of non-affirmative, emancipatory culture which was connected closely to the sphere of production was thrown into question by the presence of the totalitarian state. Totalitarianism enforces a complete subjugation of culture by civilization, parodying in a ghostly form precisely that cultural form Marcuse held to be characteristic of socialism. Since totalitarian society offers nothing on which to found social change, ideology critique is forced to centre on abstract ideals contained in past art if it is to counter this monolithic cultural structure.

To uphold these ideals in the form in which they are encountered in autonomous art Marcuse had to find causal reasons for the coalition of culture and civilization in the sphere of civilization itself rather than in culture. That is to say, if art is to retain a potentially liberating moment, its subservience to the sphere of production must be explained in terms of the latter sphere and not be seen as the result of some innate property of art. In order to avoid this danger, in his last essay for the Zeitschrift/Studies, 'Some Social Implications of Modern Technology', Marcuse postulated that technology itself functioned ideologically in the sphere of production. This process occurred because with the downfall of

free economic competition commodities were produced for profit alone. Unlike technics, which he regarded as an abstract ability, technology and a technological rationality had a stabilising effect on society. The term 'technological rationality' was meant to designate the fact that the technological power of production pervaded the entire rationality of society, as a result of which individuals were treated as mere instruments of production.

Marcuse, like Pollock before him, suggested that in the absence of a price system exchange-values became the ordering principle of society. Marcuse, however, anchored this change in the technological apparatus of production, which he held not only to guarantee the creation of exchange-values, but as a consequence to dominate society and in so doing to promote a false general interest, namely an interest in the further existence of the apparatus itself. This new technological rationality he deemed to be both capitalist and devoid of any rationality that took individuality into account. Technological rationality created a new form of social stratification different from the labour-based class system of liberal capitalism: society became divided into the rulers and the ruled. Marcuse thus profiled a qualitative change in society similar to that change denoted by Pollock's concept of state capitalism, but with the important difference that Marcuse founded this change in an inherent totalitarianism within the mode of production itself.

Marcuse proposed that the all-pervasive technological apparatus created a qualitatively new form of alienation and to take this into account he extended Marx's category of alienation. Conformism represented a new form of alienation because orientation towards the totalitarian apparatus was demanded of each individual rather than individual autonomous thought. In keeping with the main points Horkheimer had outlined in 'Vernunft und Selbsterhaltung', Marcuse listed the categories of instrumentalisation, atomization and specialisation as the constituent elements of conformism in contemporary society. Social divisions were based on hierarchical



position, whereby individual autonomy was eradicated in favour of the technological rationality of command and this had the radical consequence that the individual lost the ability to abstract from the dominating rationality. "Profitable efficiency", Marcuse maintained, "poses as the final fulfillment of individualism."<sup>25</sup> The population was thus trapped within a particular, technological mode of thinking.

This conception of technological rationality constitutes a shift in Marcuse's work, for it signifies that there is no longer a need for the ideology of universality he had traced in 'Der Kampf gegen den Liberalismus in der totalitären Staatsauffassung'. Marcuse's analysis of technology's impact and influence on capitalism amounts, in essence, to an acceptance of Pollock's work. Marcuse indicated that capitalism could be planned and administered by technological rationality and yet remain capitalist, and thus he did not foresee a change in society as possible, let alone probable. Furthermore, Marcuse's thesis extends Pollock's concept of state capitalism for he asserted in a manner more direct than Adorno's remarks on the subject that, regardless of the form of distribution, the very mode of production was innately repressive. The stabilizing effect of technology on society which he had described implied that Marcuse regarded the base and superstructure to have become fused together. The insight underlying his conception of technology and which is common to the work of his colleagues is that the rationality of the base determines the rationality of the superstructure, which in turn is put to effect in ensuring the smooth functioning of the base; culture and civilization, as a consequence, are completely ideological. The sphere of production's ideological quality invalidates any projection of a socialist planned society based on those productive forces. Marcuse, however, refused to bow to this conclusion, although the ground for it had been laid in his concept of interest. In what can only be regarded as a piece of obligatory optimism similar to that practised by Pollock, Horkheimer and Adorno, he averred that technics as mechanisation could

somehow be utilized to abolish scarcity; the present reduction of people to "fingers, arms or heads",<sup>26</sup> was, he asserted, a reduction of them to their 'natural' capabilities. This use of mechanisation as a neutral force to obviate scarcity and to facilitate the acquisition of necessities was a theme to which Marcuse was to return frequently in his later writings.

Marcuse's acceptance of the concept of state capitalism amounts to a complete reversal of his earlier position. Totalitarianism is no longer held to be an ideological aberration on capitalism's part but is regarded as deeply rooted in the sphere of production itself. In other words, the ideology which, Marcuse had assumed, generated the scission of civilization from culture transpires to be a key property of capitalist civilization per se. Marcuse's concept of essence, based as it was on the dialectical nature of the sphere of production, is thus divested of any inherent potentiality. If society's essence is latently totalitarian, then a free society can surely not be deduced from it, however much Marcuse may qualify the concept of essence.

Marcuse was only able to sketch in rough the wide-ranging effects of the ideology of technology and could not project a future emancipatory society from an analysis of civilization's properties. The essence of society being itself ideological, non-identity, and therefore dynamism cannot be posited in society's essence, which must instead be viewed as static. Marcuse's last essay for the Zeitschrift/Studies was, as a result, unable to establish the dynamic connection between theory and praxis that had been so central to his philosophical epistemology; his theory became as static as the society it sought to describe. In the absence of a dynamic concept of society the concepts of 'real interest' and 'affirmative culture' became completely abstract properties. In other words, by 1941 Marcuse's work is flawed by the same theoretical difficulties which faced Pollock, Horkheimer and Adorno.

Despite being confronted by similar logical problems, Marcuse's essays in the period between 1933 and 1941-2 did not pursue the same course as

Horkheimer's work had. Rather than deriving the ideological nature of current philosophies from a theory of non-identity, Marcuse attempted to found an historical materialist philosophy on an ideology critique of society. He devised concepts to locate the ideological interests at work in the structure of reality; the only exception to the use of this methodology were Marcuse's writings on art, where he opposed reality to an ideal, namely beauty. The concepts of interest and happiness that were so important in his philosophy allowed Marcuse both to focus his work on the contradictions of the sphere of production and its potential and therefore to remain more concrete than Adorno and Horkheimer. It is specifically this concern both with the sphere of production and with the constructive role it plays in the creation of ideology that marks Marcuse's work off from that of Adorno and Horkheimer.

Once Marcuse accepted the main tenets of Pollock's concept of state capitalism he met with the same epistemological problems as had his fellow Institut(e) members.<sup>27</sup> He could only hypothesise exhortatively that a new society would have to be qualitatively different from the present. The opposition of technics to technology (a distinction Adorno makes only in aesthetics) did not get around the problem. Marcuse was forced to resort to the concept of affirmative culture in order to keep an avenue of social change open within his epistemology. This retreat from social theory to aesthetics highlights the inadequacies of the theory of affirmative culture. The concept attempts to offer the concept of non-identity a haven against its ideological impregnation once this can no longer be grounded in the concept of essence. Although Marcuse had criticized Protestantism for encouraging drive internalisation,<sup>28</sup> his aesthetics furthers such internalisation in order to preserve certain ideals. Art took up a central place in his later work, for, he argued, it retained a notion of the new precisely because beauty was a purely ideational entity. If it were a physical attribute of reality it would be ideologically

infected by the technological reality of totalitarianism. This step deprives beauty of any sensuous nature however. The consequent passivity of his aesthetics characterizes his epistemology as a whole as soon as he had assumed that totalitarianism was latent in the sphere of production. What Jürgen Habermas labels the "analytische Zersetzung eines objektiven Scheins" as the preparation for "die Veränderung der entschleierte materiellen Lebensverhältnisse...und die Aufhebung der Kultur"<sup>29</sup> is no longer possible: what had at first sight seemed to be objective appearance is now found to be the essence.

Marcuse's approach was compelled to become as formalist as Horkheimer's and he had to renege on the progressive moments of his analytical framework, namely the concepts of interest and happiness, and to sever any connection to praxis. A remark Marcuse made in an Institut(e) seminar on Aldous Huxley's Brave New World in 1942 reflects the extent to which pessimism becomes ingrained in his epistemology once culture and civilization 'marry':

Fortschreitende Naturbeherrschung und Gesellschaftsbeherrschung beseitigt alle Transzendenz, physische sowohl als psychische. Kultur, als der zusammenfassende Titel für die eine Seite des Gegensatzes, lebt von unerfüllter Sehnsucht, Glauben, Schmerz, Hoffnung, kurz, von dem, was nicht ist, sich aber in der Wirklichkeit anmeldet. Das bedeutet aber, Kultur lebt vom Unglück. 30

In short, technological domination and concomitant social control have produced a 'closed' world.

Marcuse arrived at such a pessimistic assessment because he had assumed that state manipulation of the distributive sphere resolved the contradiction between productive forces and the relations of production that was otherwise extant in capitalism. The dialectical mediation of theory and praxis originally embedded in the concept of essence and appearance was, as a consequence, lost. It follows that his concept of essence could no longer obtain to a level of practical, empirical truth, but had to remain abstract. Furthermore, if the sphere of production involved repression in its very productive forces, then the technological potentiality Marcuse had perceived as resident in 'essence' transpired to be itself

capitalist. He could not therefore deduce or extrapolate a future society from his concept of essence. That is to say, Marcuse's concept of essence was no longer dialectical; the dialectical status of his three other main concepts is concomitantly forfeited and their purpose becomes redundant. Marcuse could only extricate himself from the ruins of his theory either by somehow recasting the concept of essence or by redesigning the initial unsystematic distinction he had drawn between technics and technology. In his later work we shall see that he attempts with varying degrees of success to do both, and in both attempts aesthetics plays an all-important role.

C H A P T E R 6 : LÖWENTHAL'S FOUNDATION OF A LITERARY SOCIOLOGY

Comparing Löwenthal's essays for the Zeitschrift/Studies with the three phases in Horkheimer's work is not difficult. Löwenthal joined the Institut(e) in 1926 and became a full-time member in 1931 on Horkheimer's assumption of the Institut(e)'s directorship. Löwenthal brought with him a training in philosophy not dissimilar to Horkheimer's as well as a great deal of experience as a review-writer. In his work for the Institut(e) he combined both these talents firstly as editor of the Zeitschrift/Studies' review section and secondly in drafting a critical theory of the sociology of literature to match Horkheimer's non-identity theory. Unlike Adorno and Marcuse, however, he concentrated solely on literature, not on art or culture in general, so that his work would appear to lack the broad sweep of the others. Yet to omit his work from an analysis of the aesthetic work of the Frankfurt School on the grounds that he did not address broad aesthetic questions would be to underestimate the role his work played in the Institut(e) projects. Surprisingly, the majority of discussions of the Frankfurt School make precisely such an omission.

Martin Jay has stated that Löwenthal's writings for the Zeitschrift form

...powerful statements of the Frankfurt School's ideology critique at a time when its members still held to relatively traditional Marxist expectations about the probable course of history. 1

This suggests not only that Löwenthal's work bears an epistemological affinity to non-identity theory, but also that Löwenthal did not veer from this course for the lifetime of the Institut(e). It will be necessary to examine whether such an affinity indeed existed and then to ascertain whether Löwenthal's position remained static rather than accomodating first a study of authoritarianism and then an acceptance of the concept of state capitalism. It will be argued that his writings do change over the period in question, but only in content, not in underlying methodology. Because Löwenthal's work is strictly limited to the application of a sociology of literature to past literary works, changes in his work are

not immediately apparent and an acceptance of Pollock's work is doubly difficult to infer. In order to obviate this problem his work will be compared to Horkheimer's. To aid this discussion two texts will be drawn on in addition to his Zeitschrift/Studies essays, both of which were written in the late 1930s,<sup>2</sup> but were not published in the Zeitschrift/Studies. As Löwenthal's essays centre on the various ideologies which he judged were inherent in certain types of literature his essays will be analysed sequentially according to the time they apply to rather than chronologically. Thus a temporal continuum in the presentations of the ideologies will be described in which differences both in the ideologies analysed and in the mode of analysis itself should be apparent. Before Löwenthal's sociology of literature can be discussed, however, the theory underlying must be outlined.

The methodology Löwenthal devised rested on two assumptions: that traditional literary history offered an excessively limited approach to literature and that literature could be analysed sociologically.<sup>3</sup> Literature, Löwenthal maintained, could not be treated as an isolated enclave but had to be placed in the triangular setting of author - work - recipient if it were to be understood in a materialist fashion. He asserted that a literary text was a mediate expression of life at the time of its writing and, through the medium of the author, depicted a specific social structure. Therefore, by comparing a literary text's statements to a correct theory of the society of which the text was a part, i.e. by studying literature's non-identity with the reality in which it existed, the ideology inherent in the description the author provided could be assessed. The study of literature became a study of ideologies. Löwenthal postulated further that if this study were extended to include an investigation of literature's reception at a particular time, e.g. by analysing the critics' varying opinions on a literary work, the ideologies at work in that society would become apparent. Indeed, the ideology motivating readers could be contrasted to the ideology of the text.

This methodology was novel in two respects, for it did not only assess the ideological quality of a piece of literature at the text's time of production and the history of a work's interpretation. By presupposing that literature was a mediation of subjective (authorial) and objective (interpretative) expressions, Löwenthal's methodology also avoided vulgar Marxism's reduction of each text to the class position of the author in question. He asserted programmatically: "Zum Sein des Kunstwerks gehört seine Wirkung; das was es ist, bestimmt sich wesentlich in dem, als was es erlebt wird."<sup>4</sup> By introducing the category of reception into a sociology of literature Löwenthal departed from the limited view of the study of literature as purely the study of what a printed text was read to state.

This sociology of literature could, when applied to a particular literary work, approach it from various angles. It could, for example, analyse the form of the work, i.e. its 'literariness' in terms of this being specific to a particular item or social group. In this context Löwenthal listed the use of dialogue in drama and then the use of narrative interlogues in novels as signifying two stages in the ascendance of the bourgeoisie. Alternatively, a sociology of literature could study the ideology inherent in the motifs, themes or material of a work. Modern psychoanalytical techniques allowed a third approach to be taken. The psychology of the author as articulated by his intentions in the work could be examined, for, Löwenthal argued, these described the society in which the author lived. He based this assertion on the claim that authorial intention was subjective but equally was objective owing to the author's membership of a social class (a notion indebted to Hegel's conception of the particular and 'Spirit').

Löwenthal introduced a fourth level into his investigation in his suggestion that literature played a role in shaping society in that it had a socially conservative function. Because literature offered psychological fulfilment to the reader - an imaginary realisation in an 'inner sphere' of what are



otherwise socio-psychological taboos - Löwenthal held that it prevented the accumulated psychic frustration caused by the taboos from being unleashed in a socially destructive form. This function of literature as a psychological escape-valve had therefore to figure in an understanding of literature's role in society. By combining an investigation of this psychological function with the three other levels of his analysis Löwenthal was able to situate and explain the artwork in sociological and historical terms.

The thoroughness of this methodology was not reflected in Löwenthal's outline of literature's non-ideological properties, something which was, perhaps, indicative of an interest solely in the ideological forms. Literature or art, Löwenthal nonetheless maintained, was never just ideological; it also contained a 'positive' element. The psychological fulfilment art provided was simultaneously an expression of dissatisfaction with reality, i.e. an expression of the conformity with society enforced on individuals. If this social dissatisfaction expressed in artworks were to become consciously articulated by the population, then possibly capitalism's social fabric would be torn apart.

Löwenthal argued that the latent existence of such an expression in literature did not imply that social change would necessarily proceed from a reading of it. This opinion parallels Marcuse's concept of non-affirmative art's 'promesse de bonheur' as is borne out by Löwenthal's statement that: "Alle echte Kunst hat ein Moment der Trauer in sich, weil sie unerfüllte Sehnsucht der Menschen gestaltet."<sup>5</sup> What is more, Löwenthal's usage of the terms 'sorrow' and 'longing' mirror their use in Adorno's work - a fact that testifies to the interlinked character of Institut(e) work. This reference to his colleagues' work is also contained in Löwenthal's assessment of 'authentic' literature. To his mind in the absence of a new society and in the face of continued repression, authentic art's sorrow reminded beholders of the repression of previous generations and therefore described the history of social dissatisfaction.

By definition, then, authentic art could not be affirmative; it had to negate society in order to preserve the image of sorrow. According to Löwenthal, however, art's very authenticity prevented it from becoming 'engaged'. Rather than ~~positively~~ pointing forward to a future, art had to expose the non-identity of the present until such a time as a free society had been created. The ideological nature of literary texts could be gauged by exploring the degree to which sorrow appeared in the artwork. If, for example, a theme or motif conformed to the wishes of a social class rather than expressing sorrow, then it could be regarded as ideological, i.e. an ideology could be determined in artistic terms. In his essays on 19th and 20th century literature Löwenthal applied both the methodology for the sociology of literature he had developed and the notion of the authentic work of art.

In a study of Conrad Ferdinand Meyer's books <sup>6</sup> Löwenthal detected hidden evidence for the existence of a 'haute bourgeois' ideology in mid-19th century Germany. Meyer's central characters, he claimed, were almost exclusively extreme individualists who were set above the law. These individualists were so superior to other characters that they were not described in psychological terms and were essentially socially amoral, acting as they wished. From this form of character description Löwenthal deduced that Meyer reduced history to the deeds of 'great' men. To achieve this in the narrative Meyer compressed time and space so that an epoch became concentrated and described in terms of the acts of a single individual.

Löwenthal submitted that this view of history was specific to the 'haute bourgeois' and that Meyer himself wished to belong to such a social class, which existed in Germany but not in Meyer's native Switzerland. Löwenthal related this ideology to a reception-oriented analysis, for he found the main readership of Meyer's books to be precisely this 'haute bourgeoisie' in Germany, a social class which saw itself as controlling and directing society and consequently could identify with Meyer's characters. Literary

and reception analysis converge at this point, for from this Löwenthal deduced that at this time Germany lacked a strong bourgeois ideology since, if this had not been the case, a large readership would not have existed for Meyer's books in the first place. His sociological study of literature thus permitted Löwenthal to locate general forms of ideology not specific to literature.

Having established the existence of a 'haute bourgeois' ideology, Löwenthal described the petit bourgeois ideology predominant in the closing twenty years of the 19th and the first fourteen of the 20th century. In order to accomplish this, he undertook to examine the reception by critics of Dostoyevsky's work.<sup>7</sup> Instead of analysing the ideological nature of literature in this period, Löwenthal claimed that such an approach was valid because Dostoyevsky was a widely read author (approximately 800 articles had been written on him in the period under discussion) whose books were frequently, to Löwenthal's mind, completely misinterpreted. It was these misinterpretations, Löwenthal proposed, that were worthy of scrutiny, for they revealed the dominant ideology of the time in question. The reviews and interpretations fell into four main groups: the mythical, the harmonious, the anti-rationalist and the psychologistic. The mythical interpretations regarded Dostoyevsky's work as a portrait of the 'sublime unity' of life. Löwenthal characterised this form of interpretation as petit bourgeois principally because it ascribed a metaphysical meaning to life in chaotic monopoly capitalist society in which the bourgeoisie were being eradicated as a social class. Thus, these interpretations sought refuge in some mythical property, an observation greatly in accordance with Pollock's view of monopoly capitalism. Löwenthal suggested:

Es gehört zu den Antagonismen der kapitalistischen Gesellschaft, daß, je stärker die Tendenzen werden, im wirtschaftlichen Unterbau rationale Planmäßigkeit walten zu lassen, im gesellschaftlichen Bewußtsein die rationalen und kritischen Tendenzen zurückgedrängt werden müssen. 8

The second set of interpretations functioned similarly, in that they harmonised various supposed contradictions in Dostoyevsky's work. Löwenthal maintained that this view subscribed to an idealism beyond class

differences, for it disconnected Dostoyevsky's presentation of society from any roots in a class reality and by situating Dostoyevsky's work in some harmony of thought eternalised those class differences.

The third group pandered to an ideology of anti-rationalism, levelled against the bourgeois rationalism of the 19th century. It adhered inflexibly to a view that Dostoyevsky's work hinged on his 'Russian' character and in so doing was itself nationalistic. The categories of self-justice and chance formed another recurrent theme of this group. In so far as justice was class-based the category of self-justice prevented any break with the ruling class from occurring and attributed causation to chance. Löwenthal commented as follows on this unholy alliance of fate, chance and happiness:

Die geringe Rolle, die die Kategorie des Glücks in jenem bürgerlichen Bewußtsein spielt, muß aus den gesamten Verhältnissen dieser Klasse begriffen werden. Eine befriedigende gesellschaftliche Verfassung ist ihr als absteigender Klasse verschlossen und muß sich darum auch aus dem Bewußtsein in seiner eigentlichen Bedeutung als Glück verschließen. 9

Löwenthal meant, by extension, that each thematic body of interpretation could only be understood in the light of the social class as a whole from which its proponents originated.

This connection established between class and interpretation is evidenced most succinctly in Löwenthal's outline of the last group. The interpretation offered regarded Dostoyevsky as a psychologist and his works as scientific descriptions of the human mind. The 'inner' person of Dostoyevsky's characters was thereby emphasized, detracting from any social and individual decision-making depicted in the texts.<sup>10</sup> Such interpretations fostered a socially conformist reading of Dostoyevsky while concomitantly offering mental solace and were therefore ideological. Löwenthal concluded from this categorization of Dostoyevsky's reception that the socially descendent class was relieved of the burden of its own plight. The four different types of interpretation all indicated in some manner the displacement of the bourgeoisie which was taking place and which called forth such interpretations. Löwenthal went so far as to correlate the

increase in Dostoyevsky's reception with the gradual downfall of the middle class, a downfall that in Institut(e) eyes had opened the flood-gates to authoritarian ideologies based on precisely such harmonizing views as Löwenthal had analysed. Interpretations promoted by the dominant class and by socialists, Löwenthal averred, were, in contrast, both more critical and more accurate than the views of the four groups. In other words, at the turn of the 20th century a non-ideological view of society was still possible. The existence of the Naturalist literary movement roughly synchronous to the reviews of Dostoyevsky allowed Löwenthal to analyse the bourgeois ideology of the time, as opposed to the petit bourgeois ideology he had uncovered. This entailed an analysis of the way in which Naturalism attempted to criticize traditional bourgeois ideology.<sup>11</sup> Löwenthal sought to delineate this criticism both by means of an appraisal of Naturalist themes (especially those used by Ibsen) and by showing the non-identity between this criticism and the reality it sought to criticize. To lend theoretical support to this project, Löwenthal also contrasted Naturalist texts to traditional bourgeois literature. The characteristic of such literature, he asserted, had been to portray the individual as capable of self-development so long as this was kept within the confines of the existing social order. Consequently bourgeois novels had centred traditionally on character development and had possessed an underlying educational note. Both strands were, however, jettisoned by Naturalism. This was, Löwenthal suggested, particularly evident in Ibsen's plays, where the private sphere competed with the public world. The world in which this took place was a closed, reified one in which relations, facts or events fettered the individuals, whose very existence was thus jeopardized. Accordingly, Naturalist works were permeated with a tone of melancholia, quite distinct from the sorrow of the authentic artwork. Faced with the unreal demands of society, Ibsen's characters became imbued with a sense of hopelessness rather than remembrance. Both fear and love he portrayed as being infected by the competitiveness of society and thus

as ideological, whereas imagination, by virtue of which people and art were held to overcome social constraints, was crushed by social pressures. Löwenthal contended that it was in particular Ibsen's characterisation of women which crystallized this self-indictment of society. Women failed in the male world of commerce and yet could not function as women in a private world equally disfigured by competition. The female characters thus emphasised the rottenness of such a society, exposing the falsehood of the bourgeois ideology of individualism.

However laudable Ibsen's intentions might have been, Löwenthal claimed that they nevertheless had hypostatized society's failings as being its meaning. The world's problems were regarded as genetically inherited and therefore as lying beyond any human control. This showed a latent mistrust of human abilities by the Naturalists quite alien to the traditional tone of bourgeois literature. Löwenthal found that while such a view was anti-bourgeois, it nonetheless degraded history to a 'constructive tragedy' in which progress was impossible. Löwenthal labelled this last attitude 'relativist', since it assumed that conditions enveloped individuals without attempting to save the individuality thus threatened. This relativism pointed to the real impotence of the Naturalist authors when it came to their trying to explain the causes of society's shortcomings. This he judged to be evidenced by a certain 'silence' ('Verstummen') in their work:

Die Aussprache bricht genau da ab, wo sie eigentlich zu beginnen hätte: bei der Entfaltung des Lebensplans; er erleidet dasselbe Schicksal wie alle anderen gesellschaftlichen Vorgänge; er wird anarchisch. 12

In this manner Löwenthal drew a connection between character portrayal, authorial intention and the latent ideological meaning of such intention. On an aesthetic level Naturalist literature might be anti-bourgeois, or individualist, but it nevertheless remained contemplative. Löwenthal maintained that, in attempting to present situations objectively, if not scientifically, Naturalism degraded the individual to the status of a spectator. This attitude was not just to be discerned in the tone of melancholia, but also in the static quality of Naturalist narrative. The real

effect of such literature was therefore conformist, for it did not furnish the artwork with any medium of change.

This aesthetic analysis coalesced with Löwenthal's analysis of Naturalism's ideological implications. Although Naturalism showed idealism to be hollow in practice, it provided no link to praxis but dissolved into despair at the individual's "lot". This divergence of Naturalist themes and bourgeois ideology signified the following:

Die Literatur (of the Naturalists) treibt die Analyse menschlicher Zustände weiter fort, als es je in der Geschichte der Dichtung vorher geschehen war, und vollendet in ihrer analytischen Technik die Forderungen des bürgerlichen Rationalismus aus seinen hoffnungsvollsten Positionen. 13

In a fashion similar to that of Horkheimer's early writings, Löwenthal thus distinguished a non-identity of intent and method. By denouncing ideals as such while failing to portray any individuals who harboured alternative ideals, Naturalism was forced to conclude its peace with the dominant social interests. For Löwenthal Naturalist criticism of bourgeois ideology never reached the level of critique; it remained bourgeois criticism ('bürgerlich-kritisch') and therefore was itself ideologically affirmative in the final instance.

Having established both the prevalence of 'haute bourgeois' and petit bourgeois ideologies in 19th century Germany and the frailty of bourgeois ideology, Löwenthal proceeded to analyse the presence of authoritarian ideologies in early 20th century literature roughly contemporary to Ibsen, namely in the work of Knut Hamsun.<sup>14</sup> This project mirrored the Institut(e)'s interest both in the field and in a derivation of the ideology from a loss of bourgeois individuality. It is therefore hardly surprising that Löwenthal suggested that both the decline in material satisfaction and the evident downfall of such rationalist ideologies as he had studied in the reception of Dostoyevsky and had located in the limits of Naturalist drama had brought a strong anti-rationalist ideology into existence.

Recurrent in all Hamsun's novels according to Löwenthal was an espousal

of the view which saw man's immediate interaction with nature as constituting a realm of freedom. Löwenthal declared that this theme not only idolized brutality in nature but also reduced human nature to some irrational, instinctual quality. In its exposition of timelessness and immutability Hamsun's work proffered the reader a false sense of comfort and in so doing heralded the defeat of the bourgeois individual's power to create the world in his image. This theme was amplified by a variety of motifs in Hamsun's work: the rhythm of life, pantheism, the secret kingdom of nature, the superiority of youth and the experience of identity with external nature. Löwenthal held all these motifs to be authoritarianly predicated, for they negated all individual transcendence and subjugated the individual to external forces. Individuality in Hamsun's work was in the light of these motifs, portrayed as mere functionality within a system, and was an 'empty' ('nichtig') reactor to outside stimuli. Löwenthal also found this authoritarianism to be innate in Hamsun's reliance on myths, i.e. on the irrational experience of a 'natural' society. Such mythical descriptions obfuscated the individual and his powers of thought and was diametrically opposed to the demystifying rationality of the Enlightenment. In other words, Löwenthal uncovered hidden evidence for authoritarianism in bourgeois literature well before the Nazis explicit use of such an ideology.

Löwenthal also pursued this research into the roots of authoritarianism in another area, in the popular biographies produced between 1910 and the 1930s.<sup>15</sup> As in his work both on Dostoyevsky and on Naturalism he collected a mass of empirical sample data (a quantitative approach) which he collated into certain representative themes (a qualitative approach), which could then be analysed for class attitudes. These themes could be correlated to readers' attitudes, particularly in the case of popular biographies, which were widely sold articles of mass consumption. Löwenthal argued that these themes could be readily established because, as



articles of mass consumption (regardless of their individualist, glossy external appearance), these biographies were all similar in construction. In a manner which paralleled Adorno's term of the 'ever-similar', Löwenthal specified that the popular biographies were not individual works, but stereotyped goods, in internal structure the opposite of the bourgeois novel. Externally, such biographies also opposed the structure of the novel in that individuals in them were driven by external cause and were merely 'typographical' elements which allowed the surrounding material to be shown in all its glossiness; even as heroes the characters were functions of history, not makers of history. The authoritarianism of the biographies was thus the reverse of Meyer's 'haute bourgeois' view of history. Löwenthal identified four main themes in these biographies, foremost amongst which was the presentation of history as a reified entity. Individuals were depicted as mere products of their time and accordingly the central characters of the biographies exhibited a certain 'helplessness' ('Ratlosigkeit'). This presentation was authoritarian since it showed individuals to be formed by a static, immutable force, history. Politics in these biographies was, therefore, regarded as equally unchanging, as a sphere of decision-making causally detached from people. Löwenthal detected an imputed identity between history and natural laws, for the biographies did not locate themselves in any theory of society, but reduced theory to a set of generalised propositions on 'natural causes', by means of which they attempted to explain all events. This espousal of a natural history was coupled with a form of mysticism which Löwenthal related to late bourgeois 'Lebensphilosophie'. This mysticism was essentially relativistic, since it preached that fate and chance as accidental forces directed individuals' lives.

Löwenthal found this ideological nature to be contained in the very language of the biographies. Löwenthal's analysis of the use of superlatives and adverbs revealed the vocabulary deployed in character portrayal as centring on an idolisation of uniqueness and extraordinariness. For example,

superlatives were continuously resorted to in order to equip the characters with a depth they otherwise lacked as a result of their being reduced overall to a reflection of historical events. These cut-out figures were further instilled with character artificially, mainly by the repetitious use of adverbs such as 'never' and 'always', i.e. their individuality was based on their continual habits rather than on their ability to reason. A sense of individuality as a private realm of activities was evoked, whereas the individuals were essentially stereotyped stencils. The vocabulary and themes of these biographies were authoritarian, for they all suggested that they offered a ~~comprehensive~~ <sup>comprehensive</sup> understanding of the world, yet in fact they provided only an ideological, mystifying view of reality.

Löwenthal equated their characters with commodities bought and sold as capitalism desired: "Diese Artikel sind Menschen, die über nichts mehr selbst zu bestimmen haben."<sup>16</sup> In line with the approach Horkheimer had taken in 'Egoismus und Freiheitsbewegung' he argued that the characters in the biographies embodied an authoritarian ideology in that they functioned only as individuals in a private realm of supposed freedom and this limited freedom itself depended on their conforming to the status quo. Löwenthal surmised that this specifically authoritarian degradation of individuality appealed to the petit bourgeoisie, for this class, having lost its social and material position in the transition from liberal to monopoly capitalism, could identify most readily with such a form of individuality. In this manner, Löwenthal grounded an analysis of the class nature and effect of mass cultural objects in a thematic and textual analysis, i.e. in an immanent content analysis. Despite having investigated the content of popular biographies for its underlying meaning rather than conducting an immanent analysis of artistic form similar to Adorno's evaluation of popular music, Löwenthal reached similar conclusions to Adorno on the ideological character of mass culture.

Where the two theorists differed was that Löwenthal was able to draw a line from the ideology he detected to one specific class, while Adorno's work remained vague on the question of the class nature of ideology.<sup>17</sup>

In other words, consistent with the methodology he had applied to 19th and 20th century 'high culture' Löwenthal deduced the ideological nature of mass cultural biographies from their non-identity with reality instead of from the formal structural properties of the works themselves and traced this non-identity back to the appeal these works were intended to have for one particular section of the population, even if the authors themselves were unaware of this.

In his analysis of 'haute bourgeois', petit bourgeois, bourgeois and authoritarian ideologies Löwenthal examined literature on two levels. Firstly, he investigated the properties of literature's themes, symbols, expressions and language. From this he then drew conclusions as to the ideological content of the piece of literature in question. The first level approached literature and authorial intention in accordance with the materialist methodology he had outlined in 1932, for it considered literature both as man-made and as a mediating-point in the social structure between subjective and objective wishes. The second level then made use of a correct theory of society and of historical knowledge in order to situate the literary work in a historical context and to locate the non-identity between the ideas the text expressed and the social reality to which it referred, i.e. by determinate negation the ideological positions of the artwork are established and assessed. Once the ideology has been assessed it can be related to a readership whose wishes it probably fulfils.

By the use of these two levels Löwenthal avoided collapsing the artwork into the readership's wishes and instead was able to relate the artwork dialectically either to the effect it had on the readership, or to that which the readership had on it. Löwenthal's essay on Ibsen articulated

this duality of analysis most directly. Löwenthal was interested in literature as a social phenomenon and yet by virtue of his methodology still accorded literature specifically literary properties rather than reducing it to the status of being a mere sociological indicator. The two levels kept literature as subjective expression and as possible authentic literature separate from literature as a social expression.<sup>18</sup> Löwenthal's essays for the Zeitschrift/Studies have been described as "an expression of a concrete critique of ideology."<sup>19</sup> It is this feature of his work that corresponds most closely to the epistemology of Horkheimer's non-identity theory. Löwenthal's conception of the ideology latent in a piece of literature is similar to Horkheimer's deduction of the ideological nature of bourgeois philosophies, although it must be said that Löwenthal is more specific in his somewhat over-easy attribution of the ideology of a certain piece of literature to one particular social class. Regardless of the problematic nature of this enterprise, Löwenthal indirectly highlighted by his sociological investigations the absence of a strong bourgeois ideology in Germany post-1848. It is this finding that ties in most with the Institut(e)'s overall concerns. Indeed, the chronological pattern of his investigations mirrors the Institut(e)'s analysis of society.

From his reflections on the absence of a specifically bourgeois ideology in the irrationalism of the last century (like Horkheimer's first phase) Löwenthal progressed to an analysis of authoritarianism's determinants (Horkheimer's second phase) and then to its connection with the social displacement of the petit bourgeoisie. This task accomplished he extended the analysis to include a study of the latent authoritarianism of mass culture (Horkheimer's third phase). From this it can be seen that Löwenthal followed Horkheimer's lead, without specifically considering the import of Pollock's writings. However, just as Horkheimer and Adorno were starting in 1939 - 1941 to specify theoretically the impact mass culture had had on society, so Löwenthal provided an historical, concrete

example of the ideological nature of its products, as well as an historical explanation for the particular rise of authoritarianism in Germany, namely the lack of a bourgeois ideology of individuality ever since 1848. In this fashion, Löwenthal's investigations functioned as empirical studies which underpinned the work of his colleagues, although they did not reflect Pollock's work overtly.

It was germane to Löwenthal's work, however, that a correct theory of society could be deployed. Rather than abandoning non-identity theory as inapplicable to the present, as a consequence of accepting the concept of state capitalism as a description of society and the irrationality of bourgeois rationalism, Löwenthal continued to make use of it, for he applied it exclusively to past phenomena and confronted the meaning that an artwork attributed to reality with what that reality had been. He thus joined non-identity theory to an immanent analysis of literature and it is the presence of these two main branches of his theory that accounts for the two distinct, but interlinked levels of interpretation in his work. However, unlike Adorno or Marcuse, his investigations do not amount to an aesthetics. Indeed, they are not intended to be one, but to provide a materialist sociology of literature that complemented the overall thrust of Institut(e) work.

Löwenthal's methodology not only fell into two interpretative halves but also contained a quantitative and a qualitative aspect. Löwenthal gathered popular texts of a particular time and then analysed them qualitatively. The numerical presence of texts at a particular time Löwenthal took as a signal of their popularity and therefore as an indication that they offered something qualitatively specific to a certain readership. Theoretically, this involved Löwenthal examining the text with a view to its reception. Accordingly, he both correlated critics and readers in terms of class membership and related the author's presentation not only to a textually immanent ideology, but to an ideology of the probable readers of that author.

This emphasis on the importance of reception-based interpretation was, at the time, undoubtedly pioneering. John Hall has suggested that:

Distributors serve as gatekeepers between books-in-themselves and books-for-others. The argument that there is no necessary connection between these two areas can easily be demonstrated. The truly pioneering work has been done by Leo Löwenthal (1964) on the reception of the works of Dostoyevsky in Germany between 1880 and 1920. 20

The manner in which Löwenthal merged interpretation of a text as a subjective statement with the text's objective meaning and reception ensured that he did not reductively equate subjective intention or the author's class position with objective meaning, a reductiveness that Lukács' work had become prone to. An example of this dialectical approach would be to find a novel which is realistic in the sense of providing an exact portrayal of the world, but which is nevertheless objectively ideological. (Balzac's work has often been understood in this manner.) Since Löwenthal's work analysed the consumption of literature rather than concentrating on its production or distribution, it could not designate what forms literature should adopt. However, the lack of a detailed analysis of distribution rendered Löwenthal's correlation of readers and critics theoretically tenuous especially as he provided no grounding for this assumed identity.

Despite his statement that art was not just ideology, Löwenthal did not set out the groundwork for an exhaustive study of art. He limited himself to ascertaining literature's ideological manifestations, i.e. to an analysis of false subjectivity. Consequently, the analysis of form that allowed Adorno to pinpoint authentic art was not used in Löwenthal's work. Form, for Löwenthal, was but the carrier of ideology and need not necessarily be itself ideological or non-ideological. This did not mean, however, that the concept of authentic art played no role in Löwenthal's work. As had been the case in Adorno and Marcuse's aesthetics, and in Horkheimer's essay 'Art and Mass Culture', authentic art underlay all Löwenthal's analyses of ideology, for it embodied truth, i.e. he considered it to be non-ideological literature.

Although Löwenthal did not overtly contrast ideological and non-ideological forms of art per se, as Adorno did for example, he accepted the distinction; otherwise the notion of ideological literature could only have had a sociological meaning and the level of literary thematic analysis would have been pointless.<sup>21</sup> A further difference between his work and Adorno's is to be found in this point. Löwenthal endeavoured to establish the manifest ideological and social meaning of art by extrapolating the results of a literary analysis, whereas Adorno assessed the non-manifest, structural ideology of art itself. Consequently, Löwenthal's work fitted more obviously into the general framework of Institut(e) studies. It provided a concrete application of Institut(e) theory and also uncovered important evidence proving some of the Institut(e)'s assumptions, e.g. Löwenthal was able to describe the relation between the rise of authoritarianism and the decline of the - to Löwenthal's mind - always socially weak, bourgeois individual. In this sense Alfons Söllner is correct to claim that:

Dem Letzteren (Löwenthal) kommt vermutlich speziell für die Ausbildung der materialistischen Kulturtheorie ein gewichtigerer Anteil zu, als es die philologische Textbasis erkennen läßt. 22

In this sense, Löwenthal's work furnished the wide historical backcloth against which Adorno and Marcuse's concepts of authentic art gained greater relief and validity.

I N T E R S E C T I O N

C H A P T E R 7 : BENJAMIN AND THE INSTITUT(E)

In the Introduction I justified my omission of Walter Benjamin from the discussion of the Frankfurt School and its aesthetic theories on the grounds that his methodology was different to that used by the School. This assertion must now be submitted to critical examination, since the nature of the Institut(e)'s methodology has now been established. In the following brief portrayal of Benjamin's relationship to the Frankfurt School it will be claimed that although his aims and objectives resembled closely those of the 'inner' core of Institut(e) members, the method he used to reach them did not. Such a portrayal must, inevitable, address the questions raised by previous research in this area.

It is not possible to compare Benjamin's work with that of the Frankfurt School simply by compiling an auditing list of similarities and dissimilarities, and then calculating either a surplus of one or the other. The relationship is far too complex to allow such a straightforward comparison. Firstly, the nature of Benjamin's formal relation to the Institute of Social Research in New York must be established, and then compared with any intellectual affiliation he may have had to critical theory. Secondly, similarities and dissimilarities arise for specific reasons and it is this underlying causal network that is most of interest to us, for it reveals Benjamin's epistemological position. Thirdly, Benjamin's work outside that published in the Zeitschrift/Studies comprises a vast amount of material and cannot be considered adequately here. Fourthly, since Benjamin died in 1940, the period of comparison is restricted to the lifetime of the Zeitschrift, when the seeds of Pollockian social theory had not yet borne fruit. To trace origins and influences after that date would be to compare artificially created positions and would thus address a different topic altogether. For these reasons the comparison will be restricted (with



two minor exceptions) to the writings Benjamin published in the Zeitschrift, the Studies and the 1942 Memorial Issue of the Studies<sup>1</sup> and will draw on material from his correspondence.

In the brief biography provided on the jacket of Der Stratege im Literaturkampf<sup>2</sup> Benjamin's life after 1932 is described as follows: "Er emigrierte 1933 nach Frankreich . und wurde Mitglied des nach Paris und später nach New York verlegten Instituts für Sozialforschung." No evidence is adduced to support this claim which is symptomatic of the manner in which the relationship between Benjamin and the Frankfurt School has often been presented. A further example of this is given by Rolf Tiedemann's 'editorial report' in Volume 1 of Benjamin's Gesammelte Schriften. There he suggests that Benjamin worked for the Institut(e) as a referee of articles from outsiders, that Benjamin's essays in the Zeitschrift were "Ergebnisse eines bis zu einem bestimmten Grad kollektiven Arbeitsprozesses" with the other members<sup>3</sup> (despite the physical distance separating them, one must assume). There is, as often is the case in debates about Benjamin, evidence both to confirm and to dispute this statement.

From his unpublished letters a slightly different portrait of Benjamin's relation to the Institut(e) emerges. Benjamin purchased and sought out books required by members of the Institut(e) after they had settled in New York and while he was still in Paris. He was also involved in translation work for the Zeitschrift and in establishing contacts with Gallimard.<sup>4</sup> Financially, he received 1000 (at one point the figure is given as 100) French francs a month from May 1935 onwards in order to enable him to work on his 'Arcades' project. (In a sense, then, this enormous enterprise was commissioned.) The correspondence otherwise mentions no sums of money, although Benjamin often underlined his financial straits in his letters to Horkheimer. No doubt the Institut(e)'s accounts would reveal the details involved,<sup>5</sup> although these are of no importance for this discussion. Pollock and Horkheimer arranged the financial transactions, Pollock meeting Benjamin in Paris and Horkheimer authorizing the former to

determine the amounts to be paid.

A seemingly innocent remark Benjamin made in a letter to Gretel Adorno on the 17th of January, 1940, points to the ad hoc status of his employment by the Institut(e):

Il importerait donc absolument de me référer aux cours que j'ai professés dans le cadre de l'Institut à Francfort. Comme je n'ai pas voulu en faire état sans l'assentiment de l'Institut je n'ai pas encore rempli mon questionnaire. Je devrai donc suspendre mes démarchés jusqu'à ce que je sois fixé de votre côté. 6

Benjamin needed the references in order to be able to apply for an entrance visa for the United States, and thus his remarks would seem to point to the fact that he worked for the Institut(e) on a freelance basis. Letters from Horkheimer to Benjamin in the late spring of 1939 also indicate that officially Benjamin was understood to be a freelance member of the Institut(e):

Ich habe Sie deshalb gebeten, es (the exposé of the 'Arcades' project) zu schicken, weil mir von verschiedenen Seiten ein reicher Mann genannt worden war, der sich für Arbeiten ausgezeichneter Qualität, auch wenn sie aus dem akademischen Rahmen fallen, besonders interessieren könnte. (5th of April, 1939)

Zwei Stiftungen an die ich mich gewandt hatte, haben noch keine Antwort erteilt, (i.e. as to whether they would sponsor Benjamin's work). (23rd of May, 1939).

Wenn wir durch seine (a "Herr Z"!?) Vermittlung überhaupt etwas erhalten, sei es unter welchem Titel auch immer, wird damit Ihr Forschungsauftrag gesichert sein. (31st of May, 1939) 7

It is clear from Horkheimer's remarks that the Institut(e)'s payroll for ex officio members was drying up and that, prior to the move to California, he was hoping to gain private backing for the various research projects supported or sponsored by the Institut(e), but not undertaken by Institut(e) members. The German 'Auftrag' suggests sponsorship, not official membership. Therefore, if one is to speak of Benjamin as a member of the Frankfurt School, one must mean this to describe only an affinity of theories if one is referring to the Institute for Social Research. Formally, Benjamin could perhaps best be described as an 'associate member'.

The intellectual relation between the School and Benjamin is an equally contentious issue, and even harder to establish. Rolf Tiedemann has suggested that Benjamin's essays in the Zeitschrift are substantial contributions

to critical theory<sup>8</sup> and also that Horkheimer influenced Benjamin's work. Richard Wolin has recently adjudged Benjamin's work to have greatly influenced the School's writings after 1941.<sup>9</sup> Julian Roberts characterizes the relation between Adorno, with whom Benjamin was on closer terms than with other Institut(e) members, and Benjamin as that of Adorno having bullied Benjamin into changing such essays as 'Über Einige Motive bei Baudelaire' to suit Adorno's view of what Benjamin's work should be.<sup>10</sup> This last description is a more thoughtful and probably more accurate version of the criticism, commonly articulated in the late 1960s,<sup>11</sup> that Horkheimer et al, by threatening to withdraw their financial support for Benjamin, coerced him into diluting the radical approach of his Marxism. If Benjamin was indeed bullied by Adorno then it can only be inferred that Benjamin overestimated Adorno's importance in the Institute in New York, for Adorno had only been there for a year by the time the debate over Benjamin's Baudelaire essay and was most certainly not the editor of the Zeitschrift. The two main arguments on the intellectual relation of Benjamin to the Frankfurt School can thus be summarized as being either that Benjamin influenced critical theory or that critical theory (deformatively) influenced Benjamin's writings. Both alternatives need to be examined more closely, because this very manner of discussing the relationship of Benjamin to the Frankfurt School is, as will be shown, questionable.

Benjamin's essays in the Zeitschrift testify to his attempt to devise an historical materialist theory of art. This project fits in with the Institut(e)'s efforts to uncover the nature of the relationship between base and superstructure. In his first essay in the Zeitschrift, 'Zum gesellschaftlichen Standort des französischen Schriftstellers', Benjamin tried to determine the class character of authors and audiences. He then drew conclusions as to the nature of artistic technics, of non-conformism, and of changes in the reading public attributable to the change in society after 1900. Above all, Benjamin noted a growing divide between writers and intellectuals, i.e. a move away from politicized narration.

Benjamin's approach to the problem of art's constitution is distinct from that of either Adorno or Löwenthal. There is less emphasis on erecting an ideology critique of the bourgeoisie and much more stress on the difficulties leftists faced in writing literature, as exemplified by his comment that "die vorgeschobensten gegenwärtigen Produkte der Avantgarde in allen Künsten haben als Publikum - in Frankreich wie in Deutschland - nur die große Bourgeoisie gehabt".<sup>12</sup> Despite his interest in the product-character of novels, Benjamin's method centres more on the possible practical gains and conclusions to be drawn from an analysis of this product-character. The essay 'L'œuvre d'art à l'époque de sa reproduction mécanisée' in the 1936 issue of the Zeitschrift takes up this point while also treating a topic close to the hearts of the core members of the School, which had been adumbrated by Benjamin in the earlier essay, namely the question of the nature of art under monopoly capitalism. This essay, it should be remembered, was intended both as part of the 'Arcades' project, and, as was the later Baudelaire essay,<sup>13</sup> as a carrot to dangle in front of Institut(e) members, enticing them to support the main work. Without going into detail on the essay,<sup>14</sup> it should suffice to say that Benjamin devised the term 'auratic' art to describe the artworks produced before the advent of mass reproductive techniques. Again, it is to be seen that the slant of Benjamin's article is angled away from ideology critique and non-identity theory towards an inquiry into artistic technics.

Rather than investigating the dialectical nature of the bourgeois 'auratic' or mass-produced artwork (as Löwenthal and Marcuse did), Benjamin looked - by means of a detailed consideration of both the production and consumption of artworks - to the future uses of the technics or technology being developed, especially that of the silent film. In this manner he established an aesthetics involving 'Wirkung' (effect and reception) which was quite contrary to Adorno and Horkheimer's later findings in, for example, 'On Popular Music', 'Art and Mass Culture' or even the Dialektik der Aufklärung, and closer in nature to Bertolt Brecht's work of the time.<sup>15</sup> For the

technology at hand Benjamin foresaw possible emancipatory applications which would compensate fully for the death of the auratic artwork, as they would also involve a demystification of current society.

The initial similarity in project and ensuing difference in method and conclusions noted above is less evidenced in the essay 'Probleme der Sprachsoziologie', which appeared in the 1935 edition of the Zeitschrift, and the longer article 'Eduard Fuchs, der Sammler und der Historiker' which was published in the Zeitschrift two years later, but it does re-appear in the controversial Baudelaire article of 1939. In 'Probleme der Sprachsoziologie' Benjamin and stated, quite in keeping with non-identity theory, that:

Man wird kaum leugnen können, daß Wahlverwandschaften zwischen gewissen wissenschaftlichen Disziplinen auf der einen, politischen Attitüden auf der anderen Seite bestehen. 16

However, in the context of the Baudelaire essay four years later, intended as part of the 'Arcades' project, Benjamin was reprimanded by Adorno for having provided too little "Vermittlung" between economic and superstructural phenomena.<sup>17</sup> Benjamin was adjudged to have ignored the Institut(e)'s appraisal that superstructural phenomena could be related only to the societal "Gesamtprozeß",<sup>18</sup> an approach he clearly had adhered to in earlier essays. Although such analyses in the Baudelaire essay as that of the "Verkümmern der Erfahrung" and Benjamin's eye for the difference between communication and narrative are quite in line with Institut(e) work, the continual reference to the 'masses' and the sociological observations, exemplified by Benjamin's notion of 'correspondences', most certainly go against the grain of the writings of the core members of the Institut(e).

In the Baudelaire essay a philosophy of history emerges that originated in the earlier essay on Eduard Fuchs. Benjamin referred in the discussion of Baudelaire to correspondences as "die Data des Eingedenkens. Es sind keine historischen, sondern Data der Vorgeschichte."<sup>19</sup> He derived this observation from an analysis of beauty in terms both of its cult-value and of its value in a Marxist sense, i.e. of art as a product and commodity.

This conception of the 'ever-similar' as found in commodity art is, undoubtedly, of central importance to Adorno and Horkheimer's later work, as is the concept of 'Eingedenken'. In the essay on Baudelaire, the development of the latter concept is explicitly bound up with a discussion of art, a central feature in Adorno's work after 1944.

Richard Wolin, although perceiving correctly that a difference exists between Benjamin's 'redemptive' criticism and ideology critique,<sup>20</sup> erroneously ignores in his analysis of the philosophy of history Benjamin advocated in his posthumously published 'Theses on the Philosophy of History' the relation between Benjamin's work published in the Zeitschrift and Institut(e) thought:

The influence they exerted on the two leading members of the Institute, Horkheimer and Adorno, was immeasurable. For many of their premises were then incorporated into the Institute's major work of the 1940s, Dialectic of Enlightenment... 21

If one bears in mind Julian Roberts' argument that the 'Theses' themselves are relatively unimportant in Benjamin's work as a whole - being only a more succinct formulation of ideas that Benjamin had been working on for many years - and turns to the Eduard Fuchs essay, one finds many of the 'Theses' already contained in it in nuce.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, not only would Adorno and Horkheimer have known of Benjamin's philosophy of history from this essay, they might well have already heard it at the beginning of the 1930s in discussions they had had with him in Kronberg im Taunus.

In the Eduard Fuchs essay Benjamin constructed a theory of negative progress, one which was no doubt planned as part of the basis of the 'Arcades' project. He provided an ideology critique of the bourgeois concept of progress and from it devised a critique of the notion of progress in capitalism (and thus also in Marxism). Firstly, Benjamin criticized the Social Democratic proposition that "Wissen ist Macht",<sup>24</sup> for knowledge, he claimed, could not be regarded as value-free and be treated as a neutral object to be used by anyone. In this manner, he spoke of the dialectic of Cartesian thought in terms common to those used by Horkheimer in

'Traditionelle und kritische Theorie'. For example, when speaking of positivism, Benjamin stated:

Er (positivism) konnte in der Entwicklung der Technik nur die Fortschritte der Naturwissenschaft, nicht die Rückschritte der Gesellschaft erkennen. Die Technik aber ist offenbar kein rein naturwissenschaftlicher Tatbestand, sie ist zugleich ein geschichtlicher. Daß diese Entwicklung durch den Kapitalismus entscheidend mitbedingt wurde, übersah er... 25

It is hardly surprising, then, that Horkheimer remarked in a letter of the 16th of March, 1937 with reference to this passage and to 'Traditionelle und kritische Theorie':

Ich kann diese Seite nicht überblättern, ohne Ihnen zu sagen, daß ich einige Sätze darin zu den wertvollsten der ganzen Arbeit zähle. Die Formulierung, daß der Positivismus in der Entwicklung der Technik nur die Fortschritte der Naturwissenschaft, nicht die Rückschritte der Gesellschaft erkannt hat, erhellt weite Gebiete der Ideologie des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts. Sie ist mir umso wertvoller, als in meinem jetzt im Satz befindlichen Positivismus-Aufsatz diese Seite unbehandelt blieb. 26

Notably, Benjamin had mentioned both August Bebel and Friedrich Engels as supporters of the view of technics and progress criticized so devastatingly. Benjamin thus devised not only a critique of linear progress which fitted in perfectly with Horkheimer's non-identity theory, but also connected this indirectly to a political conception of how left-wing thought had to be changed if it were to offer a real alternative to capitalism.

However, simultaneous to this critique of progress Benjamin offered a notion of history which was not based on 'Eingedenken', but which centred on a concept of 'redemption' or 'salvation' that typically Benjamin derived from an analysis of art. He wrote:

Diese Werke integrieren für den, der sich als historischer Dialektiker mit ihnen befaßt, ihre Vor- wie Nachgeschichte - eine Nachgeschichte, kraft deren auch ihre Vorgeschichte als in ständigem Wechsel begriffen erkennbar wird. 27

This conception of history, symbolized for Benjamin by Paul Klee's picture entitled 'Angelus Novus', which he possessed, is not only to be distinguished from ideology critique, since it does not fix the artwork at one historical point that is then negated, but also it hinges on the redemptive notion of

the future mentioned above. The future for Benjamin had to rescue, redeem and salvage the meanings of the past: "Denn es ist ein unwiederbringliches Bild der Vergangenheit, das mit jeder Gegenwart zu verschwinden droht, welche sich nicht als in ihm gemeint erkannte."<sup>28</sup> It is this aspect of Benjamin's theory of history that has led commentators to regard his work as Messianic, and it is undoubtedly informed by similar thoughts to those on barbarism which fuelled Adorno and Horkheimer's concepts in their last essays for the Studies, and, as we shall see, also inform the merger of materialism and metaphysics in Dialektik der Aufklärung and Negative Dialektik.

However, within this metaphysical construction of the coincidence of past, present and future, Benjamin retained an insistence on the determinacy of history and on its non-epic nature,<sup>29</sup> just as Adorno and Horkheimer fused their view of history with an historically-specific analysis. Benjamin elaborated his construction in order to be able to provide an account of the historical content of the artwork that concentrated on its aesthetic character and not on a socio-historical appreciation of it.<sup>30</sup> The construction which was designed to do justice to an historical materialist theory of art was thus coupled with a conception of history, the basis of which provided the framework for Benjamin's often quoted concept of 'Jetztzeit' in the 'Theses'. In other words, via an analysis characteristic of Institut(e) work, namely that of a superstructural phenomenon, Benjamin reached conclusions both similar to, and at the same time different from, those which Institut(e) members drew from similar assumptions.

The more radical, overtly political nature of some of Benjamin's work, with its thrust towards a progressive, practical use of the insights generated by an historical materialist aesthetics, and the difference between his redemptive method and ideology critique point to an underlying social theory in his work which is quite unlike that developed by Pollock. Indeed, it is to be suspected that precisely this difference could explain the ambiguity in defining his work's relation to Institut(e) writings and



theory.

This difference between Benjamin's thought and that of the Frankfurt School is underlined in such essays as those he wrote on Brecht and also 'Der Autor als Produzent', all published outside the Zeitschrift. They do not, however, indicate a difference in interest or in the attempted project Benjamin undertook. In 'Der Autor als Produzent'<sup>31</sup> - as in the 'L'œuvre d'art' essay - Benjamin paid far greater attention to a theory of artistic value, to the consumption and reception of artworks than did the core members of the Institut(e). This shows the degree to which his view of society was at variance with that held by the School's main members, for he could not accept the proposition that base and superstructure had become soldered together into one barbaric unit. Rather, he contended that consumption and reception could influence and reject what production offered, and that production could therefore be put to progressive usage.<sup>32</sup> The difference in aesthetics and political judgements between Benjamin and Adorno, Löwenthal and Marcuse must be located in this more optimistic macro-logical theory of society.

When Adorno stated that the Baudelaire essay lacked "Vermittlung",<sup>33</sup> he unwittingly espoused the Institut(e)'s opinion that such mediation of base and superstructure had become absolutely one-sided in the present, whereas the two had been inter-determining in the past. Indeed, Benjamin's radicalness in seeing a clear two-way, bipolar relation between base and superstructure actually possessed more 'mediation' than the Institut(e) view allowed for and is more dialectical than the School's Dialektik der Aufklärung . . . was later to propose. Similarly, Benjamin's redemptive criticism tried to draw more from the past for a hoped-for future than did non-identity theory, which was restricted to uncovering the essence of the present. This difference in social theory thus goes a long way towards explaining the alterations Benjamin had to make to the Baudelaire essay and permits the affinity between Benjamin's aesthetic statements and those of the Frankfurt School to be assessed more precisely, in that it shows

up the differences as well as the similarities between the two. The affinity between them must otherwise be overlooked or explained away as the coincidental consequence of all the theorists in question having lived and worked in the same tradition, and, more tenuously, of Benjamin having always written pieces into his work that he knew would meet with the Institut(e)'s agreement in the hope that this would ensure its publication.

In short a fairly clear characterization can be made of the relation between Benjamin and the Frankfurt School. Benjamin published in the Zeitschrift, and his 'Arcades' project was sponsored by the School, not purely because of the Institut(e)'s wish to support financially an erstwhile associate who was in need. Benjamin's essays that appeared in the Zeitschrift attest, as do some that were printed elsewhere,<sup>34</sup> to an overall project that he shared with the core members of the Institut(e), namely the wish to develop an historical materialist aesthetics and a refined, non-vulgar Marxist dialectics. This common concern cannot conceal, however, the very real differences to School thought evident in the approach he adopted, particularly in the second half of the 1930s, to reach this panoramic goal.

Benjamin's methodology does not have in common with the work of the Institut(e) a grounding in Pollockian social theory. On the contrary, it opposes in its view of both future change and production precisely such a one-way, linear appraisal of social potentiality. It is at this theoretical juncture that redemptive criticism parts company with ideology critique and the two strands become visible in Benjamin's work, particularly in the late 1930s when the Institut(e) turned more wholeheartedly to Pollock's work. (Adorno rejected at a similar theoretical and historical point the work of Brecht, with whom he would otherwise have shared a view of the character of the artwork). Owing to this underlying difference in their respective assessments of society, Benjamin cannot be considered a member of the School, either in institutional or intellectual terms. Yet his work cannot be regarded as completely separate from that of the Frankfurt School, for it

contains a common intent and purpose as well as a shared point of arrival, even if Benjamin's work started from different presuppositions and made use of an idiosyncratic methodology.

S E C T I O N II

C H A P T E R 8 : THE DIALECTIC OF ENLIGHTENMENT: THE SOCIO-PHILOSOPHICAL  
INTERPRETATION OF STATE CAPITALISM

In Section I the economic aspects of the Frankfurt School's interdisciplinary research were traced and then related to the writings of Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse and Löwenthal. This comparative task was facilitated by the common geographical location of the theorists and the fact that they all wrote for one journal. By 1941, however, neither of these factors any longer obtained. Horkheimer had moved to California, soon to be followed by Adorno, and not until a later date were they joined, and then only temporarily, by Löwenthal and Marcuse. Pollock stayed on in New York to administer the Institut(e)'s remaining affairs. During the last years of the Second World War Löwenthal and Marcuse both worked back on the East Coast for the United States Government, as did Pollock (although only in the capacity of an advisor), whereas Adorno and Horkheimer stayed in California completing their book on dialectics and preparing the Studies in Prejudice. In 1949 Adorno, Horkheimer and Pollock returned to Frankfurt to reopen the Institut für Sozialforschung, while Löwenthal and Marcuse elected to remain in the United States. Perhaps, then, it is this last date which best marks the final dismantling of the Frankfurt School as the cohesive research body we have discussed.

As a result of this gradual dissolution of the Institut(e) any attempt to correlate the writings of the above five members in the period after 1941 would seem beset by problems. In the following section, the main themes of works written before 1941 will be related to the writings of Adorno, Horkheimer, Löwenthal and Marcuse after this time and the later studies will be compared. This is not as untenable an approach as might seem to be the case, for, as I shall suggest, their writings after 1941 are not at all disparate, but refer both to each other and to their earlier work. Chrono-

logically, and thematically, they divide neatly into two parts: Adorno and Horkheimer's writings prior to 1947 and Adorno, Löwenthal and Marcuse's individual work after that date. It will be proposed that Adorno and Horkheimer's writings before 1947 are directly linked to the theoretical position they held last in the Institut(e), namely that embracing state capitalism. Adorno, Löwenthal and Marcuse's subsequent research,<sup>1</sup> especially their writings on aesthetics, will be compared with this first period after 1941 and thus a connection will further be established, albeit indirectly, with the 1941 writings. Simultaneously the work of these three will be correlated, in that the extent of their agreement with publications prior to 1947 will be assessed.

In this chapter Adorno and Horkheimer's main writings between 1941 and 1947 will be analysed: they are Dialektik der Aufklärung, Kritik der instrumentellen Vernunft, and Minima Moralia.<sup>2</sup> Dialektik der Aufklärung was co-authored;<sup>3</sup> Kritik der instrumentellen Vernunft, written by Horkheimer treated some of the themes of Dialektik der Aufklärung in greater depth; Minima Moralia was composed by Adorno, but he readily admitted that he could not distinguish which thoughts were his and which were Horkheimer's.<sup>4</sup> By means of an examination of the main categories Adorno and Horkheimer developed an attempt will be made to prove that these three texts bear a direct relation to Pollock's theory of state capitalism. At first sight this would seem improbable, as none of the three books, at least in published form, mention Pollock's work.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, any such suggestion of a connection with Pollock's theory depends on the validity of the presupposition that the theory of state capitalism necessitated a categorial rethink of the framework of critical theory, if critical theory were to remain able to grasp society adequately.

We have seen that critical theory's original categories were already being revised in Horkheimer's last essays for the Studies. The theory of state capitalism had proposed that no internal dynamic obtained within state capitalist societies, so that consequently there was no longer any logic

in inferring that positive social change lay latent in society. Change could certainly not be conceived of as founded on social planning, for it was precisely such planning that was held to be the hallmark of state capitalism. Similarly, if planning were not to be viewed negatively, according to what criteria could a future, democratic society be fashioned? The loss of an internal dialectic, which critical theory had to accept, were it to be able to acknowledge that society had progressed into state capitalism, meant that it had to be founded on new concepts if it were to remain critical - concepts, moreover, which had to reflect the loss of dynamism and the uncertainty of the future within their conception of the present.

A fundamental question arises out of this need to reconstitute critical theory: to what degree could the original structure of critical theory be retained? It has been variously suggested both that Institut(e) thought prior to 1941 was abandoned altogether and that it was continued.<sup>6</sup> A number of points have been made in this context. It has been asserted, for example, that social philosophy became meaningless for critical theory. Some commentators have also proposed that interdisciplinary research - as a materialist fusion of the empirical and the theoretical - was unimportant for critical theory after 1941. Others have claimed that psychoanalytical concepts were no longer an appropriate too to explain the mediations between base and superstructure. Perhaps the most fundamental criticism of this period after 1941 is the charge that critical theory came to reject any form of Marxism whatsoever.<sup>7</sup>

In the following pages consideration of these points will be provided in passing. It will be argued that the texts in question exhibit two basic intentions: they seek to create an epistemological basis for a critique of society grounded in the theory of state capitalism; and they wish thereby to refound and thus rescue Marx's concepts by marrying these with a Freudian conception of the history of the individual. In so doing, they fuse Kantian and Hegelian notions of 'critique'. This dual project is based on

the underlying theoretical argument - or rather idea, since no conventionally logical argument is presented - which informs Dialektik der Aufklärung, Kritik der instrumentellen Vernunft and Minima Moralia, namely the proposition that Enlightenment thought is dialectical. This 'dialectic of Enlightenment' is elaborated explicitly in the chapters 'Begriff der Aufklärung' and 'Odysseus oder Mythos und Aufklärung' in Dialektik der Aufklärung. However, the idea is contained in all the above three books, where it is discussed from three, albeit interlinked, points of view: those of theory, social theory and metatheory. These three levels can best be described as the theoretical construction of the dialectic of Enlightenment', its application to an interpretation of society, and its implications, both positive and negative, for an historical materialist epistemology. These three levels will be addressed separately and the questions facing their interpretation will be outlined before a discussion of the dialectic of Enlightenment in the context of Pollock's theory of state capitalism is attempted.

### 1. The Dialectic of Enlightenment

In the preface to Dialektik der Aufklärung Adorno and Horkheimer stated that they wished to establish

...nichts weniger als die Erkenntnis, warum die Menschheit, anstatt in einen wahrhaften menschlichen Zustand einzutreten, in eine neue Art von Barbarei versinkt. 8

They thus placed their work in a definite historical framework, for their intention amounted to investigating why society had evolved into (planned) totalitarianism rather than into the free society which could be created on the basis of the industrial means of production liberal capitalism had developed. Adorno and Horkheimer presented as an explanation for this relapse into barbarity the conception that "...schon der Mythos ist Aufklärung, und: Aufklärung schlägt in Mythologie zurück."<sup>9</sup> This somewhat enigmatic statement forms the kernel of the dialectic of Enlightenment. That is to say that 'Enlightenment', by which is meant post-Cartesian rational thought and science, is held to create of itself its opposite, mythic

thought, through which the world is explained irrationally. Thus, the concept of Enlightenment pertains both to an historical period and to the thought characteristic of this period. However, the historical period imbued with Enlightenment thought must not be understood as an historical epoch in the sense Marx gave it in The German Ideology, for strains of feudal and archaic thought exist alongside Enlightenment thought.

Adorno and Horkheimer grounded this metamorphosis of reason into unreason in an investigation of the initial constitution of Enlightenment thought. They sought, in other words, to answer a question as to the origin and causation of an historically specific social formation with an apparently disparate, historically indeterminate study of the basis of knowledge in history. It will therefore be necessary to examine this philosophy of history or dialectical anthropology before passing on to an assessment of its adequateness as a critique of totalitarianism.

Adorno and Horkheimer took Enlightenment thought or rationality to be the foundation on which all individuality is founded. As soon as people tried to assert their uniqueness - the hallmark of a positive awareness of individuality - by subjugating nature to their wishes, they dominated themselves and others:

Die Geschichte der Anstrengungen der Menschen, die Natur zu unterjochen, ist auch die Geschichte der Unterjochung der Menschen durch den Menschen. Die Entwicklung des Ichbegriffs reflektiert diese doppelte Geschichte. 10

In eras before individuality existed, nature had been explained by means of myths. These were not to be understood as historical eras but as stages in the development of the self. The final stage was, however, also an historical period, for the process of development culminated in the creation of the 'bourgeois' self. With the birth of individuality (and Adorno and Horkheimer viewed this as the beginning of modernity) the external world was divested of any animism and came to be explained by formal logic in that nature became handled instrumentally, as a means, rather than as an end.<sup>11</sup> All things in nature were thereby treated identically,<sup>12</sup> as quantifiable parts of a whole that could be transformed according to man's



will. Domination, Adorno and Horkheimer argued, had now to be understood as the transformation of the external world into a discrete set of objectified, quantified 'things', devoid of any further properties, animistic or otherwise. Adorno and Horkheimer stated: "Die Menschen bezahlen die Vermehrung ihrer Macht mit der Entfremdung von dem, worüber sie Macht ausüben."<sup>13</sup> The more thought became conceptual, they maintained, the more 'reified' the relationship became between it and its addressee. The thinking person treated what was addressed as an object, but in so doing also treated himself, in that he was part of the same universe, as an object. This domination of nature which was inherent in Enlightenment thought and on account of which mankind had become a sum of individuals led Adorno and Horkheimer to make two claims: firstly, that "Aufklärung ist totalitär",<sup>15</sup> and secondly, that "Aufklärung ist die radikal gewordene, mythische Angst".<sup>16</sup> Enlightenment rationality was totalitarian, they argued, precisely because in order to dominate it reduced everything to identical qualities, and was also mythic fear because it provided an entirely formal, abstract account of the workings of nature that bracketed out any qualities that it could not categorize in this manner. Enlightenment rationality could, therefore, not offer an explanation of nature's quality, but only an abstract portrayal ('Beschreibung') of it. In other words, Enlightenment rationality was not 'objective' reason, by means of which the world could be constructed for the good of all, but was 'subjective', for it was founded on domination.<sup>17</sup> Equally, such thought was unable to conceive of there being an 'objective' truth beyond the standpoint of Descartes' doubting Ego, for all things were reduced to man's view of them.

Adorno and Horkheimer contended that this creating of an abstract duplicate of the natural world was, after a certain historical juncture, nothing more than mythic:

Je mehr die Denkmaschinerie das Seiende sich unterwirft, um so blinder bescheidet sie sich bei dessen Reproduktion. Damit schlägt Aufklärung in die Mythologie zurück, der sie nie zu entrinnen wußte. 18

Modern natural science, the basis of the industrial world's mode of production, they suggested, also modelled itself on this mythic, Enlightenment rationality.<sup>19</sup> The more society was altered by the application of such a science, the less reason remained a property of reality. Adorno and Horkheimer remarked in conclusion: "Das Fortschreiten der Aufklärung löst die Idee der objektiven Vernunft auf."<sup>20</sup> In other words, a never-ending spiral of increasingly subjective, dominative reason came to govern society.

A critique of society had therefore to take into consideration the degree to which Enlightenment thought prevailed and had also to give some place to a critique of natural science. Adorno and Horkheimer took this into account in the critique they subsequently constructed. What characterised modern society was, they suggested, that Enlightenment rationality had now turned back upon itself: society was now governed by myth. Critique, therefore, had to become demythification in a manner Marx could not have foreseen. It was this mythical character of modern society that Adorno and Horkheimer analysed in their various discussions of 'instrumental rationality' or 'formal' reason. These discussions were not intended just as a critique of positivism,<sup>21</sup> but, as should be apparent from the above, as a critique of what Adorno and Horkheimer held to be the core of society. They suggested that at a certain historical stage, after the initial bourgeois revolutions in thought, the ideas of the Enlightenment ossified into a system of domination.<sup>22</sup> At this point, their argument becomes contradictory. On the one hand, Adorno and Horkheimer considered the Enlightenment to have become yoked to the dominant mode of production and therefore no longer able to protest against society.<sup>23</sup> On the other, the formalisation of reason was judged to be the 'intellectual expression of the mode of production'.<sup>24</sup> Since domination of man by man was, however, now ensconced in the mode of production, Adorno and Horkheimer concluded: "Technische Rationalität heute ist die Rationalität der Herrschaft selbst,"<sup>25</sup> i.e. Enlightenment thought was not necessarily regressive per se.

Adorno and Horkheimer traced the origins of domination in the instrumental

rationality of the Enlightenment. Such a rationality, they proposed, attempted to fashion a unified quantifiable order of 'things' and in so doing Enlightenment thought bestowed a normative status on facts. Thought, as a consequence, became reduced to the adept application of facts, ignoring that "gerade der Begriff der Tatsache ist ein Produkt".<sup>26</sup> Adorno and Horkheimer inferred that if scientific thought was solely the manipulative use of facts, then science itself degenerated into merely being a tool: "Wissenschaft selbst hat kein Bewußtsein von sich; sie ist ein Werkzeug".<sup>27</sup> In order to manage facts more adequately, instrumental reason functioned as a set of stereotyped ideas, i.e. blueprints which could interchangeably be imposed on society,<sup>28</sup> and could be applied by anyone at any time. In this manner instrumental reason was therefore both subjective and conformist. Adorno and Horkheimer summarised: "Die subjektive Vernunft fügt sich allem".<sup>29</sup> It is because of this that instrumental reason was, of its very nature, incapable of embracing a concept of objective reason transcendent of the society in which it existed.

Adorno and Horkheimer drew two main conclusions from their analysis of Enlightenment instrumental reason. Thought in contemporary society is viewed as having been reduced to a "Planen der gewaltsamen Aneignung"<sup>30</sup> and the instrumentalisation of the universe is regarded as having led to a "Liquidation des Subjektes, das sich ihrer bedienen soll".<sup>31</sup> By its destruction of subjectivity in its insistence on a dominated 'subject', Enlightenment rationality reduces people to things. Thus, Enlightenment reason necessarily metamorphoses into instrumental reason - the latter rationality being located deep in the history of the division of labour in the industrial productive process. This instrumental reason is, consequently, no longer rational, in that it has no 'subject' inherent in it, but rather treats people as objects - units of labour power - while guaranteeing their physical survival. Instrumental reason offers no rational picture of the world but is instead mythic in composition as it obfuscates the human nature of labour. This mythic code, in its extreme contemporary form, leads,

Adorno and Horkheimer asserted, to a totalitarian liquidation of the individual. In the era in which Enlightenment reason becomes instrumental, mankind is subjugated under a social system which offers the critical theorist no basis for assuming the existence of a "self". Any criticism of such a society must take this reduction of people to units - to things - as its starting point. The critique of society has to be transformed into a critique of domination.<sup>32</sup>

If thought has become domination because of the form of the production process, then any belief in the progression from capitalism to socialism, whether that progression be deemed inexorable or not, must be unfounded. Accordingly, critique cannot make use of linear logic. Adorno and Horkheimer thereby throw into question the possibility of the New evolving from the Old, for they can locate no telos or dynamism in history. (Equally, there can be no subject-object of history as had been proclaimed by Lukács). Moreover, because thought as domination causes people to view all things as alienated objects, which is the case if objectification is equated with alienation, the New cannot be created by instrumental activity, for praxis would be based on domination, rather than change it. The dialectic of Enlightenment thus allows no future 'ought' to be discovered in the 'is'. These implications of their theory of domination illustrate that Adorno and Horkheimer's concept of a dialectic of Enlightenment is based on an analysis of state capitalism in that their critique of society becomes static - a stasis they reflect on in the chapter in Dialektik der Aufklärung on the all-embracing character of the 'culture industry'.

This stationary character of Adorno and Horkheimer's critique is grounded in the very core of the dialectic of Enlightenment, for if mankind thinks according to how it produces (and the mode of production is now domination), then it follows that mankind can only think in terms of domination. Adorno and Horkheimer argued that if society produced purely for quantity, as Marx had suggested was the case under capitalism, then everything was similar in terms of productional intent, and mankind was not able to think further

than such an 'ever-similarity'.<sup>33</sup> Any real autonomy of thought and perception was consequently lost, which led Adorno to speak of contemporary life as 'damaged'.<sup>34</sup> In order to not become bound up in this predicament, at a philosophical level Adorno and Horkheimer tried to forego using instrumental rationality in the construction and form of their own categories. Adorno wrote in Minima Moralia: "In einem philosophischen Text sollten alle Sätze gleich nahe zum Mittelpunkt stehen."<sup>35</sup> Dialektik der Aufklärung is itself subtitled "philosophische Fragmente" and Minima Moralia is a collection of aphorisms. No systematic 'philosophy' is presented,<sup>36</sup> which points to Adorno and Horkheimer's rejection of any 'prima philosophia' per se; for truth, they believed, was that which could not be incorporated into the system, which was dominative per se. Systems being rational in the Enlightenment sense of the word, truth had to be meta-rational. Philosophy had to become the negation of the present and thereby the preservation of what we have called the non-identical in opposition to society which tried to make everything identical. Adorno went so far as to say that "das Ganze ist das Unwahre".<sup>37</sup> Society ruled by the dialectic of Enlightenment is thus 'untrue' and therefore has to be rejected by philosophy if the latter is to uphold the truth. Adorno and Horkheimer suggested that as a consequence there had to be a relationship between ascetism as "die Verweigerung des Mittluns am schlechten Bestehenden"<sup>38</sup> and materialism if the latter were to remain true, for "es gibt kein richtiges Leben im Falschen."<sup>39</sup>

Society's essence having become domination, philosophy had to regain the tension between what the observer observed and the observed reality, if it was to be able to conceive of society's essence. Adorno and Horkheimer state:

Nur in der Vermittlung, in der das nichtige Sinnesdatum den Gedanken zur ganzen Produktivität bringt, deren er fähig ist, und andererseits der Gedanke vorbehaltlos dem übermächtigen Eindruck sich hingibt, wird die kranke Einsamkeit überwunden, in der die ganze Natur befangen ist. 40

Only in this 'submission' to the concrete<sup>41</sup> was truth to be found, but the

process of finding the truth required more than philosophy: it required imagination.<sup>42</sup> It is at this point that aesthetics came to play a crucial role in Adorno and Horkheimer's thought.

In retaining the truth philosophy served as remembrance, as mankind's conscience;<sup>43</sup> it recalled the suffering ('Leiden') mankind had undergone owing to the dialectic of Enlightenment (and highlighted the use of Freudian theory in Adorno and Horkheimer's epistemology). Adorno connected this truth-character of imagination, remembrance and suffering with its sublation in a future society:

Philosophie, wie sie im Augenblick der Verzweiflung einzig noch zu verantworten ist, wäre der Versuch, alle Dinge so zu betrachten, wie sie vom Standpunkt der Erlösung aus sich darstellen. Erkenntnis hat kein Licht, als das von der Erlösung her auf die Welt scheint: alles andere erschöpft sich in der Nachkonstruktion und bleibt ein Stück Technik. 44

If truth could only be preserved from the standpoint of 'salvation', then Adorno and Horkheimer must conclude that their philosophy had to flee the historical stage on which it had originally been so firmly situated.

To avoid instrumental rationality, critique, as philosophy, is forced to be 'metaphysical' if it wishes to remain materialist in its demythologizing. Metaphysics is to be understood in this context as that which goes beyond the bounds of the world as defined by Enlightenment logic. Such a metaphysical position, Adorno and Horkheimer assumed, is rational and not mythic in that it places real subjectivity at its centre. This last, paradoxical point emphasizes the indeterminacy of the analytical framework Adorno and Horkheimer constructed to account for a determinate historical and social formation: that of totalitarianism. This loss of critical specificity is necessary if totalitarianism is to be grasped adequately. In other words, the categories used to outline the dialectic of Enlightenment and the underlying form philosophy had to take as a consequence, were all founded on Pollock's theory of state capitalism as well as on an interpretation of Freud's theory of individuality, and arise out of the conflict between the propositions of the two theories.

## 2. State Capitalism and Freud

In Section I Pollock's theory of state capitalism was found to play a key role in the formation of critical theory after 1937. The same theory of state capitalism, however, entailed a categorial redetermination of critical theory, one not fully evidenced by 1941. It is this projected redetermination which is expressed in the dialectic of Enlightenment.<sup>45</sup> The 'general', ahistorical concepts developed in the context of the dialectic of Enlightenment are both interconnected with the historically particular situation of state capitalism and causally derived from it, these then being projected back onto 'post-animistic' history. Indeed, the genesis of these concepts is only understandable in terms of the centrality of Pollock's theory. The actual epistemological form taken by the concepts is, however, attributable to Adorno and Horkheimer's interpretation of Freud's work.

A look at the notebooks Horkheimer filled with jottings for Dialektik der Aufklärung between 1939 and 1940 reveals that there the importance of economic theory for an understanding of changes in society was stated baldly, rather than hidden behind either phrasing or a philosophy of history. He noted of the economy, for example:

Sie war mit dem freien Markt verknüpft und dieser ist im Schwinden begriffen selbst wo die Monopolherren ihn vorläufig noch mehr durch Abmachungen und ergebene Parlamente als durch faschistische Kommissare regeln. 46

By 1942 this use of explicit vocabulary is still in evidence, as is shown in the following quotation from the second draft (October 1942) discussing the 'culture industry':

Alle Massenkultur ist identisch und ihr Skelett, das vom Monopol fabrizierte begriffliche Gerippe, beginnt sich abzuzeichnen. An seiner Verdeckung ist das Kapital gar nicht mehr so sehr interessiert, dessen Gewalt sich verstärkt, je brutaler sie sich einbekennt... Lichtspiele und Netzwerke brauchen sich nicht mehr als Kunst auszugeben. Die Wahrheit, daß sie nichts sind als Geschäft, verwenden sie als Ideologie, die den Schund legitimieren soll, den sie vorsätzlich herstellen. 47

In the final draft of Dialektik der Aufklärung, however, this economic basis of the theory of domination had become cloaked in more abstract concepts. Nevertheless, the economic shape of society still determined the

interpretation of society. For example, under state capitalism, planning - the alleged guarantor of socialism - perpetuated the existence of capitalism. In broader terms, the source of progress, the means of production, therefore apparently revealed itself as not containing the makings of a new and just society. The planned application of technology, which had been equated with the organisation of society according to the good of all, that is according to 'reason', transpired to be unreason.

In this context Adorno and Horkheimer suggested in Dialektik der Aufklärung that " Vernunft selbst zum bloßen Hilfsmittel der allumfassenden Wirtschaftsapparatur wurde."<sup>48</sup> Indeed, the central idea behind the concept of the dialectic of Enlightenment is that the condition of human freedom attainable is ignored and instead planned domination governs society. That is to say that the very question Adorno and Horkheimer addressed at the beginning of Dialektik der Aufklärung is conceivable only from the standpoint of the theory of state capitalism.<sup>49</sup> The attempt to define reason as having always been inherently mythic and the rejection of any notion of linear progress both follow from this adoption of the theory of state capitalism. Instrumental reason, and with it modern natural science, are both held to be the basis of planning and since planning is not for the good of all, they must, therefore, be unreason. Science is restricted by its function as the logos of planning and becomes what Adorno and Horkheimer called "der Inbegriff der Reproduktionsmethoden."<sup>50</sup>

The category of domination, so fundamental to the construction of the dialectic of Enlightenment, is thus rooted in the analysis of state capitalism, a form of social organisation in which reasoned planning had become domination. State capitalism had been classified by Pollock as a command economy. Adorno and Horkheimer stated in Dialektik der Aufklärung that the dialectic of Enlightenment culminated in precisely such commands: "Herrschaft überlebt als Selbstzweck, in Form ökonomischer Gewalt."<sup>51</sup> To their mind, the existence of this command hierarchy greatly impaired the existence of any notion of individuality under state capitalism, for a



person existed there only as a cog within the apparatus. Once Enlightenment thought had become mythic the **subject** becomes the prisoner of economic determination: "Was er ist, erfährt er durch die Wechselfälle seiner wirtschaftlichen Existenz."<sup>52</sup> Moreover, this statement implies that the internalization of domination (as described in Autorität und Familie) was no longer necessary under state capitalism.<sup>53</sup>

The domination exercised in state capitalism had been attributed by Pollock to the needs of the production process. That is to say, it was seen as a means of ensuring the capitalist nature of production and thus as the base dictating the shape of the superstructure. Adorno and Horkheimer considered this new relation between the economy and the polity in their discussion of the means and ends of instrumental reason:

Die vollständige Transformation der Welt in eine Welt, die mehr eine von Mitteln ist als von Zwecken, ist selbst die Folge der historischen Entwicklung der Produktionsmethoden. 54

The base in state capitalism was, in other words, never questioned. Rather, the application of technology was divorced from a discussion of ends, for all that could be discussed in state capitalism was the adoption of different means, and since domination, in the shape of a plan, governed society, this society could only be regarded as founded on unreason, regardless of its origins in the 'reason' of early liberal capitalism. The ahistorical declamation "Die Dialektik der Aufklärung schlägt objektiv in den Wahnsinn um"<sup>55</sup> thus reveals itself to be only understandable from the standpoint of domination in state capitalism.

Adorno and Horkheimer's general philosophical construction of the dialectic of Enlightenment, which is based on the three theoretical cornerstones of 'reason as unreason', 'domination as the telos of liberal thought' and 'progress as regression', shows itself to be deeply embedded in a contemporary social theory. Thus, philosophy, for Adorno and Horkheimer, while continuing to be social philosophy (albeit one tainted with the problems inherent in Pollock's theory), was condemned to being only philosophy,<sup>56</sup> for it could project no change within society. It remains to be seen whether

a relation exists between the two remaining basic elements of the dialectic of Enlightenment (the descriptions of ideology and alienation) and the theory of state capitalism, before Pollock's work can be regarded as central to the genesis of Adorno and Horkheimer's writings after 1941.

In Dialektik der Aufklärung Adorno and Horkheimer spoke of a world grounded in appearance, by which they meant that the world appeared to its inhabitants as that which Lukács had termed 'second nature'. The essence of society was no longer perceivable to or conceivable for the individual. Lukács had claimed that this second nature was a function of what Marx had designated the 'fetish character of the commodity'. Adorno and Horkheimer took this thought one step further:

Seit mit dem Ende des freien Tausches (i.e. the beginning of state capitalism) die Waren ihre ökonomischen Qualitäten einbüßten bis auf den Fetischcharakter, breitet dieser wie eine Starre über das Leben der Gesellschaft in all seinen Aspekten aus. 57

Since the fetish character permits goods only to be treated quantitatively (as exchange-values) and signifies that a commodity's origin in human labour is overlooked, this assertion by Adorno and Horkheimer in the above statement implied that the whole of society was tending to become governed by quantitative mythic thought.<sup>58</sup> Owing to the presence of thought, essence, as quality, was no longer perceivable. If labour was held to be instrumental action, then objectification, i.e. the very making of a product, was now equivalent to alienation. Adorno and Horkheimer proposed that people could no longer conceive of their own activity in the products they manufactured.<sup>59</sup>

This is a plausible description of production only under very specific conditions, namely those of a command economy.<sup>60</sup> Only if people are commanded to perform tasks do the tasks lose any meaning for them, a situation in which they would then fail to distinguish their productive activity in the result of such a task.<sup>61</sup> Adorno and Horkheimer inferred from this state of affairs that as a result of these commands people could not conceive of the essence of society. Because production was directed from above and people were judged to know ('erkennen') by virtue

of how they produced they were no longer able to know anything other than the quantitative aspect of production. This is what Adorno and Horkheimer meant when they stated: "Die konkreten Arbeitsbedingungen in der Gesellschaft erzwingen den Konformismus..."<sup>62</sup> The thesis that the fetish character infected society and that as a consequence consciousness became 'standardized'<sup>63</sup> is based on a model of production that can only be state capitalist. It is only within this context of state capitalism that complete physical alienation (from the production process) results in complete mental alienation.

In a society where the fetish character encroaches on every facet of life, there is no need for a superimposed ideology. The life-world is itself ideological; the base is the ideological superstructure. When the base becomes its own superstructure, ideology loses any truth content it might have had. Furthermore, if society is ideological, then no reason inhabits it and no anchor is left for an immanent critique of society.<sup>64</sup> This change in the constitution of ideology is conceptualised by Adorno and Horkheimer in their discussions of conformism (the main leitmotiv of Minima Moralia) and of a 'ticket mentality' (cf. the closing section 'Elemente des Antisemitismus' in Dialektik der Aufklärung). They stated:

In unserem Zeitalter der großen ökonomischen Verbände und der Massenkultur legt das Prinzip der Konformität seinen individualistischen Schleier ab, wird offen verkündet und in den Rang eines Ideals per se erhoben. 65

The command economy enforced conformity upon everyone, so that non-ideological thought was only possible outside the 'system' at the risk of losing one's economic existence:

Wie alles Leben heute immer mehr dazu tendiert, der Rationalisierung und Planung unterworfen zu werden, so muß das Leben eines jeden Individuums, einschließlich seiner verborgensten Impulse,...jetzt die Erfordernisse der Rationalisierung und Planung beachten: die Selbsterhaltung des Individuums setzt seine Anpassung an die Erfordernisse der Erhaltung des Systems voraus. 66

State capitalist production imposed instrumental thought on everyone in order to be able to continue producing for the benefit solely of a minority.

This reduction of production to physical and mental alienation and the concomitant conformism demanded of the individual, however, have dire consequences for Adorno and Horkheimer's critique of society.

Just as Pollock was left with a static analysis of society, so Adorno and Horkheimer described a society of complete alienation in which no change could occur, even though they asserted that internally society was somehow dynamic.<sup>67</sup> The domination of man by man for the purposes of production was now complete: the rebellion of man's inner nature against internalised domination had been usurped by the dominators of the command economy for their own purposes:

Der Faschismus ist totalitär auch darin, daß er die Rebellion der unterdrückten Natur gegen die Herrschaft unmittelbar der Herrschaft nutzbar zu machen sucht. 68

In other words, the dialectic of Enlightenment ended in the planned utilization by society of even people's innermost psychic resistance: liberalism culminated in totalitarianism. The dialectic ceased to be fluid movement between two poles but becomes frozen, no synthesis is possible.

The loss of dynamism involved in the dialectic of Enlightenment is evidenced in Adorno and Horkheimer's notion of a 'damaged life'.<sup>69</sup> By this Adorno and Horkheimer understood that the individual as a social entity was disappearing owing to the aforementioned dual forms of alienation. Individuality, therefore, cannot be used any longer as a critical standard against which to measure reality (as is often the case, for instance, in Minima Moralia), because in the light of the dialectic of Enlightenment the concept is paradoxical. In evolutionary terms individuality, i.e. the ego, must be regarded dialectically, because it is both emancipatory in that it guarantees mankind's survival by dominating nature instrumentally and non-emancipatory in that it dominates itself and others in the process.<sup>70</sup> This conception of a dialectic of individuality seemingly enabled Adorno and Horkheimer to avoid postulating the existence of a completely hermetic command economy, for a dialectical ego was by definition the product of an antagonistic world.<sup>71</sup> However, the drive internalisation, which creates

the ego, is required by a dynamic world, not by one in which everything occurs according to diktat and force. The command economy needs no individuals - only units of labour - and accordingly is not founded on internalisation. Concomitantly, Freudian psychology ceases to be a tool with which to explain the relation between individual and society and instead becomes a standard against which the loss of individuality can be measured. In other words, the considerations on individuality in Dialektik der Aufklärung led Adorno and Horkheimer to remove psychology from its central position in critical theory.

The above discussion of state capitalism explains the theory of the dialectic of Enlightenment, but it does not explain the origin of this idea itself. It is at this point that psychology comes to play a new role in critical theory. The loss of dynamism in society, which, consequent on that loss, resists any projection into a future based on the same means of production but on a new relation between producers and products, is assessed by means of an epistemological framework indebted to the Institut(e)'s interpretation of Freud's social psychology.<sup>72</sup>

Adorno and Horkheimer's notions of 'first' and 'second' nature on which is founded their category of domination, owe more to Freud than to Lukács, for they posited individuality in Freudian terms. Individuality, they maintained, arose out of myth because the ego (second nature) subordinated the id (first nature). People stopped thinking of themselves as nature and saw themselves as separated from their environment (also first nature) so as to be able to subjugate it to their needs. Adorno and Horkheimer identified two forms of the domination of man by man as necessary correlates of this subjugation of nature: one phylogenetic, the other ontogenetic. Man dominated other men, but also dominated (i.e. repressed) parts of himself:

Individualität setzt das freiwillige Opfer unmittelbarer Befriedigung voraus zugunsten von Sicherheit, materieller und geistiger Erhaltung der eigenen Existenz. 73

Unlike Freud, Adorno and Horkheimer did not derive the phylogenetic from

the ontogenetic but conceived of the two as mutually determining. The 'self' created by social and historical processes (phylogeny) was never a whole self, because in the individual socialization (phylo-ontogeny) necessitated by these processes the self maimed itself.

Adorno and Horkheimer offered a detailed symbolic portrayal of the repression of inner nature (ontogenesis) and the domination of outer nature (phylogeny) as forming the dual basis of individuality in their discussion of Odysseus' trial by the Sirens. In their eyes, Odysseus exhibited individuality in the form of rational logic in his encounter with the Sirens. He thought, cunningly ('listig', a Hegelian concept), how he could avoid falling into the hands of the Sirens and in this enterprise he did not rely on a whispered hint from a god, as was often the case in his adventures, but was left entirely to his own devices. He had himself bound to his ship's mast (ontogenesis) and ordered his men to place wax in their ears (phylogeny). He thus allowed himself to enjoy listening passively to the beauty of the Sirens' voices, i.e. he enjoyed art, without coming to any injury, while forcing his men to forego this pleasure for the sake of the progress of their ship. Man's reason as exhibited by Odysseus, therefore, did not facilitate his physical satisfaction or that of mankind and was accordingly not rational. Adorno and Horkheimer summarised this discussion of Odysseus by stating that "die Geschichte der Zivilisation ist die Geschichte der Introversion des Opfers."<sup>74</sup> Odysseus gained social identity as an individual by overcoming his id,<sup>75</sup> the libido (pure sensuous pleasure) and by then dominating others, imposing a superego on them (formal, instrumental reason) and a reality principle on them and himself.

Adorno and Horkheimer's main paradigm of the domination of nature resulting in a twofold domination of people is based on the id-ego-superego model Freud had developed in his later writings. The dialectic of Enlightenment reflects this by equating the ego with instrumental thought per se (second nature, ideology) in its repression of first nature. Adorno and Horkheimer thus adopt Freud's distinction between primary and secondary thought. Primary thought (real individuality, childlike mimesis) was, to their mind, repressed

by secondary thought (sublimation, based on formal, identifying principles).<sup>76</sup> The history of individuality - that of capitalism - could therefore be regarded, they suggested, as a history of increasing repression, and consequently as a bad history.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, history therefore bore no immanent dynamic that would allow the good to arise out of it, for individuality was sought at too high a cost. It is in precisely these terms that the Dialektik der Aufklärung conceives of history.

With their conception of the dialectic of Enlightenment Adorno and Horkheimer located the origins of individuality in the genesis of capitalism,<sup>78</sup> while also detecting that just as capitalism disintegrated into a command economy, so its microcosm - the individual - disintegrated.<sup>79</sup> Adorno and Horkheimer offered two psychological interpretations for the outcome of what happened to the individual.<sup>80</sup> On the one hand, they judge the id to be confronted by the superego owing to a withering away of the ego. This occurs in an authoritarian, but open society. On the other hand, however, they also contend that the id is held to be confronted by society (in the form of the 'culture industry'), i.e. in a closed world neither ego nor superego can develop.<sup>81</sup> The fact that nevertheless Adorno and Horkheimer also retained the first interpretation perhaps illustrates a reluctance on their part to accept the necessary existence of a completely closed world. This ambiguity is at least in part a result of the overriding importance attached to the oppression of primary thought by secondary thought, irrespective of the exact form this might assume. But it also highlights the problem Adorno and Horkheimer faced in making the dialectic of Enlightenment socially and historically specific. Adorno and Horkheimer are ambiguous in their use of Freudian epistemology precisely because by using it they sought to ground a social dynamism at a 'deeper' level, namely within the psyche.

Social dynamism can, at most, only be asserted to exist if it is transformed into an opposition between psychic forces. By transforming it in precisely this way Adorno and Horkheimer cannot, however, construct a true dialectic

of society from which the future could be generated. They criticize domination because historically it has meant a repression of the id, but a non-dominative system is thereby rendered impossible, for to grant the id's wishes would involve disregarding the ego/superego, the force(s) necessary for self-survival. The id may thus be for Adorno and Horkheimer a potential force of resistance, but its urges remain entwined with those of Thanatos, the death-drive (of pure libidinal satisfaction) and the search for stasis in death (Nirvana).<sup>82</sup>

Real individuality - defined as an individuality that heeds libidinous wishes - cannot therefore ever be attained because it entails self-destruction in a social sense. In other words, the very basis on which Adorno and Horkheimer sought to ground dynamism in a closed world - libidinous individuality as the opposite of 'closedness' - seems to be aporetic, for its existence would signify the end of self-survival, death.

Adorno and Horkheimer suggested, nevertheless, that this aporetic character of the dialectic of Enlightenment was, in fact, false; it was, they claimed, in turn historically conditioned. They insisted that society's enforcement of the ego/superego to the detriment of the id had to be partially repeated in each individual, in each ontogenetic process, since this was not achieved by phylogeny:

Furchtbares hat die Menschheit sich antun müssen, bis das Selbst, der identische, zweckgerichtete, männliche Charakter des Menschen geschaffen war, und etwas davon wird noch in jeder Kindheit wiederholt. 83

In a sense one could speak here of Freud's 'eternal recurrence of repression', the violence of the first moment in which Enlightenment reason imposed itself on nature being repeated in each generation. The ontogenetic process was thus considered by Adorno and Horkheimer to be phylogenetic, and hence historical in character. This being the case, the process could be changed. Adorno and Horkheimer seemingly rejected this view, when they stated: "Jeder Versuch, den Naturzwang zu brechen, indem Natur gebrochen wird, gerät nur um so tiefer in den Naturzwang hinein."<sup>84</sup>

In other words, individuation at the cost of the libido is an irreversible



process, originating in the "Urgeschichte der Subjektivität". However, this description of individuality as subjectivity signals that the process described is the dialectic of bourgeois subjectivity - Adorno and Horkheimer know of no other even if they detected symbols for it in Greek mythology. Nature's compulsion ('Naturzwang'), an ahistorical division of id and ego, is therefore not ahistorical, but related to bourgeois subjectivity. If another subjectivity were founded, one not grounded in the domination of the self through the domination of nature, the compulsion could be avoided. This is the context in which the following statement must be understood:

Aufklärung ist mehr als Aufklärung, Natur, die in ihrer Entfremdung vernehmbar wird. In der Selbsterkenntnis des Geistes als mit sich entzweiter Natur ruft wie in der Vorzeit Natur sich selber an... 85

This recognition of the self in nature could be achieved, Adorno and Horkheimer suggested, by application of the 'concept':

Denn er (the concept) distanziert nicht bloß, als Wissenschaft, die Menschen von der Natur, sondern als Selbstbesinnung eben des Denkens, das in der Form der Wissenschaft an die blinde ökonomische Tendenz gefesselt bleibt, läßt er die das Unrecht verewigende Distanz ermessen. Durch solches Eingedenken der Natur im Subjekt, in dessen Vollzug die verkannte Wahrheit aller Kultur geschlossen liegt, ist Aufklärung der Herrschaft überhaupt entgegengesetzt... 86

In this manner Enlightenment can oppose domination if uncoupled from an instrumental science which is the lackey of economic gain (cf. the 6th Thesis on Anti-semitism in Dialektik der Aufklärung).

Adorno and Horkheimer intend the term 'concept' to signify understanding as Eingedenken, i.e. thinking oneself into the Other, a term dating back to Nietzsche and indebted to Benjamin. In the context of the dialectic of Enlightenment 'Eingedenken' referred to the ego coming to understand and remember the id's wishes, a task accomplished by the former mediating the latter's wishes with the external world rather than oppressing them. A new reality principle could be established on the basis of 'Eingedenken' and therefore a new society would be brought about, since the present society opposes such 'Eingedenken'. This is not a return to some 'innocent' primeval state of nature, since no such condition of 'Eingedenken' has as yet existed otherwise society would not be oppressive. The possibility of 'Eingedenken'

proves society still to be dynamic, even if it is at present held in stasis ad infinitum. Such a use of the term 'concept' is not to be found in traditional science and yet was left seriously undeveloped and vague in the framework of Dialektik der Aufklärung, which prompts one to wonder whether even Adorno and Horkheimer were completely convinced of its power to overcome the aporia of self-survival being self-negation. In Adorno's later philosophy and specifically in his aesthetics, however, 'Eingedenken' and the 'concept' are elaborated on more fully.

The influence of Freudian psychology on Dialektik der Aufklärung goes some way towards explaining the commonly observed confluence of repression of the self (natural) and the domination of others (social).<sup>87</sup> Irrespective of the problem entailed in their grounding of social dynamism, in using Freudian categories Adorno and Horkheimer are able to interpose social psychology between the traditional opposites of natural history and human history; an opposition to be found in the different philosophies of Newtonian and Cartesian science on the one hand and Idealism's philosophy of consciousness ('Bewußtseinsphilosophie') on the other. This interposition fuses natural and human history into one process and hinders their reified separation into two unrelated spheres of activity and thought. Only thus can a category of 'Eingedenken' be conceived of. However, in thus fusing natural and human history the difference between 'natural' and 'social' domination becomes blurred because the two forms are seen only as different expressions of the same process. Further, the unspecific nature of Adorno and Horkheimer's analysis deters them from drawing any distinction between the two forms. Thus their position again borders on the aporetic, for freedom from social domination was unthinkable.

Nevertheless, this indeterminacy had five major advantages. Such a conception prevented a positivist reification of natural history to the detriment of human history. Equally, a reduction of human history to natural history as practised by Stalinist 'diamat' became impossible. Furthermore, Idealism's hypostatisation of human history as an emanation of consciousness was

avoided. At the same time, Freud's own interpretation of human history as a 'linear progression' of the continued construction of the ego was jettisoned because Adorno and Horkheimer redrew the ego's history as a history of decomposition.<sup>88</sup> Finally, phylogeny was not therefore reduced to or deduced from ontogeny but rather, as mentioned previously, the two were conceived of as mutually-determining, however indeterminate Adorno and Horkheimer's definitions of them might have been.<sup>89</sup>

By discussing history using only the category of the individual, Adorno and Horkheimer confused the two quite distinct levels of domination: the social and the 'natural'.<sup>90</sup> Social domination could, as a consequence, no longer be analysed by Adorno and Horkheimer in any specificity, although this had been their initial intention. The id-ego-superego model (despite being seen as bourgeois) is generalised in that the individual, as existent under capitalist society, is equated with society qua society. Secondary nature comes to be understood solely as formal, instrumental logic, although this is only the case under capitalism. Nevertheless it was this equation of individual and society that enabled Adorno and Horkheimer to transform social theory into the theory of knowledge which the Dialektik der Aufklärung constitutes.<sup>91</sup> The appended 'Elemente des Antisemitismus' in Dialektik der Aufklärung serve an important logical function in this context, for they illustrate the disintegration of the ego into a 'ticket mentality'.

The centrality of both the theory of state capitalism and Freudian epistemology for Adorno and Horkheimer indicates that the Dialektik der Aufklärung was not an analysis based solely on fascism, but was meant to have contemporary validity for capitalism as a whole and for late capitalism in particular. In this context, two conclusions suggest themselves. Firstly, social theory was still intended by Adorno and Horkheimer to inform the metatheory and to embrace possible future change, although they were unable to find such a dynamism even at a 'deep' level. Secondly, the dialectic of Enlightenment was historically specific, for it had meaning only in the context of state capitalism, not as a generalised philosophy of history. The

combination of these two aspects resulted in a socio-psychological philosophy. However, in this attempt to be historical in their refounding of 'critique' Adorno and Horkheimer transhistoricised (owing to both Pollockian and Freudian components) precisely that historical content.<sup>92</sup> The loss of social dynamism is therefore central to the theory of the dialectic of Enlightenment and must be regarded as constitutive of it. This loss, moreover, led Adorno and Horkheimer to add a further dimension, namely that of the 'culture industry', to the theory of state capitalism in an effort to prove, in a more empirical fashion, the existence of a 'closed' world centred on a pseudo-market. It is my contention that state capitalism's stability and the logic of the dialectic of Enlightenment have to be grounded by Adorno and Horkheimer in the structure of this 'culture industry' and I shall therefore now analyse this complex structure in some detail..

### 3. The Culture Industry

The subtitle of the chapter headed 'Kulturindustrie' in Dialektik der Aufklärung reads: 'Aufklärung als Massenbetrug', indicating that 'the culture industry' is the physical shape Enlightenment thought takes in its mythic shrouding of the world. The chapter undertakes to explain how the 'closedness' of the world is both shaped and enforced, thereby apparently ignoring the ambiguity evident in Adorno and Horkheimer's account of the Ego for if the concept of 'the culture industry' establishes that the world is 'closed', the conception of a dialectical Ego becomes redundant, unless it is powerful enough to escape such 'closedness'. The culture industry as a structure signified for Adorno and Horkheimer the contemporary organisation of culture; the latter they considered to consist of film, radio, magazines, jazz and television. These formed a unified 'industry', Adorno and Horkheimer argued, in that not only were such cultural forms without exception dependent on the all-powerful state capitalist monopolies (steel, electricity etc.)<sup>93</sup> but what each produced was identical: "Alle Massen-

kultur unterm Monopol ist identisch ...".<sup>94</sup> Specific differences amongst the products of the culture industry could be attributed solely to the fact that each was intended to serve in some way "der Klassifikation, Organisation und Erfassung der Konsumenten."<sup>95</sup> The form the products assumed depended entirely on the technical developments of capitalism: "Ihr (the products) Fortschritt entsprang den allgemeinen Gesetzen des Kapitals."<sup>96</sup> Viewed as a whole, these products were able to erect a monopoly purely by virtue of the economic role they fulfilled on behalf of the sectors of the economy on which they depended: "Was nicht konformiert, wird mit ökonomischer Ohnmacht geschlagen."<sup>97</sup> In this sense the culture industry took over the function of liberal capitalism's market in the shape of a pseudo-market, centred on advertising.

...: die modernen Kulturkonzerne sind der ökonomische Ort, an dem mit dem entsprechenden Unternehmertypen einstweilen noch ein Stück der sonst im Abbau begriffenen Zirkulationssphäre überlebt. 98

The nature of the culture industry was thus derived by Adorno and Horkheimer from state capitalism's need for a pseudo-market. It remains to be seen whether the manner in which the culture industry functioned can also be inferred from the same social form.

Adorno and Horkheimer addressed the way in which the culture industry operated from the very beginning of their investigations. In the second sentence of the chapter on the culture industry Adorno and Horkheimer declared: "Kultur heute schlägt alles mit Ähnlichkeit."<sup>99</sup>)

As we have seen, it evinces this quality in economic terms. However, Adorno and Horkheimer clearly intend the statement to designate the culture industry's existence on three further levels, i.e. to detail what its products are, to describe whom these are aimed at and also to show in what fashion they are thus aimed. They fail, however, to put the question as to the ownership of the culture industry, an omission evidencing the degree to which the chapter on the culture industry remains theory-bound and devoid of empirical demonstration. In this respect Adorno and Horkheimer's analysis of the culture industry moves uneasily between a

description of its products, whereby the former becomes the sum-total of the latter. For the purposes of reconstructing their analysis the two will be distinguished as clearly as possible.

The products of the culture industry, Adorno and Horkheimer maintained, were made up of stereotyped elements or rigid invariants. All details within each product were subordinated to the product and thus had no separate importance or meaning for the parts were subsumed under the product as a whole. Words, for example, were repeated frequently and used purely for effect, i.e. they became slogans.<sup>100</sup> Consequently, the only style inherent in the culture industry's products was the negation of style, rooted in the absence of tension between the general and the particular. The products in toto formed a system of non-culture ('Nichtkultur').<sup>101</sup> This system of products ensured that everything and everyone was incorporated into the system: "Für alle ist etwas vorgesehen, damit keiner ausweichen kann."<sup>102</sup>

The products themselves offered no escape from the 'dominant culture', since, as a result of their artificial variety, the public became part of a system that supposedly was there to serve them. Adorno and Horkheimer deduced from this that "die ganze Welt wird durch das Filter der Kulturindustrie geleitet."<sup>103</sup>

In other words, not only was everyone caught within the culture industry's stranglehold, but the efficacy of the latter's products prevented any other world from being seen.<sup>104</sup> It is this last point, the second level of the all-pervasiveness of 'similarity' that Adorno and Horkheimer used to prove the 'closed' nature of state capitalism.

It was not only by means of the standardised nature of its products that the culture industry succeeded in sealing the world hermetically. Its products were 'dreamless';<sup>105</sup> they mirrored society, but did not try to reshape it as affirmative culture was held to have done: "Kulturindustrie endlich setzt die Imitation absolut...Die vollendete Ähnlichkeit ist der

absolute Unterschied."<sup>106</sup> The products of the culture industry imitated because they mirrored society exactly as it appeared to be and by so doing duplicated it.<sup>107</sup> As we have seen earlier, Adorno and Horkheimer judged reality to be ideological. In their view the culture industry was therefore particularly insidious, for it reproduced an ideological reality and yet purported to create something new:

Kulturindustrie bietet als Paradies denselben Alltag wieder an. Sie wird zur nachdrücklichen und planvollen Verkündigung dessen, was ist. 108

This ideology had two levels in that it was both:

...die Photographie des sturen Daseins und die nackte Lüge von seinem Sinn, die nicht ausgesprochen, sondern suggeriert und eingehämmert wird. 109

Moreover, this presentation of the world made life seem imbued with sacrifice and hardship, so that toil took on the additional appearance of being worthy:

Das lückenlos geschlossene Dasein, in dessen Verdoppelung die Ideologie heute aufgeht, wirkt um so großartiger, herrlicher und mächtiger, je gründlicher es mit notwendigem Leiden versetzt wird. 110

The culture industry closed the world by reproducing it as it appeared to be: in this sense culture had become an all-embracing totality.<sup>111</sup> If people were able to see the world as it appeared to be, and were content with it in the shape of a domain of 'stars', then it would not be possible for them to envisage anything beyond it, either temporally or substantially.

Adorno and Horkheimer took film to be the main example of this imposition of what could be called 'one-way' thought. Adopting a rather conservative stance towards it, they maintained that, owing to a film's technical composition, it prevented people from thinking or even needing to think for the duration of its projection:

Der Zuschauer soll keiner eigenen Gedanken bedürfen: das Produkt zeichnet jede Reaktion vor: nicht durch seinen sachlichen Zusammenhang - dieser zerfällt, soweit er Denken beansprucht - sondern durch Signale... 112

The consumers of the culture industry were allowed no moment in which to think of the possibility of rebellion, for from the moment they left the factory at night until they clocked on next morning they were exposed to

the full brunt of the culture industry.<sup>113</sup> That is to say, they were reduced to reactors to demands made of them. In this fashion they lost any individuality:

Die Kulturindustrie hat den Menschen als Gattungswesen hämisch verwirklicht. Jeder ist nur noch, wodurch er jeden anderen ersetzen kann. 114

Society's direct domination of the individual, as noted in the discussion of Freudian categories, was founded by Adorno and Horkheimer in the nature of the culture industry. It is the totalised domination of this cultural apparatus that they held to be the reason society had become 'seamless' ('lückenlos').

Adorno and Horkheimer maintained that the culture industry thus not only standardised cultural production but in so doing forced culture to become purely ideological. Within such a complex even 'accidents' were a planned part of the whole.<sup>115</sup> To illustrate this Adorno and Horkheimer once again turned to the cinema, for it was film which as a "lückenlos(es) Gefüge der Verdoppelung der Realität,"<sup>116</sup> demonstrated better than anything else the hermetic quality of society. It followed from the doubling of reality by the culture industry that man's very nature was effected by such products as film:

Unweigerlich reproduziert jede einzelne Manifestation der Kulturindustrie die Menschen als das, wozu die ganze sie gemacht hat. 117

Adorno and Horkheimer based this observation on the claim that the culture industry was able to create, and thereby falsify, human needs, an argument that resembles so-called 'manipulation theses'.<sup>118</sup> Via the entertainment ('Vergnügen') that it offered, the culture industry was able to influence people without them being aware of any command having been given. The power the culture industry exercised stemmed from this 'hidden persuasion', namely the culture industry's overlap with the needs it had created,<sup>121</sup> which prompted Adorno and Horkheimer to state: "Nicht sowohl paßt Kulturindustrie sich den Reaktionen der Kunden zu, als daß sie jene fingiert."<sup>120</sup> Such influence was achieved by offering the consumers what they thought was



a range from which they could choose. This, however, was not only a spurious range (since the choice had been prearranged) but even the products themselves were standardised, i.e. a choice was possible only from identical articles.

Adorno and Horkheimer encapsulated this whole argumentation in Adorno's concept of the 'ever-similar', contending that entertainment, as offered by the culture industry, was centred on products whose main characteristic was their 'ever-similarity'. Entertainment is thereby 'ever-similar' in essence. The concept encompasses both the processes of standardisation and the conformism, whether conscious or unconscious, on the part of the consumer that results from it. Since all is similar, nothing can change, or, as Adorno and Horkheimer put it: "Das Neue der massenkulturellen Phase gegenüber der spät-liberalen ist der Ausschluß des Neuen."<sup>121</sup> The concept of 'ever-similarity' thus expresses the loss of dynamism which Adorno and Horkheimer regarded as the main characteristic of state capitalism and which they therefore absorbed into their dialectic of Enlightenment. The 'ever-similar' is, in effect a fascist 'Gleichschaltung' of culture; again the spectre of Pollock's analysis of Nazi Germany makes its presence felt.

The concept of the 'ever-similar' is the fundamentum in re of the dialectic of Enlightenment for it pinpoints the regression and domination innate in culture today:

Die Fusion von Kultur und Unterhaltung heute vollzieht sich nicht nur als Depravation der Kultur, sondern ebenso sehr als zwangsläufige Vergeistigung des Amusements. 122

Whereas the products of past cultures had involved real thought, Adorno and Horkheimer believed the culture industry provided only a surrogate of the same in that it masqueraded as having been imbued with thought. The real content of entertainment Adorno and Horkheimer declared to be "...Einverständnis. Vergnügen heißt allemal...das Leiden vergessen."<sup>123</sup> Through amusement the 'ever-similar' erected a closed universe of discourse and thought, one that caused conformity and prevented a recognition of the domination at the heart of society. This duplicating of an ideological reality

was the creation of the 'ever-similar'. It is this that renders society static.

For Adorno and Horkheimer the advent of the culture industry signified not only the 'depravation' of culture, but also, in accordance with the complete about-turn of Enlightenment thought, the end of culture in the sense in which, for example, Marcuse had examined it in his essay on affirmative culture. What is really new about the 'ever-similar' (and by extension the culture industry) is therefore that:

...und daß Kunst ihrer eigenen Autonomie abschwört, sich stolz unter die Konsumgüter einreicht, macht den Reiz der Neuheit aus. 124

Culture, as art, had renounced its 'aura', its claim to transcend and negate society, and had conformed instead to production's needs by acting as the sales agent for the economy.<sup>125</sup> Such an incorporation of art meant to change its social existence, namely "eine Verschiebung in der inneren ökonomischen Zusammensetzung der Kulturwaren."<sup>126</sup> Art, Adorno and Horkheimer suggested, lost any real, non-manipulated use-value and could not therefore be sold, an example of this being radio music which the culture industry offered to consumers but did not sell to them.<sup>127</sup> In this manner, culture obeyed the propagandistic needs of the powerful in society and yet had to appeal to the masses who were to consume it, even if this involved it being disseminated free of charge. Adorno and Horkheimer formulated this problem by an ingenious application of Marx's theory of value:

Kultur ist eine paradoxe Ware. Sie steht so völlig unterm Tauschgesetz, daß sie nicht mehr getauscht wird, sie geht so blind im Gebrauch auf, daß man sie nicht mehr gebrauchen kann. 128

They therefore concluded: "Daher verschmilzt sie (culture) mit der Reklame."<sup>129</sup>

Adorno and Horkheimer argued that cultural products, in that they were 'ever-similar', served simply to reinforce the pseudo-market, for they functioned as advertisements in which the domination of society was at once perpetuated and hidden.<sup>130</sup> This advertising quality was embedded in the cultural products' very composition:

Der Montagecharakter der Kulturindustrie,...,schickt sich vorweg zur Reklame: indem das Einzelmoment ablösbar, fungibel wird, jedem Sinnzusammenhang auch technisch entfremdet, gibt es sich zu Zwecken außerhalb des Werkes her... Technisch so gut wie ökonomisch verschmelzen Reklame und Kulturindustrie. 131

This argument is marred, however, by the fact that Adorno and Horkheimer adduced little evidence to support it other than their somewhat perfunctory analysis of film.

In arguing that there was a necessary connection between culture and advertisements, Adorno and Horkheimer underlined the staticism that had 'befallen' society; culture could not protest the closing of the world for it had become part of it. Mass culture had become administration. The chapter dealing with the culture industry was intended to describe the concrete form the dialectic of Enlightenment had taken in everyday life, i.e. the manner in which the hermetic universe was created.<sup>132</sup> In this sense the chapter provides an empirical determination and epistemological clarification of the dialectic of Enlightenment's factual existence. Adorno and Horkheimer hinted at this in the admittedly guarded statement that "die rücksichtslose Einheit der Kulturindustrie bezeugt die heraufziehende der Politik."<sup>133</sup>

The concept of the culture industry thus relates the application of Freudian and Marxian theory to a concrete analysis of society. Consequently, it is the effects state capitalism has on the constitution of the individual which form the main focus of the inquiry into the culture industry. This analysis seeks to prove that owing to the duplication of an ideological reality, i.e. the creation of a hermetic society, the critical individual can no longer be constituted. The 'whole' can hence be adjudged 'untrue' in that it does not function equally for the good of all, and everything is now second nature, i.e. rendered identical. The model of society Adorno and Horkheimer constructed on the basis of their analysis of the culture industry highlights the influence of Pollock's work and thus reveals the same flaws as were detected in the concept of state capitalism. It follows therefore that the staticism of Adorno and Horkheimer's analysis cannot be considered to be a consequence of their innate pessimism or idealism, or of

their lack of a Marxist epistemology. Rather it is generated by the social theory that informed their epistemology. As we have seen, the culture industry is the means by which the commodity is brought to the consumer and the means by which the latter's needs are manipulated. That is to say that the basis of the culture industry's existence is the fact that production determines consumption. By acting as the regulator of distribution the culture industry completes the closing of society. In accordance with Pollock's theory, Adorno and Horkheimer view society as still capitalist in its mode of distribution.

Despite this similarity, the concept of the culture industry describes a stage of state capitalism that Pollock had not been able to outline, namely that of a peace-time economy. Adorno and Horkheimer stated that: "In der Tat verwirklicht sich heute eine Art Wohlfahrtsstaat auf höherer Stufenleiter."<sup>134</sup> Culture industry is the structure through which force is exerted upon the population in peace-time; it is that pseudo-market of advertisements which imposes dominant beliefs on the population and ensures good sales. In other words, the culture industry is a new circulatory sphere, one which is, moreover, completely ideological.<sup>135</sup> The loss of specificity in Adorno and Horkheimer's conception of domination finds its complement here, in that Adorno and Horkheimer asserted that the whole is ideological and then inferred this to be the case for all the parts, i.e. everything within the culture industry was believed to be ideological. This logical short-circuitry is attributable to the main flaw in Pollock's work, the failure to investigate the sphere of production. Indeed, apart from the sparse remarks on film, Adorno and Horkheimer merely impute the main characteristics of the culture industry's products. By assigning to the culture industry the role of regulating consumption Adorno and Horkheimer reject any distinction between base and superstructure. With the introduction of the culture industry the base determines the life-world and therefore 'culture'. Because they attribute this reduction to the elision of a real distributive sphere,<sup>136</sup> Adorno and Horkheimer have to ignore any dynamic properties that might

actually persist within the base itself. They are forced to infer that all production is capitalist, because otherwise the individual could become aware of non-capitalist modes of production. By definition, however, capitalist production is dynamic, since it is based on a contradiction between the forces and relations of production. In other words, Adorno and Horkheimer end up inadvertently disproving what they wished to prove, namely the hermetic nature of society.

With the exception of the few remarks on filmic portrayal, Adorno and Horkheimer's analysis centres on the 'cultural' not the 'industrial' side of the concept. By thus concentrating on the distributive sphere as enforcing a closed world they were unable to conceive of change occurring in any fashion. Consequently, they cannot say why society is capitalist, for they have no socially grounded concept of what constituted the opposite of capitalism. Only in this way is it possible for them to equate objectification with alienation. The statement that all is ideological within the society governed by the culture industry is therefore both unfounded and tautological. Further, if all is absolutely ideological and not merely tendentially so, then Adorno and Horkheimer could hardly account for their own critique. The degree of generalisation and loss of specificity such a statement entails reproduces the enchantment of the world that contemporary society is held to have brought.

In this manner Adorno and Horkheimer impose a mono-causal logic on society without proving that this need be, or indeed is, the case. The concept of the culture industry, based on Pollock's understanding of capitalism, does not help delineate what forms of culture are not capitalist and yet nevertheless persist within the capitalist world. We shall see that Adorno later tried to avoid this problem by determining things in reverse: he judged authentic art to be negative, and therefore deduced capitalist production from its opposite. In conclusion we can say that the far-reaching embrace of the concept of the culture industry is severely limited, radical though its assessment of culture under late capitalism may have been, for in conceiving

of this culture as thoroughly structured, the concept loses any specificity.

#### 4. The Dialectic of Enlightenment, Suffering and Art

Adorno and Horkheimer did, however, endeavour to find a cause for change in the hermetic world they had outlined, namely in their notion of suffering ('Leiden'). The term itself has associations with art and religion, these often being regarded as the particular realms in which the suffering of man is portrayed. In this sense, the term testifies to the metaphysical properties of Adorno and Horkheimer's critique. It also evidences once more the common structure and epistemology of Dialektik der Aufklärung, Kritik der instrumentellen Vernunft and Minima Moralia - that is, the marriage of Freudian and Marxian concepts - for it describes on social, psychological and metatheoretical levels the state of society.

Adorno and Horkheimer proposed that the only escape from the closed society was to be found in the symbols of the past, of past suffering. These were oppositional because they exposed the whole to have been built on pain, and thereby exploded the image the 'whole' projects of itself, namely that it was both good and the optimum existence possible. The symbols of suffering, found in art predominantly, were of past pain for the cause of this pain was visibly rooted in the class society of the day, whereas under state capitalism such roots were disguised. The 'whole' thus tried to prevent any recognition of suffering: "Es gehört zum Mechanismus der Herrschaft, die Erkenntnis des Leidens, das sie produziert, zu verbieten..."<sup>137</sup> It was precisely the culture industry's glossy, star-spangled duplication of reality which tried to achieve this.

The concept of suffering becomes necessary for the critical theorist only when society is held to be closed, for suffering is then the only means whereby people can recognise society's first nature, namely that it is both based on domination and kept closed.<sup>138</sup> Adorno and Horkheimer had imputed that the culture industry was able to influence fully people's knowledge of themselves via its presentation of second nature. Accordingly, the constitution of individual thought was completely jeopardised by the presence

of the culture industry, so that recognition of this first nature had to be felt rather than conceptualised. Their concept of suffering is thus in part based on the assumption that people do not know of their own contemporary suffering but may be able to feel it.

Critical philosophy, Adorno and Horkheimer asserted, was able to counter the second nature posed by the 'ever-similar' if it took up the task of describing such suffering. They thus made a consciousness of society's closedness dependent on people's recognising the manner in which they repressed themselves. In this project of showing people their suffering, Adorno and Horkheimer considered philosophy akin to art:

Die Philosophie ist mit der Kunst darin einig, daß sie vermittels der Sprache das Leiden reflektiert und es damit in der Sphäre der Erfahrung und Erinnerung überführt. 139

In view of this the 'Aufzeichnungen und Entwürfe' that form the last part of Dialektik der Aufklärung can be seen to have a logical place in the book. They are not merely a philosophical addendum, but figure as a set of descriptions of suffering over the ages.

The concept of suffering implies that people have to be shocked by a recognition of pain if they are to become aware of the domination to which they are subjected. Equally, this awareness, in accordance with the dialectic of Enlightenment, has to involve a recognition of one's repression of oneself. A knowledge of suffering is therefore essentially anamnesis, for it forces the individual to become aware of the pain imposed on the id and it tries to force the id to remember that its pain originates now from the *superego* or society encroaching on it. This consciousness of repression was not, Adorno and Horkheimer argued, in itself cathartic, nor could it ever be, for in the last instance repression could only be alleviated by social change. 140

Adorno and Horkheimer's suggestion that suffering was the only mental means of recognising society's oppression of the individual was founded not only on a specific notion of the constitution of the individual depending on the production process but also on a consideration of the distributive

sphere's role within the individual's life-world in the closed, state capitalist society. The concept of suffering thus highlights the interconnectedness of a theory of knowledge, a theory of individuality and a theory of society in the refoundation of critique that Dialektik der Aufklärung, Kritik der instrumentellen Vernunft, and Minima Moralia were intended to be - a refoundation necessitated by the change in society that Pollock had outlined.<sup>141</sup> The concept also emphasizes the staticism of this critique because opposition can only be a feeling and not conceptual, and thus is not practical in any sense.<sup>142</sup> Adorno unwittingly depicted this staticism in his purely ethical exhortation: "Einig sein soll man mit dem Leiden des Menschen."<sup>143</sup>

Adorno and Horkheimer felt that a representation of suffering was contained not only in philosophy but also in art.<sup>144</sup> Any interpretation or analysis of art had, however, in the light of the dialectic of Enlightenment, to take into account the culturally all-embracing character of the culture industry. To Adorno and Horkheimer art and the culture industry were diametrically opposed.<sup>145</sup> The culture industry drew its power from an invasion of the realm of symbolic truth hitherto reserved for art, and thereby created a closed world. This had disastrous consequences for art, for, deprived of its realm of truth, it died out: "Fürs Absterben der Kunst spricht die zunehmende Unmöglichkeit der Darstellung des Geschichtlichen."<sup>146</sup>

A closed society gives no hint of an idea of history or transience, whereas, as we have seen, Adorno and Horkheimer considered both these properties to be constitutive factors in the creation of art. Indeed, in the symbolic discussion of Odysseus, the Sirens' music is countered by instrumental rationality. Art is opposed, by its very nature, to instrumental reason. Owing to this opposition between art and the culture industry, Adorno and Horkheimer decided that art could provide an antidote to the closing of the world. Two historical forms of art came into question: either past, affirmative and reflective forms or such forms as Adorno had judged 'authentic' but 'post-auratic'. Affirmative forms were no longer affirmative,



since society no longer required affirmation. Rather, the existence of affirmation in such artworks showed that an ideology had existed at the time of their production. This portrayal of tension between ideological and non-ideological strands in the artworks served to ensure both that these are dissynchronous and that they do not incorporate any part of the closed world's ideology:

Mit fortschreitender Aufklärung haben es nur die authentischen Kunstwerke vermocht, der bloßen Imitation dessen, was ohnehin ist, sich zu entziehen. 147

In as much as artworks could still do this, Adorno and Horkheimer maintained, art was oppositional to society and could parry the culture industry's embracing thrust on account of its very constitution as art.<sup>148</sup> Art was accordingly judged to be non-conformist and as such reflected ex negativo the conditions that forced it to be as it was, therefore revealing a truth about society, namely its foundation in domination. Adorno and Horkheimer spoke of the nature of art as being the artistic "Erscheinung des Ganzen im Besonderen"<sup>149</sup> and saw an artwork's style as representing a promise to portray the truth.<sup>150</sup> These properties were destroyed by world in which the whole was the parts and in which these, in turn, were dominative. Art was thus non-conformist, in that it became the antithesis to society. Adorno went so far as to suggest that art could still grasp the truth about society, a point Horkheimer disagreed with quite radically (and the only point, incidentally, on which the two did disagree). Horkheimer considered that the culture industry overwhelmed art:

Ein Kunstwerk war einmal bestrebt, der Welt zu sagen, wie es ist, ein letztes Urteil auszusprechen. Heute ist es völlig neutralisiert. 151

Horkheimer justified this by saying that subjective reason

... überführt Kunstwerke in kulturelle Waren, und ihren Konsum in eine Reihe von zufälligen Gefühlen, die von unseren wirklichen Intentionen und Bestrebungen getrennt sind. Kunst ist ebenso von der Wahrheit abgelöst wie Politik oder Religion. 152

Adorno, on the other hand, insisted in Minima Moralia that art provided,

in its 'non-instrumentality', a reconciliatory image of nature, an image of non-domination of contemplative 'mimesis'.<sup>153</sup> This property endowed art, he suggested, with a truly 'creative' view of a future reality where the world of objects was not a world of domination.<sup>154</sup> In this respect, Adorno held mimesis to reveal a new form of production, namely "Zweckmäßigkeit ohne Zweck"<sup>155</sup>, i.e. non-instrumentality, or, as he termed it, the "Dasein des Nutzlosen".<sup>156</sup>

Above all - and as a summary of the properties just mentioned, - art retained an image of suffering in that it endeavoured to maintain a remembrance of the past:

Der Drang, Vergangenes als Lebendiges zu erretten, anstatt als Stoff des Fortschritts zu benutzen, stillte sich allein in der Kunst, der selbst Geschichte als Darstellung vergangenen Lebens zugehört.<sup>157</sup>

This act of anamnestic remembrance that prevented the 'damned' ('Gerichteten') from being forgotten<sup>158</sup>, lifts the bane of the culture industry's creation of a closed, history-less world. Art, in other words, can potentially form the basis for critical thought. Faced by a closed society, it is implied, philosophy has to turn to art to interpret the world, and even then only indirectly. Changing it was impossible.

Adorno and Horkheimer's conception of art as the opposing force to the culture industry entails certain problems. By dint of its "Verzicht auf Einwirkung"<sup>159</sup>, they reduce art to a quietist role, since otherwise it would conform by shedding its non-instrumental character.<sup>160</sup> What is more, in viewing affirmative art positively, Adorno and Horkheimer run the danger of not being able to distinguish between affirmative and emancipatory artforms, or between the original meaning of an artwork and its meaning at a later point in time. The level of historicity and unspecificity that bedevils the dialectic of Enlightenment as a whole even permeates Adorno and Horkheimer's pronouncements on aesthetics. Relatedly, in a closed society a sociology of art becomes unnecessary, for l'art pour l'art is the standard of opposition to society and art's origins become irrelevant.

Equally, how are new artforms or adequate artforms to be generated or characterised within Adorno and Horkheimer's bipolar opposition of art and society? I shall turn to a detailed study of these problems in the following chapter on Adorno's aesthetics.

In the light of our discussion of the different components inherent in Adorno and Horkheimer's conception of a dialectic of Enlightenment and their logical position in Adorno and Horkheimer's epistemology, it is now in order to view the social theory, which evolved in Dialektik der Aufklärung, Kritik der instrumentellen Vernunft and Minima Moralia between 1941 and 1947, as a whole. Primarily, Adorno and Horkheimer reconsidered Marxism in the context of a postulated change in the structure of capitalism<sup>161</sup>, namely the transition to state capitalism that Pollock had outlined. Adorno and Horkheimer believed that society had, through the loss of the sphere of distribution, become monolinear, i.e. closed. For the culture industry now mediated on behalf of production between production and consumption. As a consequence, Adorno and Horkheimer affirmed that the base dominated the superstructure and built their theory around this. Any distinction between the two had become meaningless. This point was founded on an understanding of the base-superstructure relation as the constitutive relation of society only in terms of the sphere of distribution, an understanding which meant omitting and neglecting any definition of society according to the sphere of production.<sup>162</sup> This reconsideration was adhered to by Adorno for the rest of his life, (a point I shall treat in the next chapter<sup>163</sup>).

This redetermination of the cornerstones marking off a Marxist epistemology does not simply reject critical theory as practised in the period from 1932 - 1941, but rather reexamines non-identity theory's interests and aims. The Dialektik der Aufklärung essentially provides, in a manner similar to the earlier period, a critique of thought in its Cartesian form, but intends this now as a more fundamental corrective to Marxism than was

embodied in the earlier critique of vulgar Marxism. The Dialektik der Aufklärung's critique of thought amounts to a critique of the underlying structure of the Modern Age and thus Adorno and Horkheimer must be judged to have assumed that capitalism could be characterised not only by the form of production, as Marx had stated, but at an even more basic level by its form of thought:<sup>164</sup> it becomes an idealist critique. The Dialektik der Aufklärung thus takes up the debate on the relation of capitalism and mechanistic thought which Borkeuau and Grossmann had conducted inconclusively in the pages of the Zeitschrift up to 1935. The theory of rationalisation (or racionation) Adorno and Horkheimer developed is thus a quite clear continuation of Institute work, its point of inquiry matching the questions raised by an ideology-critique of bourgeois thought and society. Whereas, however, such an ideology-critique did not go so far as to establish a comprehensive critique of society, in the form Adorno and Horkheimer assumed it had to take in the wake of Pollock's findings, it had to be extended to found and embrace all thought within society, including the logic inherent in Marxism itself. This reconsideration lost, however, in its epistemological framework, a level of specificity latent in the earlier critical theory. Adorno and Horkheimer's social theory of the 1941-1947 period cannot analyse capitalism qua capitalism, but only as 'society' as a whole. As was shown above, the crucial loss of specificity is evidenced at all levels of their analysis. This aporetical indeterminacy of the analyses of a concrete historical situation is just as much due to their use of Freudian categories of individuality as to the variant of Marxism they adopted. The category of the constitution of individuality which they used is, as we have seen, paradoxical. It could almost lead the reader to suppose that Adorno and Horkheimer wished to highlight the repressive character of the Freudian concepts themselves. The validity of the version of Marxism employed in

the reconsideration of social philosophy is not itself cast into doubt, only its applicability is called into question, thereby necessitating Adorno and Horkheimer to resort to Freudian categories. That the term state capitalism cannot determine what it is that is capitalist, is left ignored.

The weakness of their version of Marxism is, however, illustrated unintentionally by Adorno and Horkheimer. Their interpretation led them to regard capitalism as having permeated the whole life-world, for both materially and ideationally no political counter to it could be posited, no new social form could be found to inhabit the old. Consequently they could not ground the existence of a cognitive subject and thus their critique itself lacked a material foundation. The dialectic of Enlightenment, and with it the notion of state capitalism, culminated in the view that no dynamism existed in society.

By analysing contemporary society as state capitalism Adorno and Horkheimer were able neither to find nor to found any opposition to it. The first inability is understandable: in the 1940s there was no major radical opposition either in Germany or the USA. The second presented a serious theoretical shortcoming, if their theory was to retain its validity after 1947. All Adorno and Horkheimer were able to propose was that in those tattered remnants of an earlier bourgeois culture in which the base-superstructure distinction had made sense, there existed a challenge to the culture industry of today. That is to say, only in art could the theorist brush history against its grain,<sup>165</sup> only in art could people's suffering - la condition humaine - be revealed. Logically, modern art would have had to take the situation under state capitalism into account if it were also to have survived. To remain oppositional, art had to become non-conformist and yet this meant, paradoxically, resisting the irresistible, namely the culture industry. This concern with modern art came to play an increasingly important role in Adorno's further thought not only in terms of it being a 'time-lagged' preserve of emancipatory

ideals, but more significantly as a paradigm of the new society, based on a new, non-capitalist mode of production. It is this transference of a dialectical methodology away from social theory - its traditional location in historical materialism - to aesthetic theory that I shall address in the next chapters.

C H A P T E R 9 : ADORNO'S AESTHETICS 1947-1970

In the last chapter we found that a direct connection existed between Pollock's work on state capitalism and Adorno and Horkheimer's Dialektik der Aufklärung. Unlike Pollock, however, Adorno and Horkheimer located a dynamic element in the closed society, namely in art. Nevertheless, they failed to explore the precise nature of the relationship between art and society, preferring - perhaps for tactical reasons - to state vaguely that art was the negation of the closed society. This chapter will try to pinpoint more exactly, by means of a critical reconstruction of Adorno's thought on aesthetics and art in the period following the publication of Dialektik der Aufklärung, what questions this negative determination posed for a critical theory of art.

In order to do so this reconstruction will address three interrelated questions: whether Adorno's writings follow Dialektik der Aufklärung in trying to found social dynamism in art, whether they are therefore based on the same theory of society and , finally, what internal role Adorno's aesthetics and writings on art play in his overall philosophy in the years after 1947.<sup>1</sup> This project will centre on a study of the main concepts developed in Adorno's aesthetics, of their relation to his philosophy and social theory and of their basis, i.e. his investigations of particular artworks. The aesthetic concepts Adorno devised and their possible limitations will be interpreted after his theory of society has been outlined because (since Adorno considered himself a Marxist) we must assume that the former was based on the latter.<sup>2</sup>

Adorno's work after 1947 can be divided into three subject areas: social theory, philosophy, and aesthetics. In order to be in a position to answer the above questions we must first determine whether a link exists both between the Dialektik der Aufklärung and his social theory and subsequently between these and his philosophy. The philosophy can then be used as the point of comparison between his social theory and aesthetics.

However, since Adorno shared Horkheimer's belief that philosophy was by nature social philosophy, it will suffice for our purposes to correlate his philosophy and the Dialektik der Aufklärung without devoting any space specifically to a study of his social theory alone. Our discussion of his social philosophy will, however, also draw on the extensive remarks he made on the nature of society in his numerous essays on art. This approach allows the argument to concentrate on Adorno's writings on art, rather than branching out into all the areas touched on by the vast body of his work. The internal relation between aesthetics and philosophy will subsequently reveal whether an important connection does indeed obtain between aesthetics and the Dialektik der Aufklärung,<sup>3</sup> something that has frequently been asserted, but never studied systematically.<sup>4</sup>

#### 1. Negative Dialectics and Social Theory

In 1961 Adorno wrote: "Das waren noch gute Zeiten, als eine Kritik der politischen Ökonomie dieser Gesellschaft geschrieben werden konnte, die sie bei ihrer eigenen ratio nahm."<sup>5</sup> This often quoted sentence contains Adorno's theory of contemporary society in a nutshell. Society had changed from the social structure Marx had analysed, Adorno believed, to one that no longer possessed an inherent rational purpose. In the absence of any rationality this society could not be subjected to dialectical critique, for determinate negation had no rational basis from within that society from which to oppose society. Consequently, society had to be judged to be static, as Pollock had suggested, for only dynamism would permit a critique of society that could lead in theory to that society's sublation. It therefore had to be assumed either that such a society contained no contradictions or else that it was able to restrain these from forcing a change in its form. In other words, Adorno thought neither a social class nor the productive forces in the shape of modern technology would generate social change within a form of late capitalism which had achieved a high degree of stability.<sup>6</sup> This did not mean to say that society was not capitalist,<sup>7</sup>



for Adorno argued forcibly that it still was, but rather merely that dialectics had come to a standstill. He based this argument on Pollock's notion that, owing to state intervention, the market mechanism had been, or was in the process of being, displaced by direct domination<sup>8</sup> and that the economic processes had become controlled directly by political institutions. It is this transformation of political economy into politics which enables Adorno to conclude that society evidenced no true rationality, as was also the case under liberal capitalism, which, however, at least contained the innate possibility of a transition to a rational society. This analysis, quite clearly based on Pollock's ideal-typical model of state capitalism, leads to Adorno's assumption that the base has become its own superstructure, thus rendering the distinction obsolete<sup>9</sup> and with it political economy as a discipline.

The feature of this static society that Adorno emphasized above all else was that of a 'universalization of the exchange principle', also termed a "universeller Verblendungszusammenhang".<sup>10</sup> These two terms are used to afford greater analytical precision in studying the closed world of capitalism, thereby extending and improving on the Dialektik der Aufklärung's theory of society, which, as we have seen, was far less historically specific than was desired. Adorno's writings on social theory attempted a posteriori to provide the historical exactness lacking in Dialektik der Aufklärung and in this manner to complement it.

The above two terms were intended to embrace three different levels of meaning. Firstly, the consumer was judged no longer to experience 'real' needs but to consume exchange-values; ideology as second nature had successfully invaded first nature.<sup>11</sup> Secondly, this reification of needs corresponded to a dissolution of the autonomous psychological subject whose gradual disappearance had been so central to Dialektik der Aufklärung. Adorno argued:

The form of the total system requires everyone to respect the law of exchange if he does not wish to be destroyed, irrespective of whether profit is his subjective motivation or not. 12

Thirdly, the presence of direct domination had led to a complete, enforced objectivation of the individual. This, above all, epitomised the closed world: "Das hermetische Prinzip ist das der vollendet entfremdeten Subjektivität."<sup>13</sup> By this Adorno meant that because people were treated as objects and treated each other as objects, it was no longer possible to distinguish between human beings and the world of things<sup>14</sup> when analysing this 'seamless organisation', this 'administered world'.<sup>15</sup> In abstract terms such reification caused subject and object to be factually similar, although Adorno held such an identification to be false from the point of view of a critical theory of society.

This complete objectification of the individual bore witness to the absence of dynamism in society. As a result Adorno attempted to formulate a critique of society by means of a philosophy which grasped the change society had undergone and transcend it.<sup>16</sup> This intention is clear in the opening sentence of Negative Dialektik, the main work on philosophy Adorno produced and the text on which the following discussion will centre: "Philosophie, die einmal überholt schien, erhält sich am Leben, weil der Augenblick ihrer Verwirklichung versäumt ward."<sup>17</sup> Society which could have become rationally structured on the basis of liberal capitalism's means of production, i.e. according to mankind's real needs, has instead degenerated into barbarism.

Adorno drew a radical conclusion for his philosophy from this state of barbarism by applying the dialectic of Enlightenment to all logic. Such an application was theoretically necessary if the Dialektik der Aufklärung was to retain its consistency and heuristic value, for not only psychological processes, but the very act by which mankind recognises and thus knows its world, had to be subjected to that dialectic.

Adorno argued that "Denken heißt identifizieren,"<sup>18</sup> i.e. he specified that in the identification of an object as 'some thing' the object was reduced to a mere quantity ('A') compared with itself and measured against other objects ('non-A') and in this process was stripped of any quality. That is to say, in using such logic the subject 'man' reduced the object to being

other than himself ('reductio ad hominem') and by equating it with other similar objects in order to identify it, simultaneously imposed his logic on that object: the subject dominated the object. Above all, Adorno claimed, there was no perceivable difference between the reduction of all objects to comparable, measurable quantities and the exchange principle which compared 'things' according to their price and thus compared quantitatively and not qualitatively, e.g. according to what need they might correspond to.<sup>19</sup>

Such comparative logic was not rational but non-identical in Horkheimer's terms with what it thought it was. If such analytical logic was therefore ideological, by virtue of its being mythic in its divesting of all objects of quality, then both Stalinist dialectic and positivism were false in their very methodology. Philosophy of Adorno's brand reflects on this state of affairs and attempts to tread a narrow path between East and West, simultaneously resisting the embrace of each and spotlighting their ideological nature. The contention that Adorno's thought in this period was influenced by 'National Socialism and Stalinism' is not quite accurate and should be revised to read 'State Capitalism's and Stalinism's respective dogmas'. The critique of such dogmas provided the parameters and structure of his philosophy.

Adorno set about constructing such a critique by deducing from the ideological nature of Cartesian logic that: "Universalgeschichte ist zu konstruieren und zu leugnen."<sup>20</sup> Mankind might have been the creator of a universal history up till now, he argued, but the results had to be recognised as having been catastrophic, for they had culminated in the present state of barbarism. The possibility of a history that had 'man' at its centre had therefore to be denied. History was not to be mistaken for positive progress.<sup>21</sup> In the light of this, philosophy was forced to become a programme of 'anti-identity' - of possibility and hope - if it was to lay claim to defending a truth that pertained to a future, just society. It had to construct a logic that paid heed to the quality of each object or, in Adorno's words, that gave precedence ('Vorrang') to the object, a procedure Adorno defined as follows:

"Vorrang des Objektes bedeutet die fortschreitende qualitative Unterscheidung von in sich Vermitteltem."<sup>22</sup> In its thinking of the object the subject had to think of its own (mediating) relation to the object rather than thinking idealistically or positivistically that its thought was the object as it is conceptualised.<sup>23</sup>

This awareness of the subject's relation to the object is what Adorno terms 'second reflection' ('zweite Reflexion'); the first act of reflection being the initial distinction between the subject and object that the subject makes in thinking. Adorno labels this second level of reflection 'mimetic' in the sense that the subject approached the object mimetically as opposed to conceptually. In a discussion of a form of differentiability and rationality that took each thing into account as possessing properties that opposed its conceptualisation Adorno remarked:

In ihrem Postulat (the thing's), dem des Vermögens zur Erfahrung des Objektes...findet das mimetische Moment der Erkenntnis Zuflucht, das der Wahlverwandtschaft von Erkennendem und Erkanntem. 24

By means of such mimetic knowledge of an object, the object was not reduced to the subject, but was left within its own qualitative individual state, its Hegelian potentiality thus being preserved:

Eine Sache selbst begreifen, nicht sie bloß einpassen, auf dem Bezugssystem eintragen, ist nichts anderes, als das Einzelmoment in seinem immanenten Zusammenhang mit anderen bewahren. 25

As a result of this insight, Adorno's philosophy endeavours to avoid constructing a systematic logic into which things are fitted. To do so, it has to guarantee the precedence of the object in another manner as well. Confronted by a society that is 'false' in that it is founded on identifying thought, Adorno's philosophy protects non-identity within the society by saving the particular<sup>26</sup> as the qualitative side of the object. The precedence of the object comes to be grounded in philosophy's preservation of the object as the non-identical in all its particularity. Adorno concluded: "Insofern wäre das Nichtidentische die eigene Identität der Sache gegen ihre Identifikation."<sup>27</sup> The presence of a monochromatic society thus forced knowledge, in A's opinion, to become a mimetic knowledge of the particular

if it was to resist the universal 'veil of blindness'. Adorno asserted categorically of all knowledge: "Erkenntnis geht aufs Besondere nicht aufs Allgemeine."<sup>28</sup> Philosophy, in Adorno's view, had to don a redemptive quality, for otherwise it could not extract that particular from the general, but would forever subsume the former under the latter.

In Dialektik der Aufklärung truth could only be realized in a concrete, true society by means of an 'Eingedenken' of the subject, i.e. by means of second reflection. This, in turn, was only possible if one presupposed the existence of subjectivity although such a state was factually threatened by the closed world. In other words, Adorno and Horkheimer placed their hopes in the development of a new subjectivity and yet could locate no subject which might so develop. This vicious circle reappears in Adorno's philosophy as is witnessed by his almost despairing reliance on a vague "Überschuß des subjektiven Anteils."<sup>29</sup> The very universe of discourse in which the subject moves and constitutes itself, i.e. its language, is invaded in a crushing manner by the closed world, so that Adorno is forced to conclude that language could now only express truth when it communicated the non-identity of expression and its intended message.<sup>30</sup>

However, as both language and therefore philosophical concepts formulated in it were potentially ideological constructs Adorno had to locate truth and, with it, subjectivity, elsewhere. This he did in the notion of the constellation,<sup>31</sup> a group of thoughts which when viewed together but not subordinated to that unity, presented the truth. This truth was, however, non-communicable; or to put it in philosophical terms, it remained undetermined or completely abstract. Adorno was only able to suggest that: "Die Idee von Versöhnung (the truth) verwehrt deren positive Setzung im Begriff."<sup>32</sup> The reconciliation of subject and object as the true state that society should aspire to, or might in the future become, can only be defined negatively. It is defined as a constellation of expression in opposition to the static closed world, and since it is in opposition, it has to be grounded outside it, undialectically, as the undefinable. Since this reconciliation

could not be grounded within the closed society, Adorno maintained that it could only be thought of, i.e. posited, negatively, in second reflection. What Adorno meant by this is best illustrated by a point he made in criticism of Hegel: "Zur Versöhnung von Allgemeinem und Besonderem hülfe die Reflexion der Differenz, nicht deren Extirpation."<sup>33</sup> The use of the verb 'to help' and of the subjunctive form would seem to indicate that even this process is not a guarantee that reconciliation can or will occur. In the absence of such a guarantee Adorno undertook to situate truth in a certain 'contemplative' attitude of which he stated: "Kontemplatives Verhalten, das subjektive Korrelation der Logik, ist das Verhalten, das nichts will."<sup>34</sup> By wanting or intending nothing, such an attitude cannot by definition dominate and therefore approximates true thought, which, in turn, grasps the object without subsuming it under an exterior logic.

This attitude reflects the enforced passivity of the thinking subject when enclosed in a hermetic world, for contemplation of a non-communicable truth amounts to a tacit acknowledgement of the fact that life cannot be changed for the better. Adorno's view of a closed world at this point creates distinct problems for his dialectical philosophy, as it condemns philosophy to possessing only a vision of the future. This is the case because Adorno asserted that only if one was passive and contemplative could one think of a picture of a reconciled world. This picture remains abstract, however, if perhaps optimistic, for such reconciliation would depend on an active subject changing the social world. Such active subjectivity is, however, by definition dominative and thus incapable of recognising the state of reconciliation to be achieved in the first place.

Thought remains the only form of praxis possible in Adorno's philosophy. This logical, if astounding conclusion is essentially pressed upon Adorno in his attempt to found or find an internal opposition to state capitalism, a seeming contradictio in adjecto and substantivo.<sup>35</sup> Neither his definition of freedom as the concrete negation of the present state of unfreedom nor his conception of it as preserving non-identity are grounded in society.<sup>36</sup> Rather, they must of necessity remain ideational, for if they were not they

would either contradict the socio-theoretical basis of the philosophy or else be absorbed by the universal 'veil of blindness'. They are condemned to remaining flashes of light in a dark one-way tunnel, i.e. to being completely transient:

Der Gestus der Hoffnung ist der, nichts zu halten von dem, woran das Subjekt sich halten will, wovon es sich verspricht, daß es dauere. 37

The only further avenue of hope or truth (and Adorno likened the one to the other) that Adorno's philosophical construction allows is a quasi-anthropological argument reminiscent of Marcuse's writings on hedonism. Adorno suggested that human happiness as a 'metaphysical' property secured the preservation of the particular in the form of the interior subjectivity of a person in opposition to its external objectification; i.e. a person's wish for happiness might be forever unfulfilled, but it could not be 'confiscated' by state capitalism's direct domination.<sup>38</sup> This argument mirrors the 'psychological' materialism of the conception of 'Eingedenken' as presented in Dialektik der Aufklärung although it contradicts the suggestion made there that needs can be completely manipulated. In a manner also similar to the structure of Adorno and Horkheimer's philosophy in Dialektik der Aufklärung, Adorno concluded Negative Dialektik by indicating that one image of the future society did indeed exist. (despite his preceding assertions that truth, as the image of a future society, was unportrayable and only negatively accessible to the thinker<sup>39</sup>). This image was contained in art. The appearance ('Schein') of art gained metaphysical, transcendental relevance in this context,<sup>40</sup> Adorno argued, for it was by virtue of art's appearance that it was both real, i.e. a mediation of subjective and objective impulses, and an instance of second reflection.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, art's appearance signalled a state that had no appearance of seeminglessness.<sup>42</sup>

Since that which has no appearance is that which has not as yet existed socially (only the 'for-itself' is appearance) Adorno must have meant that art presented a concrete image of something not based on domination. In this context he proposed that art came to the rescue of philosophical truth

by lending it concrete form, by showing that "es sei nicht alles nur nichts."<sup>43</sup> In other words, a philosophy which had to contend with a closed society needed art if truth were to be retained in a tangible form. It now remains to examine how art and aesthetics relate back to philosophy and social theory and what questions the last two fields pose for aesthetics, that is, to inquire how it is that Adorno can assert that art provides, in its appearance, an image of the 'non-appearing'.

## 2. Aesthetics and the Artwork

Studies of Adorno's work have frequently treated either his philosophy, especially Negative Dialektik, or his aesthetics. Furthermore, research on Adorno's aesthetics has tended to rely only on his Ästhetische Theorie<sup>44</sup> or, at most, has also resorted to the occasional reference to his writings on music. This approach is probably preferred to alternatives, such as looking at his numerous essays on literature or on art, because the Ästhetische Theorie provides a compendious, albeit non-systematic, account of his thought on the subject as it developed from the early 1960s until his death. In works paying attention only to the Ästhetische Theorie, however, it is often remarked that Adorno does not address himself to particular artworks. This objection, while true of the Ästhetische Theorie, ignores the detailed analyses of particular artworks which are to be found in the prolific writings on literature, art and music. It is characteristic of contemporary research that only one book has tackled exclusively Adorno's Noten zur Literatur,<sup>45</sup> although by excluding the solely theoretical writings, such an approach gives a one-sided view of Adorno's work. In order to avoid the lopsidedness of these differing approaches, the following analysis will draw both on the Ästhetische Theorie and on Adorno's numerous essays. Such eclecticism is of paramount importance for the critical reconstruction of Adorno's thought, as his theoretical statements are derived from his prior study of individual artworks.

The fact that these 'empirical' studies are in the form of essays rather than lengthy tracts should not detract from their quality; indeed, according



to Adorno's logic it should enhance it. On various occasions he championed the cause of essay-writing, seeing in the essay a fragmentary procedure which was appropriate to a fragmented society,<sup>46</sup> and which desisted from subsuming the subject matter under concepts foreign to it.<sup>47</sup> The essay's weaknesses, he argued, were weaknesses of non-identity itself when viewed from the perspective of a dominatory logic and should not, therefore, be held against it.<sup>48</sup> The reliance on Adorno's essays means ignoring, for the moment, the various charges made against such an approach: namely that in the essays in question sociological questions are collapsed into aesthetic problems,<sup>49</sup> that no dividing line is made in the theory between art and society when studying the artwork,<sup>50</sup> that the essays are, in fact, not about artworks but trace social antagonisms or the physiognomy of society within artworks,<sup>51</sup> and, finally, that the interpretations Adorno offers are foisted arbitrarily on the artworks under scrutiny.<sup>52</sup> The omission of the majority of Adorno's writings on music is in part a result of their somewhat technical nature (although the Alban Berg monograph is a notable exception here), but also because there is a wealth of data to be gleaned from the other essays. Music is all too often seen as the sole basis of Adorno's aesthetics, so that by centring on Adorno's essays on literature and art a modest counter-balance will be established.

It is necessary at the outset to define what Adorno meant by the term 'aesthetics' and in what way it is to be differentiated from his writings on art. His writings on aesthetics are concerned with the theory of art, whereas his writings on art, while applying a theory, address artworks themselves. The difference between a concept of art and a concept of aesthetics becomes more marked once one looks at the definitions Adorno offered. He stated categorically that art resisted any definition, for it could only be defined in relation to its past and/or future or negatively in its opposition to reality.<sup>54</sup> However, it could not be considered to be completely part of that reality, as vulgar Marxists and empirical art sociologists suggest, for it was more than the sum of existing artworks: "Sondern Kunst

selber hat gegenüber dem bloß Seienden...zum Wesen, Wesen und Bild zu sein."<sup>55</sup> Equally, art could not be regarded as purely that which went to make up its material,<sup>56</sup> for it required thought to decipher that matter and its forming. In other words, Adorno maintained that art could not be defined positively but had to be viewed not only by taking society into consideration but also by means of a theory of its material, namely aesthetics.

It was possible, however, to define aesthetics, unlike its object of inquiry, but Adorno provided only a definition of what aesthetics could be at present, not of what it was as a discipline:

Die Fähigkeit Kunstwerke von innen, in der Logik ihres Produziertseins zu sehen - eine Einheit von Vollzug und Reflexion,...ist wohl die allein mögliche Gestalt von Ästhetik heute. 57

Aesthetics had thereby to view art not just historically - in connection with a theory of the present - but also to pay attention to each artwork's 'internal content' (what Adorno termed its 'Gehalt'),<sup>58</sup> by which he meant both 'form' and 'content' in their traditional usage. Adorno defined aesthetics not just in its temporal 'how' but also according to what it did in observing and analysing the internal content of a work. Aesthetics, he claimed, reflected on the object 'art' and its transformation by the artist's adaptive use of the artistic material as well as on the time and place of production. In so doing aesthetics brought to life the process that had originally been involved in artistic production, and as a consequence, aesthetic knowledge could be accorded an important epistemological status:

Erkenntnis von Kunst heißt, den vergegenständlichten Geist durchs Medium der Reflexion hindurch abermals in seinem flüssigen Aggregatzustand zu versetzen. 59

Adorno therefore defined aesthetics as follows: "Ästhetik heißt soviel wie den Bedingungen und Vermittlungen der Objektivität von Kunst nachgehen."<sup>60</sup>

Precisely what he understood by 'objectivity' remains to be seen, but it is possible to say at this point that such a definition of aesthetics steels it against any reduction to a pursuit of the beautiful,<sup>61</sup> and also locates

it in the same philosophical, epistemological frame as negative dialectics, between Kantian and Hegelian thought.<sup>62</sup> Parallelling his siting of negative dialectics between transcendental and historical relativity, Adorno's aesthetics is situated theoretically between viewing art from the standpoint of the observer/beholder and seeing it as an embodiment of some transcendental property (i.e. of history) that is sublated in the artist's moulding of the artistic material. Adorno's aesthetics, like Kant and Hegel's thought on the subject, addresses the art-work, but does so in order to analyse the manner in which the piece of art is a product of labour; i.e. it examines the transcendental qualities present in an artwork's production which then in part determine the manner of its observation by others.<sup>63</sup>

Aesthetics, to Adorno's mind, had therefore to study what he termed the 'historically-sedimented' content of the artwork, i.e. its transcendental properties, and the manner in which this was handled by the producer according to an internal, 'artistic' logic. This indicates once more Adorno's rejection of any aesthetics based on empirical sociology or Stalinist dialectic, and of idealist variants which discussed the artwork's beauty without attempting to explain how that beauty was produced. The aesthetics Adorno devised consequently rested on both of the fundamental propositions of Dialektik der Aufklärung and Negative Dialektik: it was founded on a 'second reflection' of objectivity and on avoiding any historical, sociological or idealist reductionism. In other words, it took the socio-philosophical assumptions of Dialektik der Aufklärung and Negative Dialektik into account in its very theoretical structure. What needs to be examined therefore is the problems these assumptions posed for Adorno's definition of art and the manner in which the two fundamental notions that informed Dialektik der Aufklärung were located in his aesthetics.

### 3. Artistic Autonomy, Objectivity and Technics

Art was in Adorno's definition the social antithesis of society, but could not be defined by or deduced completely from society.<sup>64</sup> That is to

say, although antithetic it was of the same social structure as society and therefore formed a dialectic with it. (If this were not the case an historical materialist understanding of art would be impossible, as art would be situated in a sphere independent of society and thereby idealist.) This opposition to society meant that, in Adorno's view, art's existence was always problematic, in that it wished to be of society and yet to oppose it. Consequently, all the properties he detected in art are not only to be understood positively but they are also to be seen as negative. Indeed, frequently he described art in terms of diametrically opposed concepts, with art sliding from one pole to the other in the course of its problematic existence. Something in art prevented it being deduced simply from its social substance and existence, for otherwise this would mean that art possessed no 'in-itself'. Rather, art was mediated by the dominant social whole at the time of its production,<sup>65</sup> and the expression of this within the work's interior was the primary social quality of the artwork. Adorno argued:

Die Immanenz der Gesellschaft im Werk ist das wesentliche gesellschaftliche Verhältnis der Kunst, nicht die Immanenz von Kunst in der Gesellschaft. 66

Adorno thus defined the real relation to society as one discernible within the artwork, not external to it. This definition was intimately bound up with his judgement of art's position under capitalism as being one of 'autonomy' and with his suggestion that art possessed a 'double character', for the artwork was both 'autonomous' and yet also part of society in that it was a fait social.

Artworks were autonomous because they obeyed their own internal artistic logic and opposed their mere pleasurable consumption<sup>67</sup> rather than being subject completely to the law and logic of commodities. Adorno defined 'autonomy' in an inversion of the Kantian maxim on purposiveness as "Zweckmäßigkeit ohne Zwecke."<sup>68</sup> Adorno argued that artworks opposed society by rejecting a 'positive' purpose<sup>69</sup> and were therefore autonomous for they

did not follow the external purpose of society - the market - but obeyed an internal purpose. Their purposiveness consisted of their being internally structured in such a fashion as to ensure that rather than the general dominating the particular, the two coincided. In other words, it was from its autonomy that the artwork derived those negative properties which Marcuse had contrasted to its affirmative existence, and as such autonomy was specific to bourgeois art. Adorno highlighted the innate negative stance of art in his statement:

Die rücksichtslose Autonomie der Werke, die der Anpassung an dem Markt und dem Verschleiß sich entzieht, wird unwillkürlich zum Angriff. 70

However, this inherent negativity was problematic for art, in that it prevented art from intervening in society. This is not to say that the concept of autonomy can be equated with the doctrine of l'art pour l'art, but rather that the production of the artwork, the very manner in which the content is formed, involving vestiges of art's magical origin,<sup>71</sup> prevents its absorption into society. Since autonomy is deemed to be necessary if art is to be transcendent of society and thus genuine, Adorno indirectly equates genuine, or as he termed it 'authentic', art with autonomous art.<sup>72</sup> What is more, since autonomous art is produced only under liberal capitalism we seem to be concerned exclusively with bourgeois art. This equation of art with bourgeois autonomous art is borne out in his concept of the 'modern'.

Adorno explicated the nature of 'modern' art both socio-historically and aesthetically. He discerned the origins of modern art in Charles Baudelaire's Fleurs du Mal which has led some commentators to suggest that Adorno located the inception of modern art in 1850 at the beginning of high capitalism,<sup>73</sup> although according to Adorno the origins of its antithesis, the culture industry, date back to the early 18th century.<sup>74</sup> Adorno argued that Baudelaire had attempted to grasp the essence of the 'modern',<sup>75</sup> that is, to describe the essence of the French society in which he had lived, by creating

completely 'artificial' art. Modern art must therefore be judged to have arisen within liberal capitalism and to have ceased with the advent of state capitalism and a fully-fledged culture industry, for at this juncture autonomous art would have become theoretically impossible.

As his remarks on Baudelaire suggest, Adorno determined the nature of modern art according to its internal production. The modern, he suggested, sought to establish "das historisch Fortgeschrittene, Neueste als das zu bewährende Urphänomen."<sup>76</sup> Elsewhere he defined this as treating art's material in such a fashion as to create an 'objectivity of the second power',<sup>77</sup> by means of "Mimesis ans Verhärtete und Entfremdete."<sup>78</sup> Modern art, in other words, applies the programme of negative dialectics to itself via an internal, artistic logic. In this respect it cannot be equated with autonomy, for Adorno held Goethe's works to exhibit such autonomy and yet to be traditional. According to Adorno, contemporary art reflected and elaborated on such a logic primarily through its relation to tradition. Because Adorno assessed tradition to be the earlier existence of this artistic logic in artworks, an artwork's reflection of tradition was concomitantly a reflection on the nature of such logic. An artwork could therefore be judged to follow artistic tradition when it adhered to such internal logicality.<sup>79</sup> Tradition's use of immanent artistic logic allowed a relation between material and artwork to be established that was self-evident and clear. Owing to the universal 'veil of blindness', Adorno stated, contemporary art had lost any such self-evident relationship and had to reflect on this loss by reflecting on tradition:

An dem avancierten Bewußtsein wäre es, das Verhältnis zum Vergangenen zu korrigieren, nicht indem der Bruch beschönigt wird, sondern indem man dem Vergänglichen am Vergangenen das Gegenwärtige abzwängt und keine Tradition unterstellt. 80

The old use of artistic logic can thus only be understood correctly if placed in relation to the present, for it enables the contemporary artist to realise that a change in the relation between artwork and material or between artwork and society has occurred. Adorno's concept of modernity parallels Benjamin's discussion of the artwork's auratic property both in

the above argumentation and at another level. The concept leads, via Adorno's reflections on historical change, to a questioning of art's physical relation to society. Similarly, Benjamin's analysis foresaw a new relation of art to society, one in which auratic art ceased to exist. The concept of modernity and the era of auratic art thus coincide at this point both chronologically and logically.<sup>81</sup>

Adorno took up this problematic existence of autonomous art in the Ästhetische Theorie, which he commenced by problematising the contemporary artwork in a vein strikingly similar to the first statement of Negative Dialektik:

Zur Selbstverständlichkeit wurde, daß nichts, was die Kunst betrifft, mehr selbstverständlich ist, weder in ihr noch in ihrem Verhältnis zum Ganzen, nicht einmal ihr Existenzrecht. 82

That the problematisation of art's existence is not deduced from theory alone but from a study of historical change is emphasised in Adorno's essay on post-war cultural criticism and society where he stated: "nach Auschwitz ein Gedicht zu schreiben, ist barbarisch."<sup>83</sup> Faced by the culture industry, as described in Dialektik der Aufklärung, the autonomous artwork's existence was endangered: "Dem reinen Werk droht Verdinglichung und Gleichgültigkeit."<sup>84</sup> The universal 'veil of blindness' prevented an image of society being produced that was able to depict the truth of society as had been possible in the age of autonomous art. Since it cannot aspire to portraying truth in such a manner the existence of art is itself cast into doubt unless it can find a new way of penetrating the veil in order to gain access to truth and then depicting it. The problem presented itself to Adorno as one of the end of autonomous art, i.e. it rests on the hypothesis that the culture industry in particular and state capitalism in general destroy the basis for the truth of autonomous art, and thus destroy art itself. Since art was defined as mediated by the social whole, social theory's problems thus become aesthetic theory problems.

It must be said that Adorno neglected to analyse any forms of autonomous art within the culture industry, for he saw this as by definition impossible, since under the culture industry art was deprived of autonomy. However, in

this context Adorno also ignored the empirical, institutional and institutionalised framework of high culture art in its concrete social existence after 1945, which leaves him open to the charge that his equation of autonomous art with art produced under liberal capitalism could only be bought at the cost of an ahistorical approach. He sacrifices the phenomenon of art for the noumenon of 'artistic truth'. Indeed, an admission of the continued existence of autonomous art (or art at all) would have challenged the thesis that society was closed and yet it was precisely to prove this by means of art's truth content that Adorno granted the noumenon impunity when confronted by the culture industry. That art could continue to exist as 'true' art in any fashion, he declared, was a consequence of its 'double character', i.e. the resistance the artwork offered to the closed world derived from its dual existence as fait social and as autonomous. He juxtaposed the autonomous character based in the immanent, artistic logic of the artwork to the work as fait social (a product that is sold). Yet precisely this juxtaposition ensured its affirmative nature:

Indem die Kunstwerke der Empirie sich entgegensetzen, gehorchen sie deren Kräften, die gleichsam das geistige Gebilde abstoßen, es auf sich selbst zurückwerfen. 85

He drew two conclusions from this. Firstly, because the affirmative character had become so overpowering under the culture industry of late capitalism, art had to deny its commodity-character - its fait social - by renouncing social communicability.<sup>86</sup> Secondly, art had no need to reflect society in a Lukácsian sense, for its truth content depended just as much on the fact that it was part of society as that it still obeyed its autonomous, aesthetic logic. Neither of these points can be clarified, nor can the question of art's claim to a truth content be made more specific until the (somewhat nebulous) notions of objectivity and material constantly implied in the above argument as well as their foundation in 'aesthetic logic' have been examined more closely.

Adorno viewed objectivity in the artwork as informed by a triangular relationship between producer, technics and material, a relationship which, for



its part, was determined by contemporary society and yet also predicated by art: "Nichts in der Kunst, ... was nicht aus der Welt stammte; nichts daraus unverwandelt."<sup>87</sup> In other words, the above triad both brings society into the artwork and yet is also the means by which the artwork is qualitatively more than the sum-total of its social determinations. Expressed theoretically this relationship presents itself as one of subjectification as well as objectification. Objectivity was, in Adorno's eyes, only attainable in an artwork if this was permeated by subjectivity, i.e. subjectivity was the location of an artwork's objectivity,<sup>88</sup> or, as Adorno put it:

Die Negativität des Subjekts als wahre Gestalt von Objektivität kann nur in radikal subjektiver Gestaltung, nicht in der Supposition vermeintlich höherer Objektivität sich darstellen. 89

Objectivity was formed therefore by the retention of subjective expression in the artwork. Such objectification by means of the artist presenting the matter of the artwork in such a manner that his subjective forming of that matter was readily visible was the sole guarantee of objectivity according to the understanding of the terms offered by Negative Dialektik. This subjective objectification is not equatable with the intention of the artist - intentionality involves domination but occurs only at the point at which subjective intention ceases. Adorno's position, therefore, opposes the superimposition of form on an artwork as was practised by the Formalists.

Adorno designated the internal content to be the central point of such activity. Thus in a sense the artist becomes a functionary of the tasks thrown up by the artistic material he works upon in that he tries to stamp the material with his individuality and to follow the steps necessitated by the artistic logic. The tasks thus embody the relation between art and society, for artistic logic reflects on what art has to be like in order to avoid becoming completely fait social and in so doing is socially determined.<sup>90</sup> The necessity of adhering to the artistic logic ensures that subjectivity is not in itself a guarantee of either objectivity or aesthetic quality except when objectified in the artwork's material. In

this manner Adorno narrows the term objectivity to mean a state in which nothing in the artwork appears accidental (in terms of artistic whim), but where all the details seem, and indeed are, necessary from the artist's and the artwork's point of view.

Adorno grounded this concept of objectivity in two properties, spirit ('Geist') and collectivity. An artwork's spirit, he stated, was its 'immanent mediation', a quality by virtue of which artworks became more in their appearance than the sum of their factual parts. Put differently, it is the spirit which enables the artwork to prefigure something metaphysical and by means of which the artwork opposes external physical reality. The objectivity of the work, its internal consistency, both results from this opposition and informs it. Spirit must be understood, therefore, to be the predominantly 'intellectualised' or 'transcendental' character of the physical object 'art'. However sensuous the artwork appeared to be, Adorno claimed, its meaning nevertheless remained ideational and could only be unravelled by comprehending its intellectual 'becoming',<sup>91</sup> what he termed the artwork's 'process character'. Spirit is accordingly that which permeates each part of the artwork and fuses it into a whole.

Adorno based the objectivity of this intellectual character of art in the language out of which artworks were constructed, although this restricted the applicability of his analysis to literature.<sup>92</sup> The objectification of subjective knowledge passed through a language which was by nature collective, for it had developed via interaction. By being founded in such language, artworks became based in collectivity. This collective character gave a certain transcendent objectivity to the subjective production of artworks over and above its spirit. It was the objectivity that resulted from spirit and collectivity, Adorno proposed, which ensured that artworks contained truth in a variety of ways.

The shape such objectivity took in practice was situated by Adorno not in the content used to produce the artwork but in the forming of it. The forming of the artwork determined whether it could appear as truly incom-

patible with a 'false' society and occurred via the agency of style, of which Adorno stated: "In Wahrheit sind sie (artworks) Kraftfelder, in denen der Konflikt zwischen der anbefohlenen Norm und dem ausgetragen wird, was in ihnen Laut sucht."<sup>93</sup> In other words, to Adorno's mind the forming of the objective artwork from a subjective artistic view consisted of a battle fought between stylistic tradition and what the artwork wished to say. The stylistic form resulting from this conflict was the very basis of non-identity in the artwork in that it allowed the portrayal of both objectivity and historical specificity. Adorno suggested that as a consequence "Form konvergiert mit Kritik. Sie ist das an den Kunstwerken, wodurch diese sich als kritisch in sich selbst erweisen..."<sup>94</sup> By virtue of their form artworks criticized society and yet criticized their own inability to change society without their ceasing to be art. This dual criticism centred around form reflecting on past traditions of form (its historicity) the subjective attempt to create a new aesthetic image in the working of the artistic material relevant to society now. This fusion generated an objective form which involved a truth about society (i.e. its difference to past society) and concomitantly portrayed that truth because the artist as historically-specific in time and place could only couch his view of art in one particular form (a view also by definition socially and historically specific). In this manner, Adorno proposed, the artwork became internally a force-field between past and present, from which, therefore, the state of the present (as contemporary society) could be abstracted:

Nur in der Kristallisation des eigenen Formgesetzes, nicht in der passiven Hinnahme der Objekte konvergiert Kunst mit dem Wirklichen. Erkenntnis ist in ihr durch und durch ästhetisch vermittelt. 95

The aesthetic truth (of the 'objective' artwork) and the sociological truth (of the society in which the artwork is 'objective') converge in Adorno's deduction of truth from form. That this truth is bought at a certain cost is unavoidable, for aesthetic form sanitises the artwork, permitting its ready consumption. Form is thus a negative and positive quality.

Adorno labelled artworks 'monads' on account of this objective truth which

they carried within them. In its Leibnizian meaning the monad was the smallest possible unit from which a body was constructed. In social terms this corresponded to the isolated individual who was aware of his social nature and yet also reflected society's composition. The monad was simultaneously physical and intellectual and was thus a symbol of subjective objectification: "Erst durch Subjektivierung wird die Objektivation des Kunstwerks, als einer in sich durchgeformten Monade, recht möglich."<sup>96</sup> Artworks were, owing to their objectification, 'windowless' - they were not consciously aware of being social indicators - and yet they presented ('vorstellen') as microcosms society as it was at the time of their production. In this context Adorno differentiated a further, more abstract level of objectivity from that permitted by the form adopted by the artist. Art, like every individual, was social in character; it was internally a mediation of the intellectual subject with the sensuous social object. In this respect, the artwork mirrored the problematic constitution of individuality mentioned in Dialektik der Aufklärung. There, individuality was conceived of as being part subject and part object. Adorno and Horkheimer had argued that the object-side had come to dominate the subjective wishes of the individual. Artworks, Adorno suggested, openly discussed - and therefore overcame - this purported division in that the form was a balance between subjective and objective forces and therefore presented a picture of second reflection. This is Adorno's final definition of objectivity.

Adorno further grounded the artwork's objectivity in his concept of artistic material. The artistic material of which artworks were formed was 'sedimented history'. Material, that is the language, form, notes, colours etc. (all intimately connected to traditions in art's history) used in producing an artwork, embodied the state of their historical development and therefore were not neutral, each having evolved owing to specific causes which were reflected in their present composition. Adorno argued that to use this material correctly would entail treating it as historical and endeavouring to develop it beyond its present state: "Fortgeschrittenes

Bewußtsein versichert sich des Materialstandes, in dem Geschichte sich sedimentiert bis zu dem Augenblick, auf den das antwortet."<sup>97</sup> Adorno based this notion of material as an all-embracing category for artistic production on Negative Dialektik's construction of the 'object':

Das Objekt öffnet sich einer monadologischen Insistenz, das Bewußtsein der Konstellation ist, in der es steht: die Möglichkeit zur Versenkung ins Innere bedarf jenes Äußeren. Solche immanente Allgemeinheit des Einzelnen aber ist objektiv als sedimentierte Geschichte. 98

As we have seen, Adorno's concepts of spirit, objectivity, form, and the monadological character of art all accord with this definition of the object in that they embrace the history and matter of this production of the artwork. Adorno's conception of artistic material thus provides a further, more general foundation of the historical objectivity of the individual artwork. Adorno thereby implants a general social category of historicity in a specific aesthetic context and yet in so doing obscures whether such historicity is specifically authentic or not. He does not state whether the sedimented history of the material is apparent in the artwork or not, although he assumed this to be the case for authentic artworks. In this manner the concept of material signifies yet another rejection of any need for direct social commentary within the text, because social commentary is present willy nilly in the artwork from the very moment it is created out of material. Adorno thus conceives of the production of artworks, i.e. the forming ('Gestaltung') of the material, in keeping with Marx's Introduction to a Critique of Political Economy, for the material's shaping determines from the outset what consumption of the artwork is possible.

Adorno compensated for the generality of his concept of material by restricting it to that which is worked on by 'technics' ('Technik'), a concept which embraces the act of forming the artistic material into an artwork. Technics is a broad term that describes the composition and construction of the artwork, the creation of the artistic as well as the productive forces which Adorno perceives in art. Only via technics, he stated, could

the intention of the objective material be realised, a view which allocated a key role to the development of the technical productive forces in the construction of objective truth in art. By exercising this function technics served as the mediator of the artwork's content and its objective appearance; it was the force that tried to balance the two so that one did not impose itself on the other. Adorno had in passing thus formulated an argument that refuted any aesthetics based on a notion of the artist as 'genius', since technics could not be attributed to brilliant insight, but rather to craftsmanship. Technics was related temporally and spatially to the society in which it occurred:

Im Stand der jeweiligen Technik reicht die Gesellschaft in die Werke hinein. Zwischen den Techniken der materiellen und künstlerischen Produktion herrschen weit engere Affinitäten, als die wissenschaftliche Arbeitsteilung zur Kenntnis nimmt. 99

Adorno did not define the nature of this 'affinity' any closer, thereby leaving unspecified just how social and artistic technics were related. Technics had to be left undetermined in this respect, for only thus was Adorno able to grant it a certain 'metaphysical' property that would otherwise have been reduced to the physical. He contended that it was the technics which made the artwork metaphysical and from which it was constituted. Furthermore, technics rendered artworks not only rational but also non-conceptual ('begriffslos').<sup>100</sup>

By virtue of these characteristics, technics, despite being social, created a truth that was transcendent for it protested the present society by being non-dominative:

Das Organisierte der Werke ist gesellschaftlicher Organisation entliehen: worin sie diese transzendieren, ist ihr Einspruch gegen das Organisationsprinzip selbst, gegen Herrschaft über innere und auswendige Natur. 101

Technics was non-dominative precisely because it reconciled the artwork's social appearance with the objective artistic content in such a manner that neither part was over-emphasised at the expense of the other.

Adorno leaves this definition vague in order to be able to depict one

specific relation as existing, although this cannot be determined more closely, namely the relation between the non-identical technics of art and dominative social technics.

The realm of technics can be subdivided into the creation of artistic expression, the artwork's construction and the question of 'productive forces'. Adorno opposed expression to the appearance of wholeness that an autonomous artwork offered or rather faked, for expression was in his view the mark of subjectivity, of individuality in the artwork, i.e. of the particular within that whole. The expression contained in an artwork was thus to be equated with the artist's choice of form in the presentation of content (which evidences the inter-determination of Adorno's various concepts). Because the above process meant that the artist's particularity was bound and subject to the artistic material, it designated and expressed individuality forcibly reconciled with the totality. Thus Adorno defined expression as the dissonant within the whole,<sup>102</sup> or as the opposing and yet generative force within the artwork.<sup>103</sup> Such individuality in autonomous art was threatened, however, by the present 'construction' of the artwork. In order to defend itself against the culture industry's tentacles, Adorno argued, the artwork had to seal itself off by being so constructed that each part within it was subsumed under the whole.<sup>104</sup> Expression was then exhibited by the individuality of the artwork as an individual entity in opposition to the culture industry as the 'false' whole. However, the expressivity of an artwork was thereby limited to something outside itself and its individuality became degraded to the global opposition of art to society. Like most of his concepts, Adorno's notion of expression flips over into a concept of non-expression once he takes the culture industry into consideration. The concept is thus dialectical in that it contains its antithesis within it.

Construction can be understood to refer in Adorno's work to a rational composition of the artwork which permits the lines of its rational manufacture to be visible to the beholder. Thorough construction, Adorno proposed,

i.e. the complete alignment of parts and whole as was necessitated by the onslaught of the culture industry, concealed a deep problem for autonomous art. It forced the artwork to forego inner tension between parts and whole by imposing internally a 'primacy of inter-connectedness',<sup>105</sup> i.e. spirit dominated the material rather than taking the latter's needs into account. Contemporary artworks became, in this sense, paradoxical, for it forfeited its right to be art, and yet the manner of its continued existence was contained in this very paradox:

Das Spannungsfeld aller fortschrittlichen Kunst heute ist geradezu definiert durch die Pole radikaler Konstruktion und ebenso radikaler Auflehnung gegen sie: oft geht beides ineinander über. 106

In other words, the construction of autonomous artworks had, prior to the birth of the culture industry, achieved a balance between expression and content whereas at present it was forced to reify construction so as to avoid slipping into the snares of the culture industry.

The fact that the presence of the culture industry alters the artwork's necessary construction implies that it also endangers the existence of any specifically artistic productive forces. Adorno's own argument thus reopens the question of technics, understood as the productive forces of art, and their relation to society. Adorno had conceived of technics, seen in terms of the productive forces of art, as only being possible once the artwork had become autonomous:

Erst nachdem die Technik nicht mehr unmittelbar am gesellschaftlichen Gebrauch sich maß, wurde sie recht zur Produktivkraft: ihre arbeitsteilige, methodische Trennung von der Gesamtgesellschaft war die Bedingung ihrer gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung nicht anders als in der materiellen Produktion. 107

Leaving aside Adorno's allusion to technical development as class development, it is clear that he correlated the development of technics with the change in the social position that art underwent as a result of the simultaneous change to a capitalist society. He did not, then, equate artistic productive forces with material productive forces. The causal logic may be the same in the determination of each, but Adorno did not derive the



artistic from its material counterpart, except to the extent that he considered the material productive forces to themselves bring about a division of labour.

Except when speaking of Bach, who lived on the border between feudal and capitalist modes of production,<sup>108</sup> Adorno never stretched the relation of the artistic productive forces to society any further than in the above definition. Society was considered to determine artistic autonomy, and thus the productive relations of art, in accordance with the material relations of production themselves, but was not seen to control what the productive forces of art were. In this fashion Adorno conceived of the culture industry largely as having effected an alteration in the artistic production relations. The change Adorno outlined can be correlated to the changes in the economy Pollock had detected, for in the sphere of artistic production Adorno deduced an end to autonomy from the presence of the culture industry.<sup>109</sup>

Adorno did not use the term aesthetic productive forces very specifically.<sup>110</sup> Although locating these historically in the bourgeois era, and restricting them to the bourgeois artwork's production - since they arose out of the artwork's autonomy - he did not define their relation to society any closer other than to mention that they 'paralleled', 'converged with', 'coincided with' or 'bore an affinity to' the material productive forces.<sup>111</sup> Perhaps this indicates the inherent limitations of any historical materialist theory of art, for if aesthetics relates the two kinds of productive forces more directly it reduces the artwork to being nothing more than a commodity and cannot find 'truth' or even 'beauty' (assuming it must) within it.<sup>112</sup> But by leaving the relationship vague aesthetics must remain equally unsatisfactory in logical terms. Adorno recognised this problem and so addressed the 'materiality' of the artwork itself. This shift of focus was, however, itself not free of problems. By defining the 'Modern' in terms of the origins of the aesthetic productive forces, and then seeing the

task of the artist to be the application of these forces to the material, Adorno implied that progress within art was linear, if not indeed automatic, in respect of the productive forces. Because of Adorno's omission of any notion of productive relations specific to art alone, these must be judged to interact with the production relations only when society changes. Hence, the autonomous artwork's productive forces are seen as emancipatory, and yet it is precisely autonomy itself which inhibits these from having any effect on society as a whole. The relation between the affirmative and negative character of art is drawn anew in Adorno's work as consisting of the inherent contradiction between the productive forces developed in art and the overall passivity of the artwork. Adorno elaborated very specific artistic categories in order to be able to define the relation between art and society in terms of the internal structuration and production of the artwork, from which he then derived the concepts of objectivity and truth content. These last were, in turn, used to define art in the first instance. The intentional circularity of Adorno's approach becomes apparent in this sequence. Furthermore, the specificity of his various categories must not be allowed to divert attention away from the imprecise nature of Adorno's project. It is unclear whether or not 'artistic logic' is to be defined as the inherent logic of the objective conditions of the material available, i.e. the manner in which the material demands to be applied only in a certain form if it is to remain objective. According to what criteria and by whom are these demands defined? Such a definition also means that in order to write a novel now, it is first necessary to study the depiction of society in previous novels and to deduce from these new modifications to be made to writing now so as to describe present society in the material as opposed to merely giving expression to the stage of society previously operative in informing the material. Writing would virtually become a pursuit of the literary historian if this were the case.

Immanent artistic logic may appear to be specified in Adorno's categories of technics, material and objectivity, but for all the finesse of Adorno's argument as to a particular artwork's temporal appropriateness the definition verges on dissolving into the empty claim that 'art innately has to be so and not otherwise'. To some extent this problem of specificity is not restricted to Adorno's aesthetics alone, but is shared by historical materialist aesthetics as a whole. I shall now turn, therefore, to an examination of the concepts of ideology and truth that Adorno extrapolated from his conception of the artwork's constitution, in order to determine whether these help explain or even overcome the general overall imprecision of his otherwise specific categories.

#### 4. Art, Ideology and Truth

Using the concepts of objectivity, artistic material and aesthetic technics Adorno was able to construct a concept of ideology as false consciousness in art. He thereby designated an artist's attitude as ideological if the latter allowed the societal forces and relations of production to impose themselves on the internal artistic productive forces, thus limiting the validity of the artwork's internal logic: "Ideologisch ist Musik, wo die Produktionsverhältnisse in ihr über die Produktivkräfte den Primat erlangen."<sup>113</sup> Art was to Adorno's mind ideological wherever social rather than artistic factors governed the artwork, be it through the agency of the artist superimposing his subjectivity on the work's objectivity or be it by his according contemporary social preferences an overriding influence in the shaping of the artwork. The first case would not only mean that the artist treated his subjectivity as something ahistorical and thus absolute, it would also signify an overpowering of construction by expression. The second case simply entailed problems in the immanent construction of an artwork because the artwork pandered to social wishes rather than adhering to the task of establishing an internal balance between expression and material. This involved the artist not comprehending the objectivity of art and had as its consequence the reification of the artwork's

productive forces. Similarly, anyone viewing an artwork of this type would gain a false estimation of the relation that should obtain between forces and relations of production.

In the light of this definition of ideology, a 'true' artwork would show ex negativo the present use of the forces of production to be negative in the sense that the real potentiality of these is more than the present, dominated use to which they are put. (Adorno's conflation of tradition and the remembrance of suffering are to be understood in this context.)

The appreciation of part artworks is centred on knowing that the artistic productive forces are conditioned by production relations (i.e. autonomy) and are thus prohibited from pertaining to a social use, just as material productive forces have been chained to capitalist production relations and have been prevented from obviating real suffering.

Before examining Adorno's determination of true productive forces more closely, an outline of his notion of 'true' consciousness must be given in some detail, for a concept of false consciousness necessarily presupposes a knowledge of correct consciousness. Adorno arrived at a concept of ideology as a false use of the artistic productive forces by an immanent examination of the artwork. However, this last analysis centred on his reliance on a notion of potentiality which conjoined immanent criticism and an ideology critique. Only in this way was Adorno able to define an artwork as true if in producing it the artist had not imposed his subjective needs on the material, but had made use of the material as, in conjunction with history, it innately required. Adorno remarked:

Die Einziehung der ästhetischen Distanz im Roman, und damit dessen Kapitulation vor der übermächtigen und nur noch real zu verändernden, nicht im Bilde zu verklärenden Wirklichkeit, wird erheischt von dem, wohin die Form von sich aus möchte. 114

Accordingly, the artist could not surrender to the (subjective) wishes of his audience or public, but had to stand fast against the temptation to sacrifice objectivity to consumerism, for consumerism formed one of the contemporary material relations of production:

Der soziale Gehalt von Kunstwerken selbst liegt zuweilen, etwa konventionellen und verhärteten Bewußtseinsformen gegenüber, gerade im Protest gegen soziale Rezeption; von einer historischen Schwelle an, die in der Mitte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts zu suchen wäre, ist das bei autonomen Gebilden geradezu die Regel. 115

Adorno contended further that the immanent logicality of an artwork's construction would be prejudicially affected by it having a social message embedded within it. (On these grounds he attacked and abhorred both Sartrean 'engagement' as well as Lukács' preference for realism.)

To Adorno's mind direct inclusion of contemporary social reality in the artwork by a reproduction of external reality was ideological, because it denied or obscured the subjective transformation of such reality in the artwork through the medium of the artist.<sup>116</sup> Focussing an artwork on a didacticism foreign to it was also no better than this. Firstly, such a stance married the artwork to a particular social grouping - as in 'Tendenzliteratur' - detracting from its general nature as objective social material. Secondly, it evinced coercion within the internal construction of the artwork precipitated by the authorial wish to intervene directly in an external, social affair. However laudable such a wish might be, in the context of a society based on alienation,<sup>117</sup> if such authorial direction resulted in the material being dominated, then it had to be considered false. Such an intervention would imply a renunciation of autonomy and would therefore signify an imposition on the artistic productive forces.

Adorno argued:

Je weniger aber die Werke etwas verkünden müssen, was sie nicht ganz sich glauben können, so stimmiger werden sie auch selber: desto weniger brauchen sie ein Surplus dessen, was sie sagen, über das, was sie sind. 118

This rejection of engagement, realism and consumerism for the sake of the artwork's objectivity identifies such objectivity as the 'truth' of the artwork.

Adorno's argumentation with regard to 'true' consciousness and objectivity permits a preliminary investigation to be made of the connection he draws between immanent criticism and ideology critique. He grounded ideology

critique in immanent criticism's category of artistic productive forces. Because this category was not reducible to that of the material productive forces, it was able to open the way for a concept of the non-identity of society with society's own claims.<sup>119</sup> Authentic artworks are immanently true to the material they use and of which they are composed, and therefore they innately criticize and contest a false, ideological use of productive forces, be these by extension those of society or those specific to art.

In particular Adorno argued, contemporary society was characterised by a false use of the material productive forces. Therefore the compatibility of productive forces and relations which he denoted in authentic art was not only non-identical to the relationship between the two in society, but - more importantly - proved this last relationship to be false.

From the point of view of the individual beholder this relation can be described as follows. In society as a whole the individual views objects in the manner in which they appear to him or as they avail themselves to his manipulation of them. However, in artworks he encounters something that goes beyond this physical existence. Artworks, by dint of their being both social objects and metaphysical on account of their 'double character', project something more than they actually physically amount to, a process that was once referred to as art's 'magic'. The artworks thus challenge the common way of 'seeing' objects, for they can be shown (by immanent analysis) to be more than what they appear to be. In this sense Adorno insisted that the artwork "postuliert das Dasein eines nicht Daseienden,"<sup>120</sup> i.e. the artwork points toward a state where the subjectivity in man-made objects is not disguised. Immanent criticism thus preserves the non-identity of the artwork's construction with that of society and is thereby an ideology-critique. Whereas Negative Dialektik could only locate non-identity in thought qua praxis, artworks provide a concrete instance of it.<sup>121</sup> The production of artworks is therefore a 'true' activity, for artistic production centres on an 'Eingedenken' of subject and object, i.e. of technics and nature.

If, from the standpoint of its production, an artwork is non-identical, then surely the society in which it exists cannot be closed. From a sociological standpoint, art's presence therefore disproves the thesis of society's static nature; immanent criticism of the artwork becomes social theory in that it implies that non-identity can be founded, namely in art.<sup>122</sup> Adorno thus not only connected immanent criticism of the artwork with an ideology critique, he forged a unity of the two.

Because the category of artistic objectivity is opposed innately to societal falsehood, society, as the opposite of art, is unobjective and therefore ideological. Nevertheless, this is not to forget that art, in turn, is ideological in that it is a part of this ideological society. However, this ideological character has a positive side, for, by being both the opposite of society and part of it, art recreates an, admittedly ideational, dialectic of itself and society, observable by the individual.

The specific characteristics that were noted above as 'indeterminate' now come into their own. If the artistic productive forces had been reduced to material productive forces no juxtaposition of art and society would have been possible and Adorno would not have been able to prove the non-identical nature of society. Such deliberate prior indeterminacy, however, lends Adorno's aesthetics the tone of a circular, self-fulfilling prophecy. Moreover, any dynamism of society is restricted to theory in that the friction between artistic productive forces and social production relations in present society is not equatable with an awareness of such a conflict between social relations of production and social productive forces. Nevertheless, the non-identical quality of the artwork is perceivable for the observer and thus can function as the instigator of an awareness of the predominantly ideological character of society. The artwork is both a preserve for non-identity and a reason for rejecting society as it is together with its purported one-dimensionality. In this way art has a latent political meaning for Adorno, and thus needs to make no explicit political statements.

The theory of art once more comes to complement the theory of society, in

that art grounds the epistemology (in Negative Dialektik) in concrete reality by finding evidence for the existence of non-identity in a universe otherwise judged not to be dialectical. The non-identical can therefore be postulated and yet this reveals the paradoxical nature of Adorno's social theory, for the resolution of the problem of society's closed nature can only be thought of in a conception which denies precisely such closedness as having existed in the first place. The aesthetics Adorno presented, although complementing his philosophical anti-system, inadvertently disproves the starting point of his social theory, which makes his philosophy and the aesthetics itself redundant. The conception of social ideology derived from his analysis of the artwork shows the purpose of Adorno's aesthetics to be unnecessary.

The above notion of ideology allowed Adorno to locate an historically general concept of truth in art. The artistic productive forces, and by extension the artwork itself, were 'true', for they opposed ideology. The truth they revealed was - as we have seen - that society could not be closed because it contained art and art was not reducible to society, but rather possessed a potentiality that transcended its own appearance.<sup>123</sup>

Adorno stated that this general truth approximated to (sociological) knowledge:

Kunst erkennt... dadurch, daß sie vermöge ihrer autonomen Konstitution ausspricht, was von der empirischen Gestalt der Wirklichkeit verschleiert wird. 124

This is not to say that the artwork's location within the dialectic of the affirmative and the negative is suspended. Adorno did not, however, view this affirmative moment of art as necessarily false, but only as false in the sense that it was imposed on art by a false society; i.e. the fait social was not per se a negative feature:

Ist Affirmation tatsächlich ein Moment der Kunst, so war selbst sie so wenig je durchaus falsch wie die Kultur, weil sie mißlang, ganz falsch ist. 125

In fact, it was its affirmative character that allowed the artwork's internal structuring to conflict with society.<sup>126</sup> In other words, despite



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and yet also by virtue of their affirmative character, artworks remained 'true'.

Adorno's concept of truth functions as the criterion by which he judged artworks: a good artwork could not - by definition - be 'untrue'. Good or, to use Adorno's term, 'authentic' artworks had to fulfil those criteria in accordance with which artworks were able to lay claim to 'truth'; if they met the objective demands of the material, rejected their easy consumption and refrained from 'engagement'. By way of definition, we can say that Adorno believed the authentic artwork to be one which revealed the true non-identity of society,<sup>127</sup> i.e. the artwork had to uphold its non-ideological character. In so doing it negated the normative social system of the day regardless of whether this was the intention of the artist or not, for the artwork's truth content was contingent solely on the objectivity of the artwork's form in relation to the social structure at the time of its production.

With the exception of the assertion that the artist had to endeavour to do justice to the objective requirements of the artistic material Adorno did not derive the general sociological truth of art causally from the artist's subjective intentions. Correct development of artistic material was, nevertheless, not to be confused with an automatic guarantee of truth, for sociological truth arose from the general opposition of art to society (although the authenticity of an artwork cannot be grounded adequately in this relation). Adorno used the example of Schönberg's twelve-tone system to argue this point, for his later music, Adorno proposed, no longer furthered musical development. Adorno thus deduced the artwork's authenticity from its double character which, in turn, he based on the nature of artistic productive forces and the internal objectivity of artworks, for if he had derived an artwork's internal character from society he would in so doing have eradicated its opposition to society. Art's productive forces and its objectivity he held to survive and evolve according to art's autonomous character, in other words, on account of but not caused by art's social

character. In the final instance, Adorno deduced the general truth the authentic artwork offers from social instances although, with the term the double character of art, he tended to disguise this deduction as an interactive relation. This once again reveals the deeply problematic character of autonomy; it allows the artwork to uncover the truth about society and yet such autonomy is but part of that society.

Adorno's conceptualisation of the internal structuring of the artwork is not exhausted in his sociological categories. He put forward a further set of mutually determining concepts to explain the artwork, all of which point to a further truth content inherent in art over and above the sociological truth it provided. The concepts in question, namely the 'apparition' and the 'processual character' ('Prozeßcharakter') on the one hand and the artwork's 'enigmatic character' ('Rätselcharakter') and 'nominalism' on the other are founded in the artwork's objectivity, and provide an answer to the question as to what Adorno meant by 'artistic logic' when describing objectivity. However, objectivity cannot be considered as an a priori assumption on which these four concepts are based, for they underpin its character, and yet it has to be postulated as given in conceiving of them. Such argumentational circularity indicates the extent to which Adorno himself practises a non-reductionist logic although reference to this logic cannot excuse the problematic construction of Adorno's argument.

Adorno compared the immediacy of the artwork's relation to its consumer with an 'apparition', for the artwork only sparked off a feeling of immediate proximity, which then dissolved into nothingness. In this context Adorno described the artwork as a 'feu d'artifice', referring obliquely to the staggering beauty of a firework display that disappears in the very act of its appearing. He coupled this transient nature of artworks to the impossibility of any factual existence of immediacy:

In der industriellen Gesellschaft wird die lyrische Idee der sich wiederherstellenden Unmittelbarkeit, wofern sie nicht ohnmächtig romantisch Vergangenes beschwört, immer mehr zu einem jäh Aufblitzenden, in dem das Mögliche die eigene Unmöglichkeit überfliegt. 128

In this manner the apparition enabled subjectivity to be experienced in the artwork and consequently opposed domination in the form of objectification since, in this 'sparking off', the singularity of the artwork became apparent. In theoretical terms the apparition preserves a particularity which cannot be subsumed under a generality, thus creating a quality Adorno described in Negative Dialektik as 'hope'.<sup>129</sup> This resistance to its subsumption by the momentary, fleeting experience of subjectivity ensured that the artwork successfully prevented its incorporation into a linear logic or into society. The apparition inherent in authentic art obstructs the artwork's subjection to the principle of exchange-values, as momentary subjectivity provides little basis for commodification. In this sense the 'feu d'artifice' embodies a real use-value in opposition to current use-values.

This ability to create a real use-value - namely true subjectivity - by means of the apparition in the artwork is bound up with what Adorno labelled the artwork's 'processual character': "Das Kunstwerk ist Prozeß und Augenblick in eins."<sup>130</sup> The artwork was a process in that its content unfolded linearly, and yet this linear progression was generated by a continual reference to what had gone before,<sup>131</sup> i.e. progression through concentric circles. At each point the beholder of the artwork was able to stop and yet each point was only comprehensible in the context of the whole. The processual character therefore forged a unity or an identity of the non-identical (each separate point) and the identical (all those points as a whole). In this respect it described a non-subsumptive logic, yet one that can be experienced, because it is physically perceivable in art. Adorno stated: "Kunst erfahren heißt soviel wie ihres immanenten Prozesses gleichwie im Augenblick seines Stillstands innezuwerden."<sup>132</sup>

This experience of the non-identical as the non-subsumptive is the epistemological truth of art and it is this feature which Adorno saw as providing the symbol of real use-values. Both the apparition and the processual character guarantee that the artwork cannot be consumed as a commodity

because any consumption can only occur in the momentary 'sparking' of the subjective. The artwork is essentially 'useless', from which Adorno concluded that:

Die raison d'être aller autonomen Kunst...ist, daß einzig das Unnütze einsteht für das, was einmal das Nützliche wäre, der glückliche Gebrauch, Kontakt mit den Dingen jenseits der Antithese von Nutzen und Nutzlosigkeit. 133

In this inherent orientation towards the future the artwork prefigured by means of its 'intentionlessness'<sup>134</sup> a real use-value untainted by the need for exchange. It was internally structured not according to laws of sale and consumption but in line with the law of the preservation of singularity (which I shall term a 'non-subsumptive logic') that governed both apparition and processual character, i.e. the artwork's epistemological truth.

The concepts of the artwork's 'enigmatic character' and its 'nominalism' determine this 'non-subsumptive logic' from a different angle - not by analysing how the artwork is experienced, but by concentrating on the theoretical conceptualisation of such experience. Adorno held artworks to be enigmatic in the sense that they said something about society and yet hid what it was that they said, i.e. they identified the non-identical.<sup>135</sup> The artwork's purpose he thus defined as "die Bestimmtheit des Unbestimmten."<sup>136</sup>

This determination proceeds by means of the artwork's nominalism, an idea that derives from the Medieval mode of thought of the same name, which judged 'generals' (i.e. concepts) only to inhabit the mind and not physical reality. Adorno maintained that artworks were nominalist for they contained a multiplicity of meanings and were therefore not reducible to a general concept. He wrote of "die objektive Fülle von Bedeutungen..., die in jedem geistigen Phänomen verkapselt sind."<sup>137</sup> This nominalism ensured that, although the artwork determined something, it did so in a fashion that permitted the determinate 'thing' to be viewed in different ways. It left its object undetermined, which illustrates once again particularly in the notion of 'conceptualisation' that he used, the connection between aesthetics and negative dialectics.

Adorno attributed the artwork's internal indeterminateness to the language of art, which he regarded as non-significative.<sup>138</sup> Owing to art's use of such a language, each particular within the artwork remained a particular, despite its being part of the whole. The whole itself, Adorno argued, became a particular because it was run through by particularity:

Das Ganze jedoch wird, je mehr an Detail es absorbiert, seinerseits gleichsam zum Detail, zum Moment unter anderen, zur Einzelheit. 139

The artwork's nominalism thus guarantees the precedence of the object so important to Adorno in Negative Dialektik. Taken together nominalism and the enigmatic character, as well as the apparition and processual character, all serve to ground an 'non-subsumptive', 'aesthetic' logic within the interior of the artwork.

It is now possible, drawing on the above categories, to define 'aesthetic logic' more closely and to establish the epistemological truth content inherent in art that arises from it. We have already stated that the internal logic of the artwork is non-subsumptive in its treatment of the general and the particular, in its mediation of subjectivity and objectivity, as well as in the anti-dominative 'intentionlessness' of the fleeting appearance of immediacy that it offers in the process of its unfolding. The four categories create a constellation which describes 'artistic logic'. The artwork's truth content is, in this respect, Hegelian in origin, since it bears on the potentiality exhibited by certain components of the artwork and not on their present application alone. Adorno merged the point of view of the beholder and the internal structuring of the artwork in a manner that surpasses reception theory's one-sided approach and from this coalition he forges the pivot of artistic logic.

This artistic logic is to be seen most clearly in Adorno's definition of art's purposiveness (the basis of its autonomy):

Zweckmäßig sind die Werke in sich, ohne positiven Zweck jenseits ihrer Komplexion; ihre Zweckhaftigkeit aber legitimiert sich als Figur der Antwort aufs Rätsel. Durch Organisation werden die Werke mehr als sie sind. 140

The purpose of an artwork was thus not an instrumental one, but consisted

in merely its existence as an object to be beheld, to be contemplated. This external stance of anti-domination founded in its internal purposiveness evoked the artwork's opposition to society, a "Protest gegen die Herrschaft der Zwecke über die Menschen."<sup>141</sup> The artwork was an end in itself by virtue of its internal logical construction and its thoroughly subjectified objectification, i.e. its determination of the undetermined.<sup>142</sup> In its own reconciliation of parts and whole the artwork thereby offered internally an image of potential social reconciliation. In keeping with the logic of Negative Dialektik, Adorno considered such a construction of the parts and the whole to be rational, because it opposed the negative relation between the two that predominated in the closed society, and yet to oppose this relation the artwork had to imitate that society's logic of 'parts' and 'whole'.

This 'non-subsumptive logic' not only grounds the opposition of art to society but also informs the epistemological truth content of art which Adorno defined as follows: "Der Wahrheitsgehalt der Kunstwerke ist die objektive Auflösung des Rätsels."<sup>143</sup> The artistic logic defined the indeterminate by providing an image of how a 'non-subsumptive logic' functions, this image being its truth. Furthermore, this truth inherent in the artwork allowed art to be considered as a branch of knowledge: "Erkenntnis ist sie durch ihr Verhältnis zur Wahrheit; Kunst selbst erkennt sie, indem sie an ihr hervortritt."<sup>144</sup> This status as knowledge transformed art into a criticism of other prevalent forms of knowledge, i.e. into a critique of cognition ('Erkenntniskritik'), for these became inadequate when compared to it. The knowledge art offered in its image of non-subsumption was a negative knowledge of society, namely a knowledge of what society was not:

An der immanenten Stimmigkeit partizipiert ein richtiges Bewußtsein vom Auswendigen; der geistige und soziale Standort eines Werkes ist nur durch seine inwendige Kristallisation hindurch auszumachen. Kein künstlerisch Wahres, dessen Wahrheit nicht übergreifend sich legitimierte; kein Kunstwerk richtigen Bewußtseins, das sich nicht in sich der ästhetischen Qualität nach bewährte." 145

The authentic artwork was thus defined as one which presented this image of non-subsumption, an image of what society was not.

The non-subsumptive logic that to Adorno's mind informed the authentic artwork might be negative in that it opposed the present society, but with regard to the future it was positive. The artwork's truth content presents a paradigm for the theoretical foundations of a future, free society; free, because it would be based on a non-subsumptive logic and therefore not domi-native. By virtue of this truth content, the authentic artwork embodied an eidetic, non-conceptual image of what Negative Dialektik could only hint at abstractly. Adorno further located this future-oriented intention in the appearance of wholeness and completeness that the form of the artwork produced:

Schein sind die Kunstwerke dadurch, daß sie dem, was sie selbst nicht sein können, zu einer Art von zweitem, modifiziertem Dasein verhelfen. 146

Because their autonomy prevented them from being part of society, artworks compensated for their problematic existence by presenting an appearance of what society could be. This appearance parallels the statements in Negative Dialektik on the 'appearance of the non-appearing'.<sup>147</sup> The future society has no appearance yet, and if brought about would still have none, for in it subject and object would not be dissociated but would coincide for each would be allowed to exercise its own potentiality to the full: it would be what it appeared as. It was this orientation towards a future state, Adorno insisted, that enabled the artwork to be general:

Sondern die Versenkung ins Individuierte erhebt das lyrische Gedicht dadurch zum Allgemeinen, daß es Unentstelltes, Unerfaßtes, noch nicht Subsumiertes in die Erscheinung setzt und so geistig etwas vorwegnimmt von einem Zustand, in dem kein schlecht Allgemeines, nämlich zutiefst Partikuläres mehr das andere, Menschliche fesselte. 148.

Consequently, Adorno referred to the processual character as a model of possible future praxis.<sup>149</sup>

The most important feature of the artwork's epistemological truth was this future orientation, for it enabled Adorno to claim that the artwork produced an image of a conceptually-unexperienceable truth that was, nevertheless, still visible in the physicality of the artwork. The physical shape of the artwork thus depicted truth by presenting an allegory of a non-subsumptive



logic but crucially did not identify that logic in conceptual terms. This image can also be seen as a non-conceptual description of a non-subsumptive technics, approximating to that within the artwork, which opposes the rationality and technics of domination described in Dialektik der Aufklärung. The truth content, in other words, shows how 'Eingedenken' is possible. In particular, Adorno cited Schönberg's early twelve-tone work as an example of such a portrayal of non-identity within identity.<sup>150</sup> In summary, art's epistemological truth can be defined as a presentation in a non-conceptual, but perceivable fashion of the possibility of the non-identical. Adorno's aesthetics thus complements Negative Dialektik in that it finds a solution to the problem social change faces in a closed world. Aesthetics locates in authentic art's truth a readily perceivable, albeit non-conceptual image of a form of rationality on which the future could be built, namely by means of artistic logic itself. However, this truth is bought at the cost of the negative side of art's autonomy.

Adorno was not content to restrict art's truth to being a portrait of the form of rationality which could be used as the basis of a new society, for he stated in outlining the enigmatic character of art: "Das Rätselbild der Kunst ist die Konfiguration von Mimesis und Rationalität."<sup>151</sup> He did not, however, understand mimesis in the traditional Aristotelian meaning of the term. To the latter mimesis ('imitation') meant transposing parts of the social world external to art into art through the medium of the artist. The writer, for example, created in words something composed of images of objects or persons external to art in that they existed in real life. For Aristotle the artist imitated reality by this subjective and therefore 'emotional' creation of something new, whereas the scientist reproduced the objects without changing them. Mimesis described this process of the artist 'holding a mirror to nature' so as to reorder it in his own terms.<sup>152</sup> Imitation for Aristotle therefore signified this reconstruction of reality.

Adorno, however, used the category of mimesis in his philosophy in a different

and far more specific way. He defined it as the positing of an object without a concomitant objectification of that object; in other words mimesis is 'Eingedenken' or the application of a non-subsumptive logic. In this respect, mimesis is a shaping of nature only in its own image and therefore it is irrational in that it bows before nature. Like his concept of autonomy, Adorno's notion of mimesis is both negative and positive. Mimesis in an aesthetic context must be considered to be the application of artistic logic within the artwork, for we have seen this logic to be non-subsumptive. Again Adorno derived a major category of his aesthetics from the concept of material, for artistic mimesis can only be conceived of if thought of as the production of meaning beyond the sum-total of the artwork's parts (i.e. quality) through the artwork's treatment of its material, i.e. quantitative parts. However, determining how mimesis is brought about does not explain what artistic mimesis consists of.

Adorno specified that artistic mimesis amounted to an 'imitation of natural beauty'<sup>153</sup> by the artwork. Natural beauty ('das Naturschöne') he then defined as follows:

Das Naturschöne ist die Spur des Nichtidentischen an den Dingen im Bann universaler Identität. Solange er waltet, ist kein Nicht-identisches positiv da. 154

Natural beauty could not, therefore, exist as such, except in its embodiment in artistic mimesis. Natural beauty could thus no longer be viewed as beautiful in the form in which it occurred in nature, for nature existed only in a form that had been subjected instrumentally to social ends. Adorno suggested that artistic mimesis, as the imitation of natural beauty (by artistic beauty), was able to retain an image of real nature<sup>155</sup> otherwise not available to mankind. Accordingly depicting real nature as the origin of subjectivity became the aim of the artwork's imagery and by extension the aim of a non-dominative society, or what Adorno meant when he stated "der Ursprung ist das Ziel."<sup>156</sup> However, since this aim did not itself

originate in art, in a sense it forced the artwork to disobey its own laws.

The total mediation of the parts with the whole, of the form with the material in the artwork, was in Adorno's opinion the basis of the mimesis of natural beauty by the artwork. In other words, total mediation created an eidetic image of an image, for natural beauty itself did not and could not exist positively.<sup>157</sup> This application of artistic logic to the artwork's material produced the conjuncture of mimesis and non-identity in art as, for Adorno, the rational character of art was forged from this image of an otherwise non-existent property:

Fortlebende Mimesis, die nichtbegriffliche Affinität der subjektiv Hervorgebrachten zu seinem Anderen, nicht Gesetzten, bestimmt Kunst als eine Gestalt der Erkenntnis, und insofern ihrerseits als 'rational'. 158

Because such mimesis was not, in fact, rational in the strict sense but only a reproduction of nature, the image presented by art was always vague and could never replace true knowledge. Nevertheless, to Adorno's mind, the 'true' rationality hereby embodied by the artwork approximated to true behaviour as mimetic behaviour.<sup>159</sup> It was in this matrix that Adorno located art's third level of truth.

The ability to produce an image of natural beauty in artistic beauty rested on the artwork's constructedness by virtue of which it created subjectivity. Adorno proposed that: "Das Lückenlose, Gefügte, in sich Ruhende der Kunstwerke ist Nachbild des Schweigens, aus welchem allein Natur redet."<sup>160</sup> The subjectification of the material of art - i.e. its state of being both subjective and also object - was thus the foundation of natural beauty: "Durch Vollendung, die Entfernung von ungeformter Natur, kehrt das naturale Moment, das noch nicht Geformte, nicht Artikulierte wieder."<sup>161</sup> By this Adorno meant that the artwork's material was worked on, but that this was not as a result dominated. He suggested further that subjectification, by means of which constructedness was able to reveal natural beauty, was un-natural, in the sense that it involved human activity: "Je strenger die Kunstwerke der Naturwüchsigkeit und der Abbildung von Natur sich enthalten, desto mehr nähern die gelungenen sich der Natur!"<sup>162</sup>

Real nature, as symbolised by natural beauty in artistic beauty, was only understandable to Adorno as a nature aware of its own mediated character, the fact that it was 'worked'. 'Eingedenken'; of course, centres on a knowledge based on this insight. Adorno identified the natural beauty contained in the mimetic quality of an artwork with the artwork as a whole:<sup>163</sup> the artwork symbolised 'Eingedenken'.

In his philosophy and social theory Adorno had posited that such a future state had to be founded on 'Eingedenken' (on an overcoming of the mind-body problem). It is precisely this category of 'Eingedenken' that he found was embodied in art's mimetic production of natural beauty, a process he labelled the anamnesis of repressed nature.<sup>164</sup> Artworks were 'anti-conservative'; they showed an "Absage ans Herrschaftliche, an die Herrschaft zumal des eigenen Ichs über die Seele."<sup>165</sup> Artworks thus intended what nature could only promise innately.<sup>166</sup> Moreover, such truth, although pertaining to a future society, was grounded in the present, since the image of natural beauty - and thus of 'Eingedenken' - was constructed out of components of contemporary society, taken up and transformed by the artist. Adorno specified this in the following statement:

Die Opposition der Kunstwerke gegen die Herrschaft ist Mimesis an diese. Sie müssen dem herrschaftlichen Verhalten sich angleichen, um etwas von der Welt der Herrschaft qualitativ Verschiedenes zu produzieren. 167

However, this mimetic generation of something new out of parts of the old is still anchored in the old; in the final instance it, too, rests on a false rationality. Nevertheless, the subjectification and the constructedness inherent in the artwork, by virtue of which mimesis is produced, can therefore be considered the sole indication of what the new might be like in Adorno's work.<sup>168</sup> The main property of the new society, Adorno considered, would be the "Rettung von Natur oder Unmittelbarkeit."<sup>169</sup> If an image of the future can be created in art in such a manner that it can be experienced, then it follows that society can no longer be adjudged closed, for art facilitates in potentialis a consciousness of the new.<sup>170</sup> In this respect

Adorno's conception of artistic truth resembles Schelling's suggestion in the System des transzendentalen Idealismus that art is a consciousness of the identity of nature (as the unconsciousness) with freedom (as the conscious), i.e. a consciousness of 'finite infinitude'. In Adorno's opinion art produced (and therefore potentiality was) a consciousness of the true identity of nature (the unconscious id) with the individual (social ego) as 'Eingedenken' and therefore as freedom.

We designated art's truth content as the non-conceptual depiction of a non-subsumptive logic within the artwork's construction, by virtue of which the artwork was able to point to an unattained, future social state, that was a potential inherent in the present of which the artwork was a part. The third level of truth Adorno outlined in his aesthetics was the truth offered by the aesthetic experience of natural beauty as it appeared mimetically in the artwork.<sup>171</sup> The artwork's portrayal of natural beauty accords with an experience of an application of non-subsumptive logic.<sup>172</sup> Art's truth, in other words, is this eidetic image of the future that the beholder can experience sensuously, an image, furthermore, that acts as an allegory of the future that it culled from the past (like Benjamin's interpretation of Paul Klee's picture Angelus Novus).

Aesthetic experience becomes in Adorno's work an experience of 'Eingedenken' and thus an experience of the real truth of society, for it exhibits a form of knowledge of a new society. Art furnished a knowledge of the state of reconciliation that Adorno's philosophy could only postulate abstractly. However, because the truth art offers in its presentation of natural beauty pertains to a future society, the knowledge it affords the beholder of the present society is predominantly negative.<sup>173</sup> Adorno formulated this quality as follows: "Indem Dichtung als Ausdruck sich zu dem der für sie zerfallenen Realität macht, drückt sie deren Negativität aus."<sup>174</sup> Adorno related such negativity to Kant's epistemological concept of the sublime, as, in effect, negativity was transcendent in its epistemological orientation towards the future.<sup>175</sup>

This third form of artistic truth establishes most clearly the connection we had assumed to exist between Ästhetische Theorie and Negative Dialektik and clarifies the discussion of art in Negative Dialektik's closing pages. Thought, Adorno contended in Negative Dialektik, had become praxis.<sup>176</sup> This statement could be supplemented to include praxis as an experience of art. By extension, Adorno propounded that philosophy had to rely on art, or rather aesthetics, and thus Adorno's aesthetics supplies the solution to the problem which the closed society posed for his philosophy. This connection of Ästhetische Theorie and Negative Dialektik raises two major questions. First of all, it is unclear whether for Adorno art is now a buffer against the closed society, or is intended to describe society's actual openness. Secondly, if society is closed, how can art be appreciated or produced, since the subjectivity these processes require is being eroded by society. Adorno is seemingly faced with two dire alternatives: either to declare the end of art or to abandon the thesis at which his intellectual edifice was erected, namely that society is closed.

##### 5. Autonomy and the Closed Society

It is apposite at this point to reconsider the problem Adorno highlighted in the first sentence of Ästhetische Theorie, namely that art's very existence was no longer a matter of course. In this context he referred to 1910 as the time when this process of threatened survival commenced, thus dating the end of autonomous art to coincide with the beginnings of the Surrealist and avant-garde movements. The artworks he had labelled autonomous were drawn exclusively from periods pre-1933 and thus antedate the evolution of totalitarianism and the version of it Pollock termed state capitalism, i.e. they date from periods before the end of traditional liberal bourgeois society. Adorno's vision of autonomous artworks must therefore be understood to originate from a viewpoint looking back on autonomous art after the end of its production, although this need not necessarily be taken to mean that art itself has ended. What it does imply, however, is that Adorno's conception

of autonomous art centred on such artworks' dissynchrony. That is to say, Adorno avocates the importance of the Modern for the post-Modern period.

Accordingly, the three levels of truth so far discerned in Adorno's writings on autonomous art all owe their existence solely to the latter's dissynchronous character. The second two levels of truth obtain in autonomous artworks only because these date from an era when an image of the future could be constructed. The sociological truth of art shows the non-identity of the closed world, i.e. its factual falseness and truth, whereas the other two forms of artistic truth illustrate the true potentiality of a past social formation betrayed by the present structure of society.<sup>177</sup>

In this sense 'great' artworks await an age when their image will be redeemed and transplanted into the fabric of society itself.<sup>178</sup>

The dissynchronous character of autonomous artworks does not, then, alter the theory of late capitalism as a closed society, unless one assumes that the continued existence of such artworks itself breaches the hermetic nature of the social universe. The elements of the autonomous artworks, from which a non-subsumptive logic and its application are constructed, belong to a past age and do not, as a consequence, manufacture the image of the new out of contemporary material. Contemporary material would not avail itself to such a production since it forms the basis of the closed society and must be held to resist any dialectical synthesis. This shows that what we originally detected to be circuitous argumentation by Adorno is in fact quite logical.

This theory of dissynchrony inherent in Adorno's proposals on autonomous art highlights once again the intimate relation between his aesthetics and social theory. Adorno wrote his Ästhetische Theorie against the backdrop of what he believed was the factual existence of the closed social universe. Since the closed universe offered no elements whereby a synthesis of parts of that society could result in a new society, Adorno had to search for agents of such a synthesis elsewhere, namely in the past. The philosophical search conducted in Negative Dialektik culminated in the sparse closing comments on aesthetics there, and it was in this discipline that he subsequently founded such elements of change, specifically in his conception of

autonomous art. Adorno deemed the artwork to be autonomous as a dissynchronous entity because only thus was he in a logical position to speak of a truth in art that transcended the boundaries of the closed society. Consequently, the truth content of artworks is deeply historical as is Adorno's aesthetics itself.<sup>179</sup> Since the second two levels of truth to which autonomous artworks pertain only have meaning in their opposition to the dominant forms of thought and production in the closed world, it follows that Adorno's design of the category of autonomous art is dependent on the theory of the closed world for its starting point.

In the light of the above it can be argued that Adorno's aesthetics are not only historical in their specificity, but also reflexive. The aesthetic theory set out approximates to the social theory from which its point of departure was drawn because not only does the location of truth in dissynchronous artforms comment on the absence of truth in present society, it also indicates both the precarious position of any artworks now and the problem which theories founded on subjectivity themselves face. In a sense one could therefore speak of Adorno's conception of dissynchronous art as a metatheory of society on account of its treatment of a social object that transcends theoretical and historical frontiers. An intimation of this is contained in the following statement:

Indem das Kunstwerk nicht unmittelbar Wirkliches zum Gegenstand hat, sagt es nie, wie Erkenntnis sagt: das ist so, sondern: so ist es. 180

By deliberately constructing his aesthetics to complement his conceptions both of philosophical knowledge<sup>181</sup> and of philosophical truth - but as irreducible to such knowledge or truth - Adorno was able to ground a truth in art that was transcendent, i.e. metaphysical. This truth takes on a physical form now as the essence of a future society. Adorno's aesthetics thus spans the past and the future, but omits the present other than as the vantage point from which the other two are seen, a vantage point so important, for example, to Benjamin in his concept of 'Jetztzeit'...

If truth is only to be found in past artworks, then this fact is itself a



comment on the lack of truth in present society and on the problematic role played by contemporary art. Not surprisingly (with the notable exception of his lengthy essay on Beckett) Adorno left the work of contemporary artists relatively unmentioned. Instead he described the culture industry that confronted them, although never in a systematic fashion.<sup>182</sup> He juxtaposed autonomous art to the culture industry, but refrained from considering in detail the fate of authentic, non-autonomous art in the face of the culture industry, preferring to present autonomous art and the culture industry as two unrelated, although coexistent, static but opposing poles.

At the one end of this spectrum the culture industry proclaimed the ideology of the closed world in order to contest the truth contained in autonomous art situated at the other end. This ideology functions as the opposite to that promulgated by the liberal, bourgeois public, who had permitted and encouraged the rise of autonomous art because of the latter's affirmative character. Instead, the population is now supplied with information rather than members of it producing or selecting art themselves.<sup>183</sup> Such a direct distribution of information from above enforces the will of the controllers of the distributive apparatus - an idea we have met in Pollock's work. This conception led Adorno to state: "Anpassung tritt kraft der Ideologie der Kulturindustrie anstelle von Bewußtsein."<sup>184</sup> The strength of this conformism lay in the fact that ideology could no longer be perceived as false consciousness, for society itself was now false, i.e. the very structure of the life-world dictated conformism.

Adorno declared in the light of this change that "Ideologie heißt heute: die Gesellschaft als Erscheinung."<sup>185</sup> Ideology had become what Adorno termed 'the threatening face of the world',<sup>186</sup> for the normal person was no longer able to differentiate between reality and the fiction propagated by the culture industry.<sup>187</sup> He asserted that television, for example, prevented people from attaining or indeed knowing anything other than the functionalized life they led, an argument reminiscent of Dialektik der Aufklärung

and Kritik der instrumentellen Vernunft.<sup>188</sup> The net result of this ideology of conformism, if one can any longer speak meaningfully of ideology, is, Adorno claimed, that "nichts darf sein, was nicht ist wie das Seiende."<sup>189</sup> The culture industry, in other words, is able to influence people indirectly in that it occupies leisure time available to them, ensuring that the time in which they could relax is taken up with something 'ever-similar' to their working lives,<sup>190</sup> namely conformism.

This conception of the culture industry ghosts its way through Adorno's writings as a continual point of contrast and reference, one absolutely central to his aesthetics. In its centrality as the diametrical opposite to autonomous art, and as the reason for Adorno's construction of the latter, the concept of the culture industry indicates the continuing relation to the Dialektik der Aufklärung that persisted throughout Adorno's writings. He referred to this connection between the culture industry and a society Pollock had described as static in a discussion of jazz:

Je vollständiger die Kulturindustrie Abweichungen ausmerzt und damit die Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten des eigenen Mediums beschneidet, um so mehr nähert sich der lärmend dynamische Betrieb der Statik an. 191

Adorno's various remarks on the culture industry in the course of his work further resemble the analysis presented in Dialektik der Aufklärung in that they illustrate how Adorno derived the culture industry's shape and its resilience from the economic backers it possessed.<sup>192</sup>

The spectre of Dialektik der Aufklärung is equally present in Adorno's depiction of the new technics developed and employed by the culture industry. Not only did he maintain that these were not to be confused with the technics of the artwork, but he also claimed that such technics fed parasitically off the commodity production of the stagnant planned production.<sup>193</sup> Technics as applied in the culture industry served to facilitate and hasten the consumability of its products: the planned production of these ensured that they did not possess any truth content. Adorno remarked: "Ästhetische Technik als Begriff der Mittel zur Objektivierung einer autonomen Sache, wird ersetzt durch die Fähigkeit Hindernisse zu nehmen."<sup>194</sup> Consequently, products of

the culture industry could not be termed artworks and since the culture industry was all-powerful, autonomous artworks could not exist within it: "Die Autonomie der Kunstwerke, ..., wird von der Kulturindustrie tendenziell beseitigt."<sup>195</sup> Adorno thus conceived of the culture industry as the opposite of autonomous art because it prevented the production of such artworks.

Adorno spoke of this process generally as an "Entkunstung der Kunst."<sup>196</sup> Art either lost its qualities as autonomous art to avoid the culture industry, or became part of it. In either case, Adorno proposed "Kunst wird entkünstet: sie tritt selber als ein Stück jener Anpassung auf, der ihr eigenes Prinzip widerspricht."<sup>197</sup> The autonomous artwork still present within the network of the culture industry was turned against itself and thus ceased to be art. This being the case, even dissynchronous artworks were confronted by a merciless opponent that threatened to make them extinct. Adorno suggested that they could only do one thing to avoid this existential dilemma:

Um inmitten des Äußersten und Finstersten der Realität zu bestehen, müssen die Kunstwerke, die nicht als Zuspruch sich verkaufen wollen, jenem sich gleichmachen. 198

Artworks had to emulate the conformist one-dimensionality of state capitalist society if they were to continue to exist per se. In other words, they had to abandon their autonomy since this had already become, objectively speaking, both redundant and impossible. This meant, however, that artworks divested themselves of their double character and thus of their truth content. To avoid this predicament, Adorno endeavoured, in his study of Beckett, for example, to redefine autonomy. In the contemporary authentic artwork, he claimed, autonomy became a question of communication. An artwork that did not conform to dominant patterns of communication was autonomous. In this sense Adorno tried to find a synchronic dissynchrony. He analysed the authentic artwork (I shall term this the 'post-autonomous' artwork) in the same manner as the autonomous artwork, i.e. he examined its immanent construction. Its technics, material and construction he held to be similar to those of its predecessor. These had now to be applied in a slightly different manner, for "jedes Kunstwerk heute müßte vollends durchgebildet sein."<sup>199</sup>

Significantly, Adorno now adopted a prescriptive stance towards the post-autonomous artwork, one foreign to his earlier analysis of autonomy. He avowed that the artwork had to be hermetic vis-à-vis the external world if it were to be an artwork at all. By its renunciation of communication the work expressed the breach between art and the social world and thereby portrayed the social world's closed character.<sup>200</sup> Such hermetic non-communication not only made any 'engagement' or realism pointless, but also rendered to the artwork a quality of 'non-art', in that it dismantled the appearance of art. Further, Adorno contended that such hermeticism pointed up the world's negativity in its own absolute negation of the social world. For example, in a discussion of Beckett's omission of references to the social world in Endgame he suggested that:

Die protestlose Darstellung allgegenwärtiger Regression protestiert gegen eine Verfassung der Welt, die so willfährig dem Gesetz von Regression gehorcht, daß sie eigentlich schon über keinen Gegenbegriff mehr verfügt, der jener vorzuhalten wäre. 201

Adorno reiterated this completely problematical nature of the present relation between art and society when proposing that the artwork had to mirror society in order to expose it:

Erhebt in den neuen Kunstwerken Grausamkeit unverstellt ihr Haupt, so bekennt sie das Wahre ein, daß vor der Übermacht der Realität Kunst a priori die Transformation des Furchtbaren nicht mehr sich zutrauen darf. 202

Post-autonomous art had to renounce the truth levels attained by autonomous art for the social material at its disposal could no longer be worked into artistic form. The material from which the new artwork was produced had to be hermetic, that is to say, 'unconsumable'.

Two alternatives availed themselves in this context: either the artwork is purely subjective or it relinquishes any meaning in contemporary linguistic terms. Beckett adopted the second approach, since his plays, according to Adorno's interpretation at any rate, renounced communication: their meaning consisted of their 'meaninglessness' ('Sinnlosigkeit'). This renunciation, Adorno averred, created one possible foundation for non-ideological artworks:

"Daß Werke der Kommunikation absagen, ist eine notwendige, keineswegs die zureichende Bedingung ihres unideologischen Wesens."<sup>203</sup> Although non-communication could not prevent the incorporation of artworks into the culture industry' public sphere, it was able to guarantee these a certain inaccessibility in that they were no longer 'culinary'.<sup>204</sup> The inherent danger in artworks being silent and bereft of an expressive language ('sprachlos') was, however, that they shed any sensuous mantle they ever had and so ceased to be art.<sup>205</sup>

Adorno struggled to justify this interpretation of non-communication as a positive feature of contemporary art by arguing that under late capitalism the mental and physical spheres had become separated. He proposed that as a consequence art had to portray the divide between idea and sensuousness by forfeiting its previous reliance on the second of these. The divorce of the two culminates in the abstract art Adorno then considered to be art's negative depiction of precisely that separation, although he had to concede that such art was no longer in keeping with his definition of art. Since opposition cannot be physical, it could at best, he argued, be mental. Clearly, Adorno's argumentation on this point is circular and self-justifying.

Despite its frequent reiteration, Adorno's ardent espousal of non-communication cannot disguise the insubstantial content of his analysis. He is unable to ground a non-ideological or anti-ideological stance in non-communication and yet persists in claiming such silence to be the only appropriate avenue open to art:

In der verwalteten Welt ist die adäquate Gestalt, in der Kunstwerke aufgenommen werden, die der Kommunikation des Unkommunizierbaren, die Durchbrechung des verdinglichten Bewußtseins. 206

Essentially, the chickens of Pollock's theory of state capitalism have come home to roost with a vengeance: in a non-theory of contemporary art. Adorno is forced by the unrelenting logic of his own position to relapse into slogans, as in the pronouncement that "noch im sublimiertesten Kunstwerk

birgt sich ein 'Es soll anders ein'."<sup>207</sup> Adorno endeavoured feebly to make a necessity into a virtue: "Neue Kunst ist so abstrakt, wie die Beziehungen der Menschen in Wahrheit es geworden sind."<sup>208</sup> This cannot detract from his own admission that abstractness and non-communication presented an "Emaskulierung von Kunst im Angesicht der Möglichkeit, ihr Versprechen real einzulösen."<sup>209</sup> The promise of past art, that society would be constructed according to the principles of non-domination, is factually possible with the productive forces of the present, but prevented from coming about by the closed world and its culture industry.

Adorno raised the elitist, non-communicating and esoteric character of contemporary art to the status of a truth, excusing the elitism as being necessitated by the closed society.<sup>210</sup> The new abstract art was true, he argued, because it provided - by means of its absolute negation of societal norms - a picture of society's closedness otherwise unavailable to the individual:

Je totaler die Gesellschaft, je vollständiger sie zum einstimmigen System sich zusammenzieht, desto mehr werden die Werke, welche die Erfahrung jenes Prozesses aufspeichern, zu ihrem Anderen. 211

Adorno founded this artificial creation of the other as the vantage point 'outside' society on the "technical consistency"<sup>212</sup> of the contemporary artwork, whereby it obeyed only rules of its own technics, form and material and refrained from including social content. The truth content of contemporary art could, he therefore proposed, be judged to be its self-determined 'meaninglessness as meaning' in contradistinction to the false meaning inculcated in society by the culture industry. Being 'meaningless', the contemporary artwork lost any use-value and could thus oppose the false use-values generated by the culture industry, namely exchange-values.

Adorno held the meaninglessness of Beckett's Endgame to portray truth and artistic technics, for the play resisted the patterns of consumerism and conformism enforced by the culture industry. In short, because the play allowed no space for the culture industry's blanket dictation of meaning, Endgame, Adorno argued, aspired to truth. However, he did not extend his analysis to other contemporary artworks,

regarding the culture industry as affirmative, for in its conformism it could not even qualify as culture: "Die Negation des Begriffs des Kulturellen selber bereitet sich vor."<sup>213</sup> In Adorno's view Freud was correct to detect an innate psychic "Unbehagen an der Kultur"<sup>214</sup> because such culture had given birth to a monster in the shape of the culture industry. This, in turn, could not be brushed off as a fleeting aberration, for it was embedded, Adorno proposed, in the very logic of liberal bourgeois culture: "Was an Kultur Verfall dünkt, ist ihr reines Zu-sich-selber-kommen."<sup>215</sup> Products of this new anti-culture contained no dialectical properties, for they fostered only conformism.

Adorno neglects, however, to take the step of locating the origin of such conformism in the affirmative character of autonomous artworks, and this despite stating: "Ist Affirmation tatsächlich ein Moment von Kunst, so war selbst sie so wenig je durchaus falsch wie die Kultur, weil sie mißlang, ganz falsch ist."<sup>216</sup> He simply dissolves the dialectical interplay of affirmative and negative elements that had existed under bourgeois culture and replaces it with a static opposition between the conformist and the non-conformist. Since he views society as static, bereft of any dynamism, opposition cannot be founded in it, but must be external or marginal to it, such as in the allegorical opposition that he identifies in Beckett's dramatic portrayal of non-communication.

Since the truth of contemporary artworks resides solely in their non-communicative character, a void is left in the present, for no artistic truth to complement the philosophical truth of Negative Dialektik is now apparent, as it was in autonomous artworks. If Adorno's 'system' is not to fail to ground truth with respect to the present, then Adorno must situate truth - as the image of 'Eingedenken' - in the past. The dissynchronous autonomous artworks triumph in this respect over their synchronous post-autonomous counterparts. This triumph is, however, shortlived, for Adorno is unable to locate - even in terms of a logical account of their empirical existence -

autonomous artworks in the present, or to prove the presence of an aesthetic subject capable of understanding them.<sup>217</sup> In effect, he avoids the topic altogether and for good reason: how, after all, could the autonomous persevere in the closed world? Contemporary society prohibits the production of artworks which contain an image of a non-conceptual truth such as Adorno detected in autonomous art. The abstract post-autonomous artwork is conceptual, in the manner in which it exhibits truth. Adorno's thought is caught up in a vicious circle: art has to disengage from society if it is to oppose it, he claims, and yet in disengaging it loses any claim to be art, for it contains no social truth. Adorno's conception of non-conformism is drawn in such stark contours that it negates itself; it is at worst aporetic, at best exhortative.

What is more, the conception of non-conformism is inaccurate in the excessive obeisance it pays to a closed society, because empirically society is not completely closed, as Adorno was himself to admit in the last years of his life. In Ohne Leitbild he commented on artists and their position in society:

In der verwalteten Welt brauchen sie zum selben Zwecke große Institutionen, die einsichtig genug sind, ihnen Unterschlupf zu gewähren und damit etwas wie Korrektur an sich selbst zu üben. 218

He omitted, nevertheless, to pursue why this might be the case, although the above quotation would seem to hint that the culture industry needs legitimation, a quality unnecessary in a hermetic world of direct domination and diktats. Adorno tried to attribute the cracks in the culture industry's seal to a critical remnant in the psychology of the masses:

Nur ihr tief unbewußtes Mißtrauen, das letzte Residuum des Unterschieds von Kunst und empirischer Wirklichkeit in ihrem Geist, erklärt, daß sie nicht längst allesamt die Welt durchaus so sehen und akzeptieren, wie sie ihnen von der Kulturindustrie hergerichtet ist. 219

In the last essay Adorno completed before his death he expressed these second thoughts more clearly, although time prevented him from even adjusting his 'system', let alone changing it completely. He wrote:

Die Integration von Bewußtsein und Freizeit ist offenbar doch noch nicht ganz gelungen. Die realen Interessen der Einzelnen sind immer noch stark genug, um, in Grenzen, der totalen Erfassung zu widerstehen. Das würde zusammenstimmen mit der gesellschaftlichen Prognose, daß



eine Gesellschaft, deren tragende Widersprüche ungemindert fortbestehen, auch im Bewußtsein nicht total integriert werden kann. 220

It is perhaps fitting that Adorno found the empirical 'openness' of society to be evidenced in the realm of popular culture.

### 7. Conclusion

Regardless of whether Adorno finally came to amend his theory of the closed world, the fact remains that his aesthetics was designed against the backdrop of the assumed existence of such a hermetic society. Adorno transforms aesthetics into a theory of knowledge, for only thus can it provide the non-conceptual truth of society which both Negative Dialektik and Dialektik der Aufklärung were unable to ground.<sup>221</sup> Consequently, Adorno's aesthetics becomes simultaneously an ideology-critique (sociological truths of autonomous and post-autonomous art) and a theory of the communication, application and possible experience of a non-conceptual logic. In this way, Adorno's aesthetics approximates to his social theory. His theory of contemporary art at once both reflects and justifies his theory of the closed world, while his theory of past, autonomous art paints a picture of possible future social change. Moreover, the aesthetic concepts attest to the deep flaw in Adorno's theory of state capitalist society, for such a theory must be seriously defective if it requires an aesthetics to explain the social world comprehensively.

As we have seen, Adorno interlinks his aesthetics with his philosophy in an effort to overcome the problems of his static theory of society. The theory of autonomy plays a central part in this context, for it provides the foundation of social change and a stimulus to a change in consciousness. This interdetermination of the aesthetic and the philosophical fails, however, when applied to contemporary society. How, in a situation in which artworks are forced to be abstract because society is closed, can other artworks exist and provide the location of non-conceptual logic and its application? The immanent criticism Adorno develops to analyse past artworks and from which he then derives his appraisal of Beckett, sows the seeds

of its own destruction precisely when applied to Beckett. The abstract character of the latter's work would seem to suggest that at best the autonomous artworks latently preserve the basis of the new until such time as these can be taken up, and that, at worst, they will cease to exist under the aegis of the culture industry.

In Adorno's construction, post-autonomous art coexists with autonomous art, but without any apparent connection being made between the post-autonomous artwork's disclosure of present society's falsehood and the eidetic image of a future society inherent in autonomous art. The only connection Adorno suggests is that post-autonomous art requires its autonomous counterpart since it can no longer show what the latter was able to portray. Such a connection is highly abstract and far from historical, with the result that Adorno's work falls into two separate halves: a study of autonomous art and a study of the post-autonomous variant.

Nevertheless, his aesthetics furnishes his philosophy with a theory of knowledge that the philosophy is not able to posit.<sup>222</sup> This theory of cognition is that of a negative knowledge because art contains an image that is non-conceptual. Whether this image is 'knowable' ('erkannt') but simply not 'recognisable' ('erkennbar') remains uncertain. The implication of Negative Dialektik is that cognition should no longer be 'knowing' in the traditional sense, but 'recognition' as in the mutual recognition of subject and object, human and nature in the process of 'Eingedenken'. What is certain, is that this equation of aesthetics and a theory of cognition is deeply problematical, for if aesthetics as the 'knowledge of art' is modelled into a moral theory of what perception should be, it can hardly be regarded as an aesthetics (if this is understood to centre on the study of the beautiful).<sup>223</sup> Furthermore, even if Adorno's theory is considered an aesthetics, the form of cognition necessitated renders the attempt quietistic, for non-communication cannot in any sense be held to provoke a change in society.

Adorno also runs the danger of reducing aesthetics to a philosophical inquiry

into the basis of knowledge. Epistemologically, Adorno situates the artwork, as did Kant, between the purely sensuous and the purely intellectual, thus determining that the artwork cannot be grasped adequately either by an empirical philosophy or by a philosophy of consciousness, the two poles Negative Dialektik endeavours to steer between. Thus Adorno avoids the problem that Lukács, for example, faced in distinguishing between art and science, in that he finds art in a concept of objectivity different to that of science, namely one based on reflexivity. Art, he proposes, is its own form of inquiry, for its truth is unconceivable in any other discipline. Its claim to objectivity resides in this singular truth content and not in an attempt to reflect the empirical world in a direct fashion.<sup>224</sup> However, by situating art within a nexus of social production Adorno circumvents the positions adopted by Idealist theorists on which his aesthetics would otherwise have bordered.

The theory of cognition he offers in his aesthetics becomes a theory of communication when seen in the context of the closed world. The aesthetics discusses the possibility of communicating 'oppositional meaning' and thus hinges on the question of what is 'meant' not 'by' but 'in' the artwork and how this meaning is then communicated. The 'knowledge' art offers of the world is thus discussed in terms of whether it can be communicated or not - with the resulting insight that since the world is closed, art is prevented from communicating meaning and consequently must divest itself of any. Meaning in the artwork is accordingly derived not from content (which is overt communication and therefore by definition imposed by society) but from the numerous interlocked relations of the component parts of an artwork, these being held to be both 'natural' and social.

Adorno shifts the emphasis of aesthetics away from an analysis of beauty towards a theory of the technical production of art's 'magic', i.e. of its non-conceptual promesse de bonheur. Accordingly his theory is an aesthetic theory, that is, a theory of how art can be produced from the viewpoint of the social constraints and influences surrounding it. Adorno's aesthetic

theory does not, therefore, concentrate on a judgement of what is to be or what should be considered beautiful, but focusses on how the production of art opposes dominant social production in producing beauty, i.e. on how the beautiful is, intentionally or otherwise, critical of social ideology. This is why his theory is defined against both Kantian and Hegelian aesthetics and, ironically, in opposition to Aristotle. For Adorno it is uninteresting, if not banal, whether or not the artist produces personal, mimetic images of his environment and forms them into art. What is interesting to him is the process whereby this is accomplished and the extent to which the image created confronts the world with an allegory of diminutive thought and an assertion of what society is not. At a time when, in Adorno's opinion, the sphere of distribution has been eradicated, he constructs a model of alternative production to oppose the domination of the sphere of production. In so doing he changes the direction of aesthetics.

Since a comparison of this change in aesthetics and other contemporary aesthetics will be undertaken in the concluding chapter to this thesis, I will restrict myself here to a few preliminary remarks. Adorno's theory of art avoids the most obvious shortcomings of theories based only on a receptionist, Idealist or structuralist approach, as well as eschewing the simplifications of empirical art sociology. Adorno situates the recipient's viewpoint in the received object, grounds this on the historically-specific materiality of the artwork, which in turn is determined by the society of which it is part. This makes discussions of 'relative autonomy' appear somewhat unwieldy in their attempts to avoid determinism. However, does Adorno's more abstract standpoint, drawing pluralistically on insights gained by these other approaches, produce a superior theory, let alone a historical materialist one? The main question to be asked with regard to the internal logic of his aesthetics is whether or not his theory combines immanent criticism and social theory effectively. We have seen in the analysis of the autonomous artwork that such a task is accomplished with exceptional

intricacy and devotion.<sup>225</sup> However, the starting point of such a combination is a social theory inadequate to the task of describing contemporary society, namely Pollock's theory of state capitalism, and this places the results of Adorno's theory on a completely unsound footing. As a consequence of this basis, the conclusions of Adorno's aesthetic theory are idealist in the sense that they do not countenance the artwork's engagement in society, but rather only its abstract disengagement. The individual supposedly so endangered by state capitalism cannot look to artworks for help or use them to effect a change in his or her life-world, because, Adorno insisted, that artworks - and indeed praxis itself - has to be contemplative. Thus Adorno's work, while providing a fruitful insight into a problem deep at the heart of historical materialism, can provide only a barren counter to Enlightenment reason, for the solution Adorno offers involves abandoning Marxism's theory of revolution. The combination of immanent criticism and social theory is, in other words, damned from the outset as a result of the constraints Pollock placed on social theory with his concept of state capitalism.

Nevertheless, Adorno's treatment of capitalist art is attractive and historically specific because of the distinction he made between the autonomous and the post-autonomous as the respective sides of the totalitarian caesura in Germany from 1933 - 1947/8. Even if Adorno's analysis of late capitalism is inaccurate it still acknowledged the fact that post-War Western society has been radically separated from its predecessor by a new global state of affairs which centres on multinational companies and American rather than European cultural hegemony in the Western world. It is also noteworthy that Adorno's work forms a pioneering attempt to incorporate what is now termed deconstructionism within an historical materialist framework. In his analysis of the autonomous artwork Adorno 'deconstructs' meaning in the artwork, for he views authorial intent as secondary to the objective meaning of the artwork which he constructs out of both the historical use and the inherent history of material and technics.

In essence he removes the subject/artist from its position as the final determinant of the artwork and replaces it with socio-historical properties specific to art. He confronts form and content, even in poetry, with their historically changing, objective social meaning even to the extent of providing careful analyses of the words used, e.g. he finds Goethe's use of language now to be revolutionary.<sup>226</sup> However, once he has specified that the age of autonomous artworks has passed, 'deconstruction' becomes the understanding of non-identity and non-communication and therefore dissolves itself.

Regardless of this advantage, the central pillar of Adorno's theory, the connection between immanent criticism and ideology critique, is a double-edged affair. Some critics now argue forcefully that ideology critique is anachronistic, either because there is no one dominant ideology at present,<sup>227</sup> and most certainly no bourgeois ideology, or, and less convincingly, because social theory should not be the basis of objectivity.<sup>228</sup> Ideology critique as Adorno practises it has the advantage, nevertheless, of not specifying one (class) ideology as dominant. Rather it addresses its efforts to determining what the counter to such an ideology is and also, by extension, to describing positions of non-identity within hegemonic institutions or ideas. In this undertaking, however, the theory out-argues itself, for it can no longer ground the concept of non-identity on which it was based, but has to posit this in allegorical form. Moreover, Adorno's theory debunks itself in adducing to the culture industry a hegemony it does not in fact exert, and thus Adorno's deduction of the autonomous artwork suffers in content and efficacy. However, the aesthetic categories conceived of in order to describe the autonomous artwork are not thereby rendered defunct in form and conception, for they were not deduced from the presence of the culture industry. Rather, coupled with an accurate social theory, they could emerge unscathed by the above criticism. A critique of Adorno's work need not reject out of hand the categories he developed to use in immanent criticism, but could

sublate and accommodate them within a contemporary, accurate social theory. (A preliminary step in this direction will be taken in the conclusion to this thesis.)

C H A P T E R 10 : MARCUSE'S AESTHETICS 1942-1978

Post-war critical theory has been associated mainly either with Dialektik der Aufklärung or with the later work of Herbert Marcuse. This may seem surprising given the close affinity between Horkheimer and Marcuse's Zeitschrift writings on critical theory. This separation between Marcuse, Adorno and Horkheimer could, however, be justified on geographical rather than theoretical grounds. After Horkheimer and Adorno had departed from New York, Marcuse was to join them only for a short time in California, electing to remain in or around New York for the duration of the Second World War, rather than participating in the research work surrounding the Studies in Prejudice. After leaving the State Department's Office of Strategic Services, where he had been involved in denazification projects, instead of returning to Frankfurt with Adorno, Horkheimer and Pollock, he preferred to embark on an American academic career.

In recent years this physical separation has generally been interpreted to signify underlying theoretical differences that arose during or after the completion of Dialektik der Aufklärung. Marcuse's decision to remain in the United States is somehow read to imply a theoretical rather than an Atlantic Rubicon that he refused to cross.<sup>1</sup> (Jürgen Habermas and Thomas McCarthy are the sole commentators to have suggested that the work Marcuse undertook after 1941 bears a significant relation to Adorno and Horkheimer's writings of the same period.) A brief philological examination of Marcuse's main books from the years 1941-1978 reveals the existence of numerous important lexical similarities with the language of Dialektik der Aufklärung, particularly in the recurrence of such key terms as 'total mobilization', 'totalitarianism' and 'the administered society'.<sup>2</sup> Martin Jay<sup>3</sup> and Morton Schoolman,<sup>4</sup> nevertheless prefer to draw a connecting line between Marcuse's work and Franz Neumann's interpretation of Nazism in Behemoth, rather than referring to Pollock or Horkheimer. They educe the evidence for this from



Marcuse's 1941 work Vernunft und Revolution (pages 361 and 372) where Marcuse footnotes Neumann's work, but such sparseness of proof turns their own case against them. The biographical evidence of Marcuse and Neumann's close friendship perhaps influenced this argument and is read as implying theoretical identity. Schoolman has gone so far as to suggest, somewhat contradictorily, that the Institut(e)'s work on fascism had little influence on Marcuse's substantive work.<sup>5</sup> The citations from Vernunft und Revolution, however, cannot be regarded as conclusive. Quotations can all too easily be countered by other quotations, for example, the remarks on pages 361, 370 and 371 of the same book which all point away from Neumann's work and firmly in the direction of Pollock's theory of state capitalism.

In order to avoid a fruitless debate based on such a use of quotation and counter-quotation, the following chapter will argue, by means of an analysis of the central themes in Marcuse's writings, that a close relation existed between the social theory informing Marcuse's aesthetics and that of Adorno, Horkheimer and Pollock's respective work. Such an undertaking is not altogether unproblematic. First of all Marcuse's works Vernunft und Revolution, Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft, Die Gesellschaftslehre des Sowjetmarxismus, One-Dimensional Man, An Essay on Liberation, Konterrevolution und Revolte and Die Permanenz der Kunst confront the researcher as a set of seemingly unconnected and disparate projects. This wealth of material, threaded throughout with a variety of themes which often appear in a completely different form from one work to the next, is then extended by the countless essays Marcuse wrote in the post-War years. Secondly, in the case of Marcuse's writings, his observations on social theory and aesthetics are intertwined in the above mentioned works. Thus, in order to explicate the relation of Marcuse's social theory both to that expounded by Adorno and Horkheimer and to his own aesthetics, an artificial separation needs to be made between the two fields. Thirdly, the social theory itself appears in two distinct versions. one proposed in Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft, the other put forward in One Dimensional Man; a compromise between the two is elaborated in An Essay

on Liberation and Konterrevolution und Revolte. As a consequence, the artificial separation of the respective strands of social theory from the body of his work runs the danger of obscuring the reasons for its nature. These two distinct views of society and also the interlinking of aesthetics and social theory in Marcuse's work is perhaps a result of the connection his writings bore to contemporary politics. In this context, the element of praxis, supposedly so lacking in Adorno and Horkheimer's theory of society, has been frequently lauded in discussions of Marcuse's work.

This practical dimension is easily visible in the explicit political content of some of these works and can be detected in the hidden political intentions of the more abstract writings. It will be argued in what follows that while this attention to contemporary political matters distinguishes Marcuse from Adorno and Horkheimer, the 'engagement' his work provided was bought at a high theoretical price.

In order to overcome the difficulties just outlined, Marcuse's writings will be compared to his first major work after leaving the Institut(e), Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft, after having assessed the relation between this text and Dialektik der Aufklärung. Thus, a point of comparison will be established between Marcuse and Adorno and Horkheimer's respective work which still permits a detailed outline of his aesthetics to be undertaken. Three underlying themes will be addressed in the course of this discussion, namely Marcuse's refounding of the concept of reason in Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft, his subsequent alteration of the concept in his notion of 'one-dimensionality' and the centrality of 'automation' to his work. These will then be related to his aesthetics. In this fashion, chronological changes in Marcuse's writings resulting from his political analysis of society will become apparent and yet will not be accorded overriding importance in the interpretation of his work in general and his aesthetics in particular, as has often been the case.

The political side to Marcuse's work lends his social theory an ambiguous tone evidenced particularly by his concept of 'technology', an ambiguity,

moreover, which cannot be simply brushed aside, for it becomes crucial to his theory of art. In that this level of Marcuse's work is lost in a non-chronological approach, the analysis is confronted with considerably more difficulties than was the case with Adorno's work. The act of separating his social theory from his political theory has the disadvantage that it prevents a clear view of the origin of the three themes and conceals the fact that they each possess the character of a political 'thesis' developed at a particular historical juncture.

Two specific purposes are fulfilled by outlining the three themes just mentioned. Firstly, they allow a fundamental relation to be established between Marcuse's work and Adorno, Horkheimer and Pollock's writings. Once this underlying connection has been delineated, Marcuse's aesthetics can be understood in a different light to that thrown on it by research thusfar. The remarks on aesthetics in his writings can be shown to rely on an inner system of thought that also underpin his social theory. What is more, the aesthetics can then be shown to play a very specific role in his social theory, a connection we have already found in Adorno's work. On this basis it will be possible, finally, to compare Adorno and Marcuse's respective aesthetics.

### 1. Eros and Reason

In the 1954 postscript to Vernunft und Revolution, the last work he completed whilst a member of the Institut(e), Marcuse commented (quite in keeping with Adorno and Horkheimer's thought in Dialektik der Aufklärung):

Von Anbeginn enthielten Idee und Wirklichkeit der Vernunft im modernen Zeitalter die Elemente, die ihr Versprechen eines freien und erfüllten Daseins gefährdeten: die Versklavung des Menschen durch seine eigene Produktivität; die Glorifizierung des hinausgezögerten Glücks; die repressive Beherrschung der menschlichen und außermenschlichen Natur; die Entwicklung der menschlichen Anlagen innerhalb des Herrschaftsgefüges. 6

A few lines previously he had stated that both the Hegelian and Marxian ideas of reason were no closer to being fulfilled than before. The reason of rationality that prevailed in present society was, he suggested, completely irrational if measured against society's potentiality (i.e. its

possible shape):

Und wenn Rationalität in der Verwaltung verkörpert und nur dort verkörpert ist, dann muß diese gesetzgebende Macht irrational sein. 7

In other words, however 'planned' and efficiently administered society might be, this could not detract from its underlying irrationality. From 1941 onwards Marcuse was preoccupied with demonstrating the irrationality of the planned society, just as Adorno and Horkheimer had devoted Dialektik der Aufklärung to the same subject<sup>8</sup>. The rationality that Marcuse denounced as irrational was so, he maintained, because it was based on domination, namely that of the object by the subject. Marcuse declared that "Reason as conceptual thought and behaviour, is necessarily mastery, domination"<sup>9</sup>. In Vernunft und Revolution and elsewhere Marcuse deduced this form of domination from the closed society that he specified - as had Adorno and Horkheimer - was founded on administration. Marcuse's logical deduction of irrationality also mirrored Adorno and Horkheimer's, for he judged that, as a result of its being imposed from above, the rationality of the closed society was irrational per se. Reason became mythical in the sense that myth had always been regarded as the opposite of 'reason': "The process of civilization invalidates myth (this is almost a definition of progress), but it may also return rational thought to mythological status."<sup>10</sup> In other words, like Adorno and Horkheimer, Marcuse perceived the Enlightenment to have been negated by the very core of Enlightenment thought itself and believed 'reason', when fully developed to reveal itself to be 'un-reason'. If this is the case, then it follows that a dialectical concept of reason no longer avails itself to philosophy. Philosophy cannot, therefore, call on reason when attempting to negate society. Nor can it even depict the difference of present appearance and its essence whose inherent potential could be realized as a future coincidence of essence and appearance, i.e. in a free society. The power of Adorno and Horkheimer's and also Marcuse's

argument swept away any basis for a critical analysis or critique of society. The immanent methodology practised by ideology critique was as a consequence redundant, for reality itself being ideology, any confrontation of ideology with reality became impossible. Marcuse was faced with the alternative of either abandoning critique altogether or turning to a metaphysical ethics of the 'ought' in opposition to the 'is'.

He did neither, but rather took the loss of any critical standard of reason as the starting point for all his post-War writings. These became imbued with the attempt to refound the concept of reason in such a manner as to ensure that it regained its critical edge. Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft is not only the first instance of this refoundation, but is also the only study devoted entirely to this project; Marcuse's subsequent writings all refer back to Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft as their point of departure.

Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft is essentially a treatise on both Freudian metapsychology and the ontogenetic and phylogenetic development of the individual. Writing against a backdrop of tendential totalitarianism and complete domination,<sup>11</sup> Marcuse set out to determine (by examining the philosophy of psychoanalysis) whether Freud's analysis of repression permitted one to conceive of a society free of repression. This examination led him to historicize the ontogenetic structure of repression, for by so doing he was able to locate a sociological level of investigation at the centre of the concept of repression.

Marcuse commenced his interpretation of Freud by accepting that the pleasure principle and the reality principle necessarily collided with one another.<sup>12</sup> However, this collision of opposites could, he maintained, be shown by close analysis to be less absolute than Freud had supposed. So as to be able to specify this feature, Marcuse devised two new psychological concepts, those of the 'performance principle' and 'surplus repression'. Whereas Freud had asserted that the individual necessarily repressed certain desires directed by the pleasure principle in order to submit, via the median agency of the

ego, to the demands of reality and thus to survive, Marcuse claimed that 'necessary repression' was far more precise a quality than Freud's expansive notion conceived of it as being. Marcuse termed necessary repression 'basic', i.e. that which had to exist if the individual were to eat, drink and procreate. 'Surplus repression', on the other hand, was that form of repression which was brought about by a particular historical organisation of society and was necessary only for that society's continued existence:

Diese zusätzlich-Lenkung und Machtausübung, die von den besonderen Institutionen der Herrschaft ausgehen, sind das, was wir als zusätzliche Unterdrückung bezeichnen. 13

By implication, such forms of psychological domination as are used solely to uphold contemporary society can be dispensed with. In other words, Marcuse considered that a free society could be constructed on the basis of 'necessary repression' (i.e. labour not alienated in the capitalist mode of production) and not as Freud had believed, namely that repression was per se negative.<sup>14</sup> This allowed Marcuse to define the rationality of the contemporary order of society as irrational, for that which forms the basis of surplus repression could not, by definition, be rational. Contemporary society achieved this enforcement of surplus repression by means of what Marcuse labelled the 'performance principle'. The performance Marcuse signified with this term was that of Weberian purposive rationality, which Marcuse, in common with Adorno and Horkheimer, regarded as domination.<sup>15</sup> Logically, the pleasure principle Freud had spoken of had to be opposed to the performance principle and by extension to surplus repression, but not necessarily to basic repression. Equally, therefore, the pleasure principle could be held to coexist with the reality principle as long as the latter was not based on the performance principle and thus provided the basis for a free society. In this fashion, Marcuse was able not only to determine the irrationality of present society, but also to construct a paradigm for an ideal future state using psychoanalytical categories.

Marcuse paid some attention to the manner in which the performance principle involved an objectification of the world external to the acting person.

Firstly he derived - somewhat tenuously - technological domination from the destructive drive generated by the id in the course of its repression by the ego. Secondly, he maintained that surplus repression was not visible to the individual, for it had become the very substance of the life-world, i.e. the life-world was itself ideological:

Die Unterdrückung verschwindet hinter der großen objektiven Ordnung der Dinge, die die fügsamen Individuen mehr oder weniger entsprechend belohnt... 16

Contemporary society endeavoured by means of such an ideological blanketing of reality to prevent the 'Wiederkehr des Verdrängten', i.e. the unleashing of repressed drives in a destructive form. Otherwise, Marcuse claimed:

...würde die dem Es entsprechende Energie sich gegen ihre immer mehr veräußerlichten Beschränkungen auflehnen, würde danach drängen, ein immer weiteres Feld existenzieller Beziehungen zu ergreifen und zu überfluten, und würde so das Realitäts-Ich und seine verdrängenden Leistungen sprengen. 17

In the light of his remarks on basic repression it is clear that Marcuse did not view such an explosion as a necessarily negative development, as Freud had done. The thrust of Marcuse's argument is to the effect that culture (and civilization, for he did not distinguish between the terms here) need not be negatively repressive in the fashion Freud had assumed had to be the case.<sup>18</sup>

Marcuse proceeded to demonstrate how such a change in repression could be effected and the implications such a possible change of society would have for a critical philosophy. He attempted first to provide a proof of the possibility of such change by means of a discussion of the symbolical figures of Orpheus and Narcissus. Whereas in the standard psychological interpretations of these two figures they were both judged to be alienated from the world, Marcuse suggested that in fact they evinced properties which connected them integrally with the world in the sense that they symbolised an overcoming of a society in which subject and object were separated from one another. Orpheus and Narcissus represented a reconciliatory state of cooperation - one of 'Eingedenken', to use Adorno and Horkheimer's term - between mankind and nature.

In the common understanding of Freud's work such a view would be untenable in psychological terms, for labour and culture are both held there to be repressive per se and therefore eternally irreconcilable with nature. Marcuse tried to show, however, via a discussion of Eros and sexuality, how labour (work) could be a libidinous and thus liberating activity, so long as it was expended for the common good. He argued: "Nur als soziales Phänomen kann die Libido den Weg zur Selbst-Sublimierung nehmen: als ununterdrückte Kraft..."<sup>19</sup> This process would signal a reconciliation of mind and body, and in such a changed social situation it would be possible to conceive of no drive-opposition existing between work and play, as Marcuse was quick to assert:

Die Arbeit als freies Spiel kann nicht der Verwaltung unterstellt werden, nur die entfremdete Arbeit kann durch rationale Routine organisiert und verwaltet werden. 20

Work and play would coincide in forming the basis of a free society. This notion of work coinciding or indeed merging with play, i.e. a merging of instrumental rationality with a subjective rationality of 'Eingedenken', was examined further in Marcuse's outline of the relation between Eros, the life-drive, and Thanatos, the death-drive. He found that a state in which physical pain and need were eliminated would allow both for a non-repressive sublimation of the id and for a reconciliation of Eros and Thanatos in the Nirvana principle.<sup>21</sup> If society, in other words, were so organised as to eliminate poverty, death would not oppose life and man would no longer need to strive for death as a consequence of the frustration of life.

Having painted this picture of a future libidinous society, Marcuse cast about for an agent that would set in motion such social change as would bring about this libidinous state. He determined first of all that any change had to involve a remembrance of the id's wishes:

Ohne die Freisetzung der verdrängten Gedächtnisinhalte, ohne die Lösung der befreienden Macht der Erinnerung ist eine nicht-repressive Sublimierung unvorstellbar. 22

He defined remembrance as "a mode of dissociation from the given facts, a



mode of 'mediation' which breaks, for short moments, the omnipresent power of the given facts."<sup>23</sup> Thus, memory kept awake a knowledge of past promises made to mankind.<sup>24</sup> However, even assuming these contents had been remembered and this was not just a remembrance of psychological properties, the individual still would have no conception of the form this future society should take. Marcuse located the forming of such an image in the imagination (deploying a notion similar to the Existentialists' concept of projection): "Die Phantasie sieht das Bild der Wiederversöhnung des Einzelnen mit dem Ganzen, des Wunsches mit der Verwirklichung, des Glücks mit der Vernunft."<sup>25</sup> This imagination was to be formed in and by art, in art's "Zweckmäßigkeit ohne Zweck," its "Gesetzmäßigkeit ohne Gesetz."<sup>26</sup> Artistic form portrayed a reconciliation of the general and the particular, of the intellect and the senses (i.e. of id and ego) by virtue of being "durch die Ordnung der Sinnlichkeit bestimmte Form."<sup>27</sup>

Having proved to his own satisfaction that a libidinous society could indeed exist, there being agents which could raise the necessary catalysts from the depths of the id into consciousness, Marcuse went on to test the degree to which the concept of Eros (which embraced both the life-drive and the libido) could be used critically. In so far as society could be founded in line with the concept of Eros - basic repression leaving much scope for the libido - present reality had to be found lacking owing to the non-libidinous character of contemporary rationality when compared to the concept of Eros. In other words, despite the presence of immediate material satisfaction provided as an anaesthetising palliative that disguised the present ideological character of society and reality, a critical standard nevertheless existed which unmasked precisely this ideology.

Further to this debunking, critical edge that the concept possessed, the concept of Eros also functioned to ground a notion of interest, namely the interest of mankind. If the new society was to be centred on the libidinal satisfaction of all, and Marcuse averred that this had to be the case, then

the existence of such a society could be considered to be in the interest of everyone's very nature in instinctual terms. The new society could thus be called rational, and equally the concept of Eros was rational for it also hinges on mankind's interests. Marcuse asserted that in the future rationality would be defined in this manner: "Vernünftig ist nun, was die Ordnung der Befriedigung unterstützt."<sup>28</sup>

The concept of Eros is both rational and critical and thus recuperates the properties Adorno and Horkheimer had shown did not inhere in Enlightenment rationality. The definition of rationality in the concept of Eros avoids the reduction of rationality to a purposive instrumental form which was the problem latent in the Enlightenment version. Erotic rationality is only purposive in the vague sense that it is intended to inform the creation of a just social universe beneficial to the whole of humanity. In this manner Marcuse devised a concept which not only cannot be enmeshed within the dialectic of Enlightenment, but which also assails Cartesian thought for being ideological in its opposition to Eros. Marcuse thus refounded the concept of reason.<sup>29</sup>

In complete accord with Adorno and Horkheimer Marcuse regarded contemporary rationality as irrational. Instead of despairing in the face of such a tragic perception and the effects the irrational society had on the constitution of individuality (and by extension on Freudian psychology), he refounded the concept of reason with the aid of Freudian metapsychology. In doing so Marcuse did not, however, depart greatly from the route laid down by critical theory, as many have taken the optimism of the refoundation to imply. As he put it in 1979, Marcuse moved Marxism towards psychology:

Was sich ändern müßte, wäre der Unterbau unter der ökonomisch-politischen Basis: das Verhältnis zwischen Lebens- und Destruktionstrieben in der psychosomatischen Struktur der Individuen. 30

The concept of Eros as true rationality - because it is founded in the material (and biological) interests of mankind - neither involves a Panglossian turn in Marcuse's thought, nor does it rest on some metaphysical

view of man as 'innately' good, but on a recognition that mankind can now be good, as critical theory had always maintained.<sup>31</sup>

If mankind can be good, however, does this mean that people can escape Enlightenment rationality and live in true freedom, in coexistence and (re-)conciliation with nature? Marcuse insisted that mankind would be free in a libidinous society, because human beings would recognise this freedom as such and as a freeing of their own nature. Mankind would have effectively recreated its naturalness and by playing rather than working to achieve this end would no longer dominate external nature. External nature would be 'eingedacht', i.e. thought of in the very act of positing one's own self, for that 'self' would be regarded as natural. In this fashion a libidinous, free society really could avoid the clutches of the dialectic of Enlightenment and the concept of Eros would provide the foundations for a new critical and dialectical philosophy. This does not mean to say that Marcuse's conception is unproblematic. I shall leave aside the objections that could be raised against Marcuse's reading of Freud and concentrate instead on difficulties within his argumentation. His reading of Freud is well-documented elsewhere. Moreover, arguments against it normally rest on differing readings of Freud, and as such do not constitute an immanent critique of his thought.

The relation between the present and future world appears to have to be voluntaristic in Marcuse's conception. He referred frequently to his work as a 'transcendent project', i.e. as an effort to find forms in the present that will generate a future. Such a project had, he insisted, to continually be on its guard against accepting as transcendent any forms tainted by Enlightenment rationality; it had to ignore the elements of the past inherent in the present: "Die Vergangenheit bestimmt die Gegenwart, weil die Menschheit noch immer ihre eigene Geschichte nicht gemeistert hat."<sup>32</sup> A similar problem lies at the core of Marcuse's conception of the id in that we cannot know the drives that are repressed and yet it is upon them that the future is to be founded. Equally, we cannot know whether the mythical, natural content of the drives can prevail against Enlightenment rationality

and provide for the needs of all when allowed to run free. Marcuse's transcendent project remains consistently indeterminate in order to be transcendent, with the notable exception of his reference to art.

Marcuse had wished to break away from the suffocating cocoon of Enlightenment reason which was seated in the supposedly objective, instrumental character of such thought. The concept of reason Marcuse devised was therefore situated in the subject, in a philosophical conceptualisation of the subjective psychology of mankind as a whole. As such, it was a counter-concept. However, Marcuse had to try to avoid the reductio ad hominem that was the fatal undoing of Cartesian logic and Enlightenment philosophy. Rather than grounding his concept of reason in the subject, Marcuse took great pains to establish the equally objective character of Eros (in the sense that it is meta-subjective). In order to circumvent the fickleness of instrumental rationality Marcuse conceived of a philosophy grounded in the 'Gattungssubjekt', the species-being: mankind. In this fashion the concept of Eros avoids notions of intersubjectivity now in vogue by (as it were) viewing mankind as a macro-subject. This line of argument is, however, not without its own dangers. When Marcuse spoke of a "Unterbau unter der ökonomisch-politischen Basis,"<sup>33</sup> he imbued Eros with an absolute quality and reduced the life-world to this first principle, the wish to experience pleasure: "Dasein ist dem Wesen nach das Streben nach Lust."<sup>34</sup> The concept of Eros thus acquires an ontological character foreign to a Marxist analysis of society.

If life is the 'wish to experience pleasure' and this, in turn, is regarded as the guiding principle of life itself, then life can only be analysed in terms of whether or not it is pleasurable. The question that must be raised in this context is whether such an analysis of pleasure is quantitative or qualitative, for there is a tendency in Marcuse's work to treat Freud's drive theory in terms of numerical quantities. The decrease of erotic energy in society as a consequence of the sublimative culture under which we currently live, and the interchange and counterbalancing between erotic and thanatic energy both seem to be considered by Marcuse in an arithmetic manner.

Finally, Freud's thought had opposed mankind to society, whereas Marcuse posited the future unity of social forces and human beings. Freud's conception was linear and static as he regarded the above bipolar opposition as absolute, mankind's innate wishes being eternally incompatible with society. Marcuse altered this construction, for he viewed human beings and society as being dialectically opposed, as a result of which conception he was able to contemplate a synthesis of the two. To achieve this within the concept of Eros Marcuse had both to accept the notion of an archaic heritage informing the id and to reject Freud's postulation of an unvarying, ahistorical Oedipus complex.<sup>35</sup> Marcuse's detour around the Oedipus complex raises problems for an understanding of ego-development and for the incursion of the reality principle into the domain of the id, just as Adorno and Horkheimer's compression of ontogeny and phylogeny had done. Indeed, Marcuse's description of ontogeny and phylogeny follows that laid down by Adorno and Horkheimer in Dialektik der Aufklärung.

This problematic conceptualisation of the ego leads on to a wider problem thrown up by Marcuse's theory of Eros, namely the concept of ideology promulgated by that theory. On the one hand Marcuse's concept of ideology no longer matches that devised by Marx, for it can no longer refer simply to a false consciousness. Ideology now involves a repression of drives and thus signifies a false consciousness both of libidinous needs as well as of the social structure. On the other hand, society offers no basis for ego-development - Marcuse's theory is hazy on this point - so that it is not clear whether there can indeed be a 'true' consciousness either of society in general or of libidinous drives in particular. After all, if libidinous drives were conscious to the individual or species through the intermediary of the ego, it would be questionable whether these drives could then really be regarded as libidinous.

## 2. Eros and Dialektik der Aufklärung

It has become clear in the course of our discussion of Triebstruktur und

Gesellschaft that Marcuse turned to Freud's metapsychology in order to elicit from Freud's work a rationality which was impregnable to the dialectic of Enlightenment. Freud, it should be remembered is not alien to Marcuse's thought, having ghosted through the pages of 'Über den affirmativen Charakter der Kultur' and 'Zur Kritik des Hedonismus'. Marcuse used Freud's categories to sharpen the conception of happiness and interest presented in these essays to such a point that the ensuing concept of Eros is a conscious foil to the dialectic of Enlightenment and, by extension, to Dialektik der Aufklärung.

In this project Marcuse accepted that the social formation that had replaced monopoly capitalism was closed, allowing its citizens no knowledge of its real essence. He believed furthermore that the social structure was able to anchor a counterrevolution in the very instinctual structure of individuals.<sup>36</sup> However, he also argued that buried beneath this counterrevolutionary strand there existed a (Chomskian) deep structure of libidinous drives that could - potentially at least - burst the social fabric asunder. Marcuse assumed that such social change would follow a de-reification, that is a subjectification of mankind's own nature, by means of 'Eingedenken', which was thus not just an ideal but also a practical possibility. Although he referred to art in this context, it was not necessary for him, as it had been for Adorno, to centre his projection of a future society on it. In Dialektik der Aufklärung and Kritik der instrumentellen Vernunft Adorno and Horkheimer had traced logic to an aporia inherent in the dualism of self and self-preservation. By using the Freudian categories of id, ego and super-ego they were able to discern a fundamental impasse in Cartesian logic, from which, however, they could not extricate themselves. Equally, they remained dogged in their postulation of non-dominatory thought by the hangover of Pollockian socio-economic concepts in their work. We have seen that this last influence extended as far as the cul-de-sac of Adorno's Negative Dialektik and the self-contradictory nature of the Ästhetische Theorie. Adorno and Horkheimer found difficulties in pursuing an historical materialist path that steered between the barrier reefs of Stalinism and positivism. Marcuse, however,

remained undaunted and with Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft took up the task of establishing a liberating and emancipatory epistemology by sifting through the Freudian ashes of Dialektik der Aufklärung's discussion of the id (i.e. the remarks on Odysseus) and raking from their embers a phoenix: a theoretical refoundation of rationality as Eros completely uncountenanced by Adorno and Horkheimer. (This refoundation, as we shall see, culminates in a new aesthetics, divergent from that of Adorno.) It remains now to determine the exact relation between Marcuse's work on Freud and the work of Adorno and Horkheimer, in particular their Dialektik der Aufklärung.

Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft can be interpreted both as a rejoinder to Dialektik der Aufklärung and as a complement to its theoretical design. Such an interpretation contrasts starkly with the usual discussions of Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft which tend to view this work as 'seminal' to Marcuse's thought and 'unusual' in its subject matter, and yet do not attempt to explain why Marcuse came to analyse Freudian material and re-fashion it. It is hoped that the connection to be made below between Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft and Dialektik der Aufklärung will successfully reveal the intellectual heritage of Marcuse's book.

There are three main connections to be made between Marcuse's work and Dialektik der Aufklärung. Firstly, Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft amounts to a proof of Adorno and Horkheimer's assumptions but in psychological terms, a characteristic of Frankfurt School work notably lacking in Dialektik der Aufklärung itself. Although Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft marks a continuation of Marcuse's interest in the 'catastrophe of human existence',<sup>37</sup> it places this catastrophe firmly in the context of the dialectic of Enlightenment, i.e. the dialectic of the domination of nature, whose sublation Marcuse described in the last article he published as:

La tranformation de la société n'est pas seulement une transformation de la nature humaine, mais aussi bien de la nature extérieure. 38

It is this relation between the internal and external domination of nature that Marcuse elaborated in psychoanalytical terms in Triebstruktur und

Gesellschaft. He therefore referred to the drive structure of human beings as their 'second nature', "welche die gesellschaftliche Erscheinung seiner ersten Natur ist."<sup>39</sup> He claimed that Freud had provided an image of this dialectic of domination in the eternal circle the latter had drawn of patri-  
cide and the introjection of authority.<sup>40</sup> Marcuse equated this description with the dialectic of domination in terms of the portrait it presented of the true "vicious circle of progress."<sup>41</sup>

In Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft Marcuse's discussions of ontogeny, phylogeny, of the libidinous self in opposition to non-libidinous self-preservation and of sublimation as alienation all served to underpin in psychoanalytical terms the following claim:

The forms and content of freedom change with every new stage in the development of civilization, which is man's increasing mastery of man and nature. In both modes, mastery means domination, control: more effective control of nature makes for more effective control of man.<sup>41</sup>

Marcuse's concept of Eros was postulated as a counter to the irrationality of such repression as reinforced the dialectic of domination. Enlightenment rationality was, in other words, discovered to be rooted in the phylogenetic development of the psyche.<sup>43</sup>

It is at this point that Marcuse abandoned Freud's linear conception of history and archaic history, for had he accepted the inevitability of the Oedipus complex and the validity of the 'primitive horde' theory he would not have been able to conceive of a way of breaking the hermetic seal of the dialectic of repression and introjection. However, in its discussion of domination Marcuse's work complements Dialektik der Aufklärung, for his interpretation of Freud lent reinforcement to Adorno and Horkheimer's theory of civilization. At first sight this appears ironic because Adorno and Horkheimer saw little further use for Freudian categories, having assumed that the ego had now decomposed completely: progression had always been regression. On the one hand Marcuse accepts this (in Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft and Die Gesellschaftslehre des Sowjetmarxismus for example), although he persists in still using psychoanalytical terms to describe, on



a macrological level, the subjugation of nature as the subjugation of the real self, i.e. society's repression of libidinous, natural drives. On the other, he rejected the validity of Freud's concept of the ego, for Marcuse considered it to function as a median quality, not as the self-conscious, composed self that Adorno and Horkheimer conceive of it as. The ego for Marcuse can aid the real self, the id, to attain a realisation of the id's desires. Therefore, the present 'decomposition' of the ego can only be understood in Marcuse's work to denote the ego's redundancy in the face of a gargantuan social super-ego.

This obsolescence of the ego can, nevertheless, be interpreted in a positive light in that it allows the self's true desires to shine through the outer layers of social conditioning. The labelling of Marcuse's work, particularly Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft, as a 'marriage of Freud and Marx' is, in this respect, reductive. Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft uses both Freud and Marx to analyse the 'pre-history' of repression in terms of the Dialektik der Aufklärung, not in terms of Das Kapital or Jenseits des Lustprinzips. It is the social theory of Dialektik der Aufklärung that Marcuse sought to explicate and amend.

Despite its complementary nature, Marcuse's theory of the historical nature of repression also has radical consequences for Dialektik der Aufklärung. If surplus repression is lifted in a future state that is governed by Eros and basic repression is held to be compatible with Eros, then the pessimism of Dialektik der Aufklärung is unfounded. Under the sway of Eros the laws of logos would cease to apply, i.e. Dialektik der Aufklärung's ineluctable dead-end can be countered by a possible form of non-instrumental, critical rationality.

Marcuse's theoretical challenge to the conclusions of Dialektik der Aufklärung remains idealist, however, not just because it only has practical importance in some hazy future, but, more importantly, because Marcuse deduces future change from hypothesised, mental drives. (This admittedly has the advantage of protecting his notion of change from any empiricist reduction.)

Despite this idealist cloak, Marcuse's position goes beyond just complementing Dialektik der Aufklärung, for it bursts Adorno and Horkheimer's philosophy of history by relocating 'potentiality' and the 'interest' of mankind in the individual species being's id qua the representative of Eros.<sup>44</sup> Twenty three years later Marcuse was still to say:

L'enracinement de l'opposition dans une structure pulsionnelle libératrice doit rendre possible la transformation qualitative, la révolution totale

and further

Seulement par le vécu individuel, l'expérience de chacun, qui brise la coquille de la conscience subalterne et qui amène l'individu, qui l'oblige, à voir, à sentir, à penser les choses et les gens d'une manière différente. 45

Even if couched in an idealist form, what Marcuse offers is a concrete antithesis to Dialektik der Aufklärung: the libido as a base behind the material base.

The materiality of the psychological drives thus provides the possibility of a future synthesis of thought and being, namely in the Eros-governed society. In other words, Marcuse was able to construct a way out of Dialektik der Aufklärung's theoretical dilemma by virtue of the concrete form that he imparted to the concept of 'Eingedenken' in his discussion of the dialectic of history and civilization. However, this "Tiefendimension menschlicher Existenz,"<sup>46</sup> the material base behind the base, is not concrete in any meaningful sense, for it can only be embraced in abstract-theoretical categories. It is, as noted above, metaphysical or idealist and had to be gounded by Marcuse in aesthetics and in remembrance.

In this respect, Marcuse's attempt to found concrete change in the libido brings him into difficulties that Adorno had also encountered. He had, namely, to ground his theory in an aesthetics. However, this is itself problematic, because, owing to the fact that unrepressed drives cannot be known without them changing from libidinal into ego-drives, they cannot be recognized in art. Moreover, despite Marcuse's claim that "hinter der sublimierten ästhetischen Form kommt der unsublimierte Inhalt zum Vorschein:

die Verhaftung der Kunst an das Lustprinzip,"<sup>47</sup> art cannot be judged to be a guarantee of the continued ideal existence of this dimension. Indeed, Marcuse himself pointed this out inadvertently when discussing the closed society:

Im gegenwärtigen Zustand, im Stadium der totalen Mobilmachung, scheint selbst diese höchst ambivalente Opposition nicht mehr lebensfähig. Die Kunst überlebt nur dort, wo sie sich selbst aufhebt, wo sie ihre Substanz rettet, indem sie ihre traditionelle Form verleugnet und damit auf die Versöhnung verzichtet: wo sie surrealistisch und atonal wird. 48

It would seem that Marcuse's counter to Dialektik der Aufklärung was stranded with his aesthetics on the beach where Adorno's lay washed up by its insistence on incommunicability.

This pessimism in Marcuse's writings can be seen in his use of the category of remembrance. Although he meant it to be understood positively (whereas it signified a remembering of the horror of the past in Adorno and Horkheimer's work) remembrance remains - like the concept of art - practical and causal only in the future. The practical thrust of the category is stemmed at present by what Adorno called the 'universal bane of exchange-values' and will stay in such a state until an antidote consisting of non-reified forms of perception has been developed to combat the bane. In contemporary society one can at best conjecture as to what the libidinous drives might be that would inform the new society and at worst only impute their existence; they cannot be remembered. Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft, despite appearing at first sight to offer a real escape from the dialectic of Enlightenment proves on closer inspection to be as deeply pessimistic as Dialektik der Aufklärung. Freedom, in the shape of an 'erotic' society, is only the stuff of dreams, dreams which are imaginings about the future. The closed society continues unaffected by such phantasies.

Regardless of Marcuse's initial rejoinder, Pollock, Adorno and Horkheimer are in the final instance proved to be correct in their pessimism. In fact, their pessimism is reinforced by Marcuse's work, for the future society can only be dreamt of, not even thought of. Perhaps this is part of the reason why Marcuse never mentioned Marx in Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft, despite

the clear degree of correspondence between the arguments in Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft and Marxist thinking. He neither wanted to deify Marx as the final authority on all matters (as had Stalinism), nor did he believe Marxism was able to bring about a change in society.

At the narrower level of research methodology, Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft provides a corrective to Adorno and Horkheimer's work in the Studies in Prejudice and to Fromm's later writings. In complete contrast to their work, it is precisely the idealism and the anti-empiricist slanting arising from Marcuse's study of Freud's metapsychological texts that provides the basis for his critique. Marcuse may bestow empirical, concrete form on philosophical concepts, e.g. at the level of an anthropology, and yet this very process is imploded because Marcuse mischievously takes up in his discussion those elements of Freud's work which even Freud knew contradicted empirical evidence, e.g. the concept of archaic heritage.<sup>49</sup> Empirical psychology, in other words, is subverted, for in the case of Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft science is used as theory's tool and not vice versa. Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft thus reconstitutes Hegel's speculative philosophy in the shape of an anthropological social theory.

### 3. Reason Reinstated?

In his social theory Marcuse found an opening for Eros which, however, ultimately transpires to be illusory. Irrespective of the outcome of these mergers of social theory and psychoanalysis, Marcuse is far more specific and empirical in the construction of his social theory than Adorno and Horkheimer had been with theirs. Marcuse had addressed problems of planning and technology in his work on social theory published prior to Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft and specifically in his last essay for the Institut(e), 'Some Social Implications of Modern Technology'. It would be wrong to suppose that this train of thought was suddenly abandoned once Freud came to the fore in Marcuse's writings. Indeed, the concepts of planning and technology play a crucial role in Marcuse's interpretation of Freud and constitute an important link between Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft and both Marcuse's

non-psychological writings and the writings of the Frankfurt School after 1941. The implicit presence of a discussion of planning and technology is evidenced by a seemingly innocuous, throw-away remark in Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft:

Die Eliminierung menschlicher Möglichkeiten aus der Welt der (entfremdeten) Arbeit schafft die Vorbedingung für die Eliminierung der Arbeit aus der Welt der menschlichen Möglichkeiten. 50

Labour is understood here in both its Marxist and its Freudian meaning (i.e. as repression). The implications of the sentence are thus shattering: an abolition of 'labour' and of repression is foreseeable.

The manner in which such an 'elimination' could occur bears directly on the subject to which Pollock addressed himself after returning to Frankfurt in 1949, namely cybernetics or automation. In three lengthy essays written between 1955 and 1958 based primarily on work undertaken in the United States,<sup>51</sup> Pollock had approached the question of the impact automated or semi-automated production processes would have on society and whether, in fact, a second Industrial Revolution was under way. In order to clarify the relation Marcuse's work had to them, a brief examination of the main points of these essays is necessary.

The introduction of automation was seen by Pollock as giving rise to two major themes, for both of which he found a wealth of empirical evidence. On the one hand, Pollock suggested that automation created a tendency to over-produce. In order to ensure sales of the commodities thus produced the owners of the means of production had to control both the free time available to the workforce and the development of needs.<sup>52</sup> The social form that such a society had to take would be centred on an "autoritären militärischen Hierarchie".<sup>53</sup> the automative society thus matched that of state capitalism. In this context he detected that a correlation obtained between automation, structural unemployment, the heightened destructive potential of the ever-expanding armaments industry and "sinnentleerte und mechanische" labour.<sup>54</sup>

On the other hand, Pollock had attempted to remedy the flaw in his earlier analysis by conceiving of state capitalism as dynamic. He specified that

automation could have other effects than those listed above, for it could be used to abolish poverty in the whole world if "von den heute gegebenen Möglichkeiten ein vernunftmäßiger Gebrauch gemacht würde".<sup>55</sup> However, he judged that such a beneficial use of automation could only occur if the classical market mechanism was to be removed<sup>56</sup> by planning:

Würde in einem gesellschaftlich ausschlaggebenden Maße der Wille bestehen, die neue Produktionsweise unmittelbar und planmäßig für das Wohl der Menschen nutzbar zu machen, dann könnte sie tatsächlich den Segen bewirken, den heute viele allzu optimistisch von ihrer unkontrollierten Entfaltung erwarten. 57

This statement is deeply paradoxical, for Pollock himself had pointed out that capitalism could continue uninhibited in a planned form, while Adorno and Horkheimer had found planning itself to be domination. Accordingly, there was no logical reason to suppose that a planned society would necessarily abolish poverty unless this were in the interests of profit. Pollock had to remain ambiguous in the final instance on the question of whether planning was positive or negative.

Marcuse did not share this ambiguity. In the 1960 Preface to Die Gesellschaftslehre des Sowjetmarxismus he wrote of the application of automation:

Da dieser Optimalzustand (social wealth, full employment) von der Fähigkeit der Gesellschaft abhängt, die materiellen und geistigen Lebensbedürfnisse aller ihrer Mitglieder mit einem Minimum an auf-erlegte Arbeit zu befriedigen, erfordert er Planung und Kontrolle der Wirtschaft im Hinblick auf diesen Zweck, er erfordert überdies eine Umschulung im Hinblick auf die Austauschbarkeit der Funktionen sowie eine Umwertung der Werte, die eine repressive Arbeitsmoral beseitigt. 58

In this context, quantitative change could bring about qualitative change. A concept of planned automation thus forms the background to the concept of potentiality Marcuse put forward in Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft, for it provides evidence of social potentiality that would facilitate the creation of a libidinous society.

Automation, Marcuse argued, could permit transcendence from the social conditions, if it itself were put to a different end, for it provided a technology which could cater for all mankind's needs without relying on human intervention. This opened the way for a libidinous, non-instrumental approach to life. Marcuse contended in 1978:

Technischer Fortschritt ist objektive Notwendigkeit für den Kapitalismus sowohl wie für die Emanzipation. Letztere ist abhängig von einer Weiterentwicklung der Automation bis zu dem Punkt, wo die herrschende 'Ökonomie der Zeit' (Bahro) umgestürzt werden kann: freie, schöpferische Zeit als Lebenszeit. 59

Society at present appeared in a light which was all the more irrational for the fact that the repression it enforced was redundant in terms of its own productivity.<sup>60</sup> What Marcuse suggested was that basic repression had itself become almost unnecessary, for automation could provide the necessities of life. Automation, instrumental reason par excellence could flip over into its opposite by facilitating the abolition of labour. Any work time which at present existed for mankind could be used for play, i.e. dedicated to erotic pursuits. In this fashion, the discussion of automation permits Marcuse to reintroduce an immanent analysis of society into his argument. The potentiality of the means of production can now be opposed to reality; society can be proved to be irrational, because it has been outgrown by the potentiality of its own internal form.<sup>61</sup> If labour, in an alienated or non-alienated form, can be abolished by the introduction of full automation, then Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft is not based on idealism but on a practical change that could be effected in society.

It follows that Marcuse's concept of Eros (as a critical measure of the present against a better, potential future) can only be conceived of against the backdrop of automated production. Indeed, the research work and thought Marcuse put into Die Gesellschaftslehre des Sowjetmarxismus, where he first discussed automation, date from the early 1950s (1952-53 and 1954-55), precisely the time when he was also preparing Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft. This link in epistemology is perhaps best illustrated by the title of an article he wrote at the time: 'Progress and Freud's Theory of Instincts'.<sup>62</sup> The chronological coincidence reflects the merging of the two strands of his thought. In other words, the very design of Marcuse's interpretation of Freud hinged on an assessment of technics and automation and, by extension, it rested implicitly on themes that were being discussed at the reopened Institut für Sozialforschung in Frankfurt.

Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft was written against the background of German totalitarianism and the continued existence of what Marcuse saw as the tendency towards totalitarianism.<sup>63</sup> The potentiality of technics and automation that permitted Marcuse to reinstate Eros as an immanent analysis of society in that it showed society to be dynamic does not disprove the thesis of the closed world, it only asserts that dialectical potentiality persists within that society, even if the society endeavours to suspend any change.<sup>64</sup> As a consequence, Marcuse never stated firmly whether automation was positive or not, whether or not a rational organisation of the sphere of production would create the basis for an erotic state which could then be established by a change in consciousness.<sup>65</sup> The immanent analysis of the means of production reinforces logically the optimistic concept of Eros, aligning theory once again to the changes in society and thus avoiding the dilemma Marcuse saw many theories to be faced by:

Eine Theorie, welche die Praxis des Kapitalismus nicht eingeholt hat, kann schwerlich eine Praxis einleiten, die darauf abzielt, den Kapitalismus aufzuheben. 66

Marcuse's consideration of automation allowed him to oppose Eros to the closed society from within that society, i.e. he was able to show this social form to be dynamic. Nevertheless, this supposedly proven dynamism still remains purely conjectural, for it depends logically on a future change in society which is, in turn, dependent on a change in consciousness.

#### 4. One-Dimensionality and Technology

This last question, namely whether Marcuse believed that human beings could come to think of themselves as part of nature ('Eingedenken') in view of the power state capitalism possessed to shackle technology to its own purposes, can only be answered by means of a closer analysis of Marcuse's conception of society. Marcuse's conceptualisation of the closed society can best be discussed under the label of 'one-dimensionality', the name he gave to the social structure analysed in his most popular book, One Dimensional Man. Marcuse set out to explore a society which was founded on two



opposing tendencies, the one wishing to contain change, the other serving as the basis of change.<sup>67</sup> The coexistence of these two tendencies has been seen above to originate in Pollock's discussion of automation, so their interconnection will be left aside for a moment; the analysis of one-dimensionality will concentrate instead on the forces of containment.

For Marcuse, society was 'one-dimensional' in the sense that it precluded opposition by means of the control it exercised over the productive and distributive spheres in the manner described by Pollock.<sup>68</sup> Marcuse specified that the profit maxim inhabited every walk of life and that both mind and body were kept in a state of permanent mobilization in order to prevent any view or way of thinking other than in terms of profit. Marcuse described such a crushing of opposition in a manner that reminds one of Adorno and Horkheimer's concept of the culture industry:

The most effective and enduring form of warfare against liberation is the implanting of material and intellectual needs that perpetuate obsolete forms of the struggle for existence. 69

He argued that the social structure effecting such a "social determination of consciousness" was enforced by "total capitalist administration".<sup>70</sup> It was also to be considered a global occurrence: "Die Fusion ökonomischer, kultureller und politischer Kontrollen ist ein internationales Phänomen."<sup>71</sup> This fusion was at least in part caused by the technology of such a one-dimensional society which could not, therefore be isolated from the use to which it is put. He took this into account by defining one-dimensionality as a state in which both the dominators and the dominated were subjugated by the production apparatus.<sup>71</sup>

Marcuse analysed this one-dimensionality in four different ways: two sociological, one anthropological, and one socio-psychological. At a sociological level Marcuse spoke of the integration of mankind into the one-dimensional society, which he attributed to "structural economic-political processes."<sup>73</sup>

These absorbed any political opposition society might encounter from the working class, by offering the proletariat material rewards in the form of consumer articles. As a consequence of these, the working class became

instilled with "systemimmanente Bedürfnisse und Aspirationen", thus guaranteeing the "Reproduktion des Bestehenden durch die Beherrschten."<sup>74</sup>

Marcuse observed:

Und wo die etablierte Gesellschaft die den Lebensstandard erhöhenden Güter liefert, erreicht die Entfremdung denjenigen Punkt, auf den selbst das Bewußtsein von ihr weitgehend unterdrückt ist: die Individuen identifizieren sich mit ihrem Sein-für-Anderes. 75

Accordingly, this material integration could be considered a "freiwillige Knechtschaft"<sup>76</sup> that formed the basis of a "gleichgeschaltete" society.<sup>77</sup>

Marcuse maintained that this integration was reinforced psychologically because the one-dimensional society encouraged its members to think of themselves as individuals only to the extent that they were members of the mass society.<sup>78</sup> This coalescence of ego and super-ego - a main theme in earlier Institut(e) writings - led to alterations in the constitution of the psyche:

In the mental apparatus, the tension between that which is desired and that which is permitted seems considerably lowered, and the Reality Principle no longer seems to require a sweeping and painful transformation of instrumental needs. 79

By promoting what Marcuse termed a 'happy consciousness', the one-dimensional society absorbed any opposition to society still extant in the instinctual structure of the individual.<sup>80</sup> Marcuse tried to trace this destruction of individuality with his concept of 'repressive desublimation',<sup>81</sup> which designated the levelling out of the antagonism between culture and social reality. Instead of culture being created by a sublimation of libidinous energy, a release of this energy was actuated by, for example, commodities being produced that bore a libidinous attraction for the consumer.<sup>82</sup> Individuality was "verstümmelt, verkrüppelt und frustriert"<sup>83</sup> by this process of desublimation, for ego-development was impeded as was the aspiration for more than what already was. Marcuse declared that as a consequence of its stultification of the ego "society has surpassed the stage where psychoanalytical theory could elucidate the ingression of society into the mental structure of the individuals..."<sup>84</sup> In the absence of an ego, one-dimensional man could no longer be embraced in categories pertaining to

the balance between id and ego.

Marcuse measured this collapse of individuality against the individualist high culture of bourgeois society, for he judged the latter cultural form to cause a fruitful sublimation of libidinous energy. The combination of repressive desublimation with the process by which individuals were integrated into one-dimensional society eroded the traditional distinction between civilization and culture. The two could not be separated at a sociological level any longer for if the normal world had become ideological,<sup>85</sup> as Marcuse contended it had, then no distinction could be made within that world between productive time and free time. Leisure time was solely a reflex of production's desired sales. Equally, it was impossible to distinguish fruitfully between base and superstructure. As Pollock had originally suggested twenty years earlier, the two had merged; the market as a regulator had disappeared to be replaced by the closed society.

Anthropologically, one-dimensional society's levelling out of the various differences and dualities of liberal society results in the complete dominance of instrumental rationality in people's lives. Marcuse's analysis thus parallels the way Adorno and Horkheimer derived the same occurrence from Pollock's notion of the closed society. Marcuse's statement that "die Entfremdung der Arbeitsleistung ist fast vollständig"<sup>86</sup> highlights this intrusion of a rationality into all walks of life that perpetuates mankind's domination of its own 'naturalness', just as it enforces mankind's domination and corruption of external nature. Marcuse remarked that:

Nous pouvons maintenant formuler plus concrètement l'idée que la domination et l'exploitation capitaliste de la nature sont, en tant que telles, domination et exploitation des hommes. 87

In the light of this conception of domination, Marcuse's appeal to Eros seems as hopeless as had Adorno's espousal of the non-communicative artwork, for qualitative change can neither be anchored in the instrumental rationality of automation nor can it hope to oppose such a rationality.

Two points can be raised in this context. Logically, Marcuse's analysis

should not involve an analysis of the dialectical properties of automation, for how can there be a sublation of the technological rationality on which automation is based, without such a sublation breaking Marcuse's dialectic? Furthermore, many observers have claimed that if Marcuse's analysis were accurate, he would not be able to account for his own existence as an oppositional theorist.<sup>88</sup> Both these criticisms, however, are inaccurate, for Marcuse provides a "historische Analyse der Tatsachen, die eine kritische Analyse von Tendenzen einschließt, von geschichtlichen Möglichkeiten, die in irgendeiner Weise demonstrierbar sind."<sup>89</sup> Since the analysis is purely theoretical and not based on empirical fact, its recounting of the nature of the facts is also ideational, i.e. it describes a tendency, not reality.<sup>90</sup> That Marcuse was not sure of whether society and with it technology were dominative per se is reflected by the fact that, during the 1950s and the 1960s, he wavered between two assessments of society. On the one hand, he viewed society as having potential for change (i.e. as being dynamic) while, on the other, he regarded it as static and completely closed.<sup>91</sup> In treating society as dynamic Marcuse had to revise what he perceived as the inner contradiction of capitalism:

Es ist von äußerster Wichtigkeit festzustellen, daß Marx die Abschaffung des Privateigentums ausschließlich als Mittel zur Abschaffung der entfremdeten Arbeit im Auge faßt und nicht als Selbstzweck. 92

Marcuse situated capitalism's inherent dynamism in the conflict between the productive forces and the productive relations, believing the former to be fettered to the latter in terms of their ownership, development and application.<sup>93</sup>

He found this conflict to be particularly acute under late capitalism in a number of ways. Firstly, technological rationality itself demanded a move towards its own 'consummation', a trend countered by "intensive efforts to contain it."<sup>94</sup> Marcuse noted a contradiction between technology and the profit principle:

If capitalism does not succeed in exploiting these new possibilities of the productive forces and their organization, the productivity of labour will fall beneath the level required by the rate of profit. And

if capitalism meets this requirement and continues automation regardless, it will come up against its own inner limit: the sources of surplus value (human surplus labour) for the maintenance of society will dwindle away. 95

Secondly, social productivity and wealth rebelled against the division of labour. Marcuse deduced this from technological improvements and innovations in production: "If the exploitation of physical labour power in the process of production is no longer necessary, then this condition of domination is undermined."<sup>96</sup> Thirdly, the consumer society produced such affluence that an internal barrier was soon reached, a saturation point of the stock and commodity markets.<sup>97</sup> As a consequence, the rate of profit followed an even tighter course, forcing ever greater problems on individual capitalists.<sup>98</sup> Marcuse was quick to point out that this variation on classical Marxism should not be seen to imply an automatic collapse of capitalism. However, he envisaged the contradiction between the potential of the productive forces and the productive relations to be one that people might become aware of. It is the development of such an awareness that the one-dimensional society attempts to preclude by levelling out any knowledge of qualitative difference. This is what Marcuse meant in his statement that:

Auf dieser Stufe (that of administered totalitarianism) ist der Widerspruch zwischen den Produktivkräften und den Produktionsverhältnissen soweit und so offenbar geworden, daß er rational nicht mehr bewältigt, nicht mehr ausgedrückt werden kann. Kein technologischer, kein ideologischer Schleier kann ihm mehr verhüllen. 99

Marcuse equated this contradiction with late capitalism's production of insatiable needs in the population. Since Marcuse held that the sphere of consumption in one-dimensional society determined consciousness, the consumerism it fostered had to be satisfied if that consciousness were to be upheld, and yet if it were to do so capitalism would not remain profitable owing to the wage increases necessary if people were to be able to spend more. The fact that production was geared to consumer production could not detract, in Marcuse's eyes, from the potential inherent in the productive forces. He remarked:

If the productive apparatus could be organised and directed towards the satisfaction of vital needs, its control might well be centralized;

such control would not prevent individual autonomy, but render it possible. 100

The 'vital' needs he derived from the basic possibilities offered by automation:

The dynamic of human existence is self-preservation and growth, i.e. not only satisfaction of biological needs but also development of the needs themselves in accordance with the possibilities which emerge in the constant struggle with nature (and with man). 101

This principle, in turn, allowed him to conjecture on what form the new needs would take:

Moralische und ästhetische Bedürfnisse werden zu grundlegenden, vitalen Bedürfnissen und verlangen nach neuen Beziehungen zwischen den Geschlechtern, den Generationen, den Männern und Frauen und der Natur. 102

Although Marcuse couched his description of a controlled form of production in the future conditional tense and, as we shall see, left it to aesthetics and the concept of Eros to define the character of 'vital' needs, he nevertheless regarded this future society as inherent in late capitalism and as rational, as the "Verwirklichung des Begriffs aller Dinge."<sup>103</sup>

The productive forces in this context have come to mean not just any form of technology, but specifically automative processes<sup>104</sup> as can be seen in the following statement:

Der technische Fortschritt ist Fortschritt in der Möglichkeit menschlicher Freiheit. Das heißt: technischer Fortschritt ist Reduktion und Abschaffung entfremdeter Arbeit, Beseitigung der Armut und der Ungleichheit, Schaffung einer freudvollen Lebenswelt. 105

By viewing automation in this way, Marcuse forewent any application of the labour theory of value to automation or to the productive forces.<sup>106</sup> Rather, these are investigated for their emancipatory content in order to prove that freedom is possible if it is built upon such automation and if the technological forces are used for Utopian ends.<sup>107</sup> Despite this view of society as being dynamic owing to the potential of automation, at certain stages (e.g. from the early 1960s) Marcuse supported the thesis that technology was itself ideological and, as a consequence, society had to be regarded as static.<sup>108</sup>

In a discussion of Max Weber Marcuse averred that: "Nicht erst ihre Verwendung, sondern schon die Technik ist Herrschaft..."<sup>109</sup> Marcuse attributed this

negative property to the nature of technological rationality as an extension of instrumental rationality and viewed the technological apparatus as authoritarian in itself<sup>110</sup> in that it was founded on domination. Technological rationality and its products had therefore to be considered ideological. The underlying thought behind this position thus parallels the approach taken by Adorno and Horkheimer. Here the base of society itself is perceived by Marcuse as ideological whereas (specifically in An Essay on Liberation and Konterrevolution und Revolte) it was precisely in the base that he had founded the potential of automation and therefore of change. In contradistinction to his view of automation he now believed society was static, for it exhibited no potentiality, i.e. it would continue as it was. The scientific-technological conglomerate lauded in Marcuse's analysis of automation he now damned:

Today, domination perpetuates and extends itself not only through technology, but as technology, and the latter provides the great legitimation of the expanding political power which absorbs all spheres of culture. 111

It was thus possible to derive one-dimensionality from the technological apparatus itself.

There are distinct problems in such a 'technocracy' thesis. Marcuse's concept of technological rationality is unspecific, for - like Adorno and Horkheimer - he bundled together all technologies in his equation of technology with domination.<sup>112</sup> He was no longer able to specify which forms of technology pertained solely to capitalism and which surpassed the barriers inherent in capitalism.<sup>113</sup> Consequently, there was no reason for him to suppose that a future, just society would ever exist, if it were barred from using technological or instrumental rationality to provide for its members' subsistence. In the light of this proposal, Marcuse could not maintain that the future could exist on the basis of a refashioned, emancipatory technics. He endeavoured to argue that such a refashioning was possible, but this goes against the logical grain of his argument. His picture of a future society became an arbitrary, voluntaristic 'Entwurf',<sup>114</sup>

an existentialist projection or choice between 'good' on the one hand and 'bad' on the other.

On occasion Marcuse reverted to a third, intermediate position, one redolent of Adorno's work, namely that a new society had to be founded on a new technics:

Die Umwertung der Werte und Zwänge... könnte sehr wohl schon in der Konzeption der Technik selbst, im Aufbaudes technisch-wissenschaftlichen Apparats wirksam werden. 115

This implied using technical knowledge but creating a different technology:

...und die Errungenschaften der technischen Zivilisation anders zu verwenden: zur Befreiung von Mensch und Natur, vom zerstörerischen Mißbrauch von Wissenschaft und Technik im Dienst der Ausbeutung. 116

Such a liberation would have to involve the concept of Eros, for it entailed a rediscovery of nature's "lebenssteigernden Kräfte, der sinnlich-ästhetischen Qualitäten."<sup>117</sup> Whether this suffices to guarantee that the new technics are not founded on an instrumental rationality is a moot point, for Marcuse's argument here is based more on conjecture than logic.<sup>118</sup> Additionally, the transcendence of the domination of nature went hand in hand, Marcuse believed, with a "pacification of existence",<sup>119</sup> a label that points to the quiescent, non-instrumental, perhaps even Nirvana-like character Marcuse foresaw the new technics as having. He suggested that this sensuous-aesthetic quality had to become the informing principle of the new technics:

The rationality of art, its ability to 'project' existence, to define yet unrealized possibilities could then be envisaged as validated by and functioning in the scientific-technological transformation of the world. 120

Once more, Marcuse's social theory has to turn to his aesthetics for a solution to its and society's problems.

If society is closed and static, in the sense that it contains no inherent potentiality, technological or otherwise, then the instigators of a new rationality must come from outside that hermetic universe. In 'Der Begriff der Negation' Marcuse devised an epistemological basis for this assertion:

"Das Allgemeine bleibt... außerhalb des Systems der bürgerlichen Gesellschafts."<sup>121</sup> In the course of his writings Marcuse turned to the 1960s



student movement, to the black population in the United States and to the Third World in the search for a group of socially-marginal individuals who might prove to be such a catalyst for change, for he considered social marginality to be a guarantee of such groups' exclusion from society. In the last five years of his work Marcuse then addressed his attention specifically to feminism and the women's movement, seeing in them a potential for qualitative change.

This conception of catalysts led Marcuse to adjust the concept of revolution in order to centre it on those vanguard or catalysts groups which, in his view, constituted a conscious opposition to society. Conscious opposition to the closed society amounted, he believed, to the determinate negation of one-dimensional society, for any questioning of that society was equivalent to its negation. The sole example in existence of such a form of determinate negation perceivable to the beholder was, he affirmed, to be found in art. In this manner his aesthetics became at times a 'Tendenz-ästhetik', for it was allied to his political diagnosis of society. In art, he stated:

The tension between the actual and the possible is transfigured into an insoluble conflict, in which reconciliation is by grace of the œuvre as form: beauty as the 'promesse de bonheur'. In the form of the œuvre, the actual circumstances are placed in another dimension where the given reality shows itself as that which it is. Thus it tells the truth about itself,...Fiction calls the facts by their name and their reign collapses...122

As was the case in his socio-psychology and his theory of one-dimensionality, Marcuse's theory of a new technics and a new form of revolution hinges in the final instance on his conceptualisation of art's trans-historical properties. It is to this field that we shall now turn.

##### 5. The Dual Character of Marcuse's Aesthetics

As a consequence of its position in relation to the two strands of his analysis of society, Marcuse's aesthetics also divides into two branches: one pointing to a possible future, the other concerned with the closed society. The one branch is founded on his conception of a new, libidinous

society being potentially possible given the achievements of automation, whereas the other variant centres on preserving an image of erotic reason in the one-dimensional.

Marcuse's discussion of a possible, libidinous future was based not only on his study of Freud but also on the interpretation of Kant and Schiller that he propounded in Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft. There Marcuse made use specifically of both Kant's notion of 'purposive purposelessness' and Schiller's conception of an 'aesthetic State'. Using these two ideas he established a political aesthetics which considered art to be the paradigm of a future society founded on play rather than alienated labour and which thus showed society to be dynamic. This first aesthetics therefore referred to what can be gained from an experience of art and did not concentrate on an interpretation of artworks themselves; it can thus be considered a theory of aesthetic experience.

Marcuse derived this intimate connection of art and playfulness from his study of Freud. First of all, he suggested, art was governed by Eros and therefore bound up with what he termed real necessity.<sup>123</sup> Accordingly, he viewed both art's production and consumption as libidinous forms of activity, an assertion which allowed him to claim that artistic labour, by virtue of its being libidinous in character, was free of repression:

Künstlerische Arbeit, wo sie echt ist, scheint aus einer verdrängungslosen Triebkonstellation zu erwachsen und verdrängungslose Ziele und Zwecke anzustreben... 124

Ignoring for the moment the problematic construct of 'authenticity' we can turn to the effect attributed to art in Marcuse's conceptualisation. Since art was 'free play' in a libidinous sense, Marcuse maintained it showed in its form what a future, non-repressive society could be and opposed the present state of things in the sense that 'free play' was not compatible with an administered society.<sup>125</sup>

Despite this orientation towards the future, Marcuse's aesthetics is not similar to Adorno's theory of aesthetic experience, for the concept of

the non-identical here is based causally on a conception of artistic alienation as Freudian sublimation,<sup>126</sup> and not on a study of the inner construction of the artwork. Although Marcuse emphasized the centrality of aesthetic form in the constitution of an image of non-repression, he did not deduce his findings in Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft from a study of particular artworks, as Adorno had done. Rather, he discussed the aesthetic form in general with a view to discovering the properties inherent in beauty that accentuate an experience of what could be a non-repressive future. Marcuse remarked:

Hinter der sublimierten ästhetischen Form kommt der unsublimierte Inhalt zum Vorschein: die Verhaftung der Kunst an das Lustprinzip ...Ästhetische Form ist sinnliche Form. 127

By virtue of its being bound up with the pleasure principle aesthetic form could be taken as the central governing principle on which to erect a future society, because such form could be extended to incorporate either the life-world beyond automation or even the labour inherent in automation itself. The foundations of a future, utopian society could therefore, Marcuse suggested, be laid on the basis of an experience of art.<sup>128</sup> Hence society could be changed and should not be considered closed.

Marcuse's second aesthetic position differed radically from the first in that it was not oriented towards the future, but was situated in the present, and accorded with his analysis of technological rationality. Rather than attempting to formulate a new concept of philosophical reason, as Adorno had done, Marcuse resituated reason in Eros. In the face of the one-dimensional society meta-psychological ideas became revolutionary<sup>129</sup> and their preserve Marcuse located in art. Thus in the one-dimensional society art became the sphere in which a knowledge or image of the reality behind the veil of ideology was kept alive:

The aesthetic dimension still retains a freedom of expression which enables the writer and artist to call men and things by their name - to name the otherwise unnameable. 130

Marcuse attributed this ability to pierce ideology to the artwork's

one addresses the present, the other draws from this present something for the future. The combination of outer and inner person Marcuse mentions attests to the continual interface in his writings between aesthetics and social theory.

Marcuse's thesis on technological rationality's inherent domination can, unlike his analysis of automation, only make use of the second aesthetic position. Since there is no possibility of a different future one can at most only hope that the idea of 'anotherness' hibernates within the hermetic society, ready to be resuscitated at a later date. Only at a remote time in the distant future could a utopia based on aesthetic experience be contemplated. In other words, the one aesthetics' orientation towards the future can, in the context of the one-dimensional society, only be contemplated from beyond that social system, whereas in Marcuse's earlier social theory it was a projection within that system. This difference will become clearer with an elaboration of the respective aesthetic positions.

#### 6. The Theory of Aesthetic Experience

Marcuse located his aesthetics of experience in the one-dimensional society. By virtue of an experience of art, he maintained, the stranglehold of the culture industry could be broken and society could subsequently be changed. Marcuse grounded the means of attack - art - in the imagination, a concept which is thus central to his aesthetics. Imagination, Marcuse argued, was on the one hand closely connected to the pleasure principle<sup>133</sup> and on the other hand formed the very basis of art. It was therefore by virtue of the imagination that erotic content became instilled in art. Equally, the imagination opposed instrumental reason in that it mediated between sensibility on the one side and theoretical and practical reason on the other.<sup>134</sup> In other words, the imagination was hybrid, for it was both sensuous and ideational, both erotic and sublimated. From this positioning Marcuse was able to deduce the existence of two forms of emancipatory knowledge in the imagination - and, by extension, in art. He stated first of all that:

Phantasie bewahrt - als Erkenntnis - das Bewußtsein der unauf- löslichen Spannung zwischen Idee und Realität, zwischen Möglich- keit und Wirklichkeit. Das ist der idealistische Kern des dialekt- ischen Materialismus. 135

Secondly, he coupled this form to another aspect of knowledge found in the imagination:

Die Phantasie sieht das Bild der Wiederversöhnung des Einzelnen mit dem Ganzen... Die Analyse der erkennenden Funktion der Phan- tasie wird so zur Ästhetik. 136

The theory of aesthetic experience, i.e. that embracing both art's applic- ation to the future and art as a symbol of what is false in society now, was thus judged by Marcuse to be a result of its production by the imagination.<sup>137</sup>

As a consequence of the two forms of knowledge that it involved, and its subversion of reality as a result of the 'language' it used,<sup>138</sup> the exper- ience of art, for Marcuse, broke the total alienation of the mind as well as keeping alive the possibility of a new, free society. Since a new society could be created on the basis of automation a cultural revolution, founded on the properties of the imagination present in art and led by a small elite, could bring about the necessary change of the social structure. This would open up society to the possibility of a different use of the base, if not an actual change of the base, Marcuse being ambiguous as to whether only production relations or also the productive forces would be altered.

This conception of the experience of art as the cornerstone of a cultural revolution is indebted both to Schiller's writings and to early Hegelian and German Romantic thought. Although in his later thought Hegel was to turn away from 'aesthetic experience and behaviour', in his early writings e.g. the 'Systemfragment' of 1793-97 - he allotted art a central function. As is the case in Marcuse's theory of aesthetic experience, Hegel held art to contain a future-orientated facility for reconciliation by virtue of which it became the hub potentially of an 'ethical totality' that could overcome Modernity's division of the world into physicality and spirituality. Reason, for Hegel as later for Marcuse, became an 'aesthetic act', sensuous-

ly tangible metapoesis.

Marcuse's aesthetics also mirrors the concern of Novalis and the Romantics with recreating the unity of life by poeticizing existence. For Marcuse, art depicted an 'ought' which had still to become an 'is', an idea similar to the Romantics' notion of 'sein' and 'sollen'. A world inhabited by Eros would offer a 'totality of life-meaning' and would also be based on the 'non-conceptuality' ('Nichtbegrifflichkeit') of free existence espoused by the Romantics and Marcuse alike.

The conception of aesthetic experience or, alternatively, aesthetic judgement must be distinguished from the concept of judgement that Kant devised. Kant had seen aesthetic judgement as a necessary and beneficial median between and complement of theoretical and practical reason in that it was intuitive and yet ethical.<sup>139</sup> For Marcuse, however, aesthetic judgement became the basis for an implementation of practical reason, for an injection of the 'sublime' into human existence, because aesthetic experience allowed for a new theoretical understanding of the world, namely one aligned to Eros not Logos, and thus provided the foundation for a new society.

Artistic form is connected in two ways to the establishment of a new society in Marcuse's work, both resting on the assumption that a consciousness of artistic form can prompt the erection of the new society (without this implying that art in the future will become reduced to society).<sup>140</sup> On the one hand, Marcuse argued that the form of art could be applied to the life-world, so that society would be informed by art's libidinous and non-dominatory principles. In essays in Neues Forum and New Left Review he spoke of "die Gesellschaft als Kunstwerk".<sup>141</sup> Such a relation between art and society would mean the abolition of surplus repression and the unleashing of human creativity, but it also implied that basic repression would still be required in the form of labour in order for necessities to be produced.<sup>142</sup> The underlying rationality of production (e.g. automation) would therefore remain unaffected by art's role as the informing principle of society.<sup>143</sup>

On the other hand, Marcuse also suggested that the aesthetic dimension should invade the sphere of material production, precisely to change the otherwise dominatory rationality of the production of necessities. His description of "the aesthetic as the possible Form of a free society"<sup>144</sup> thus takes on a new meaning. Intellectual and material production would merge, as a result of which the division of labour would cease to be an "Umgestaltung der Wirklichkeit".<sup>145</sup> Because Marcuse spoke of the experience of the aesthetic he was able to suggest that such an aesthetic consciousness could infiltrate and thereby subvert and sublate material production, whereas an aesthetic of the artwork, as is found in Adorno's writings, would resist such an extension to the material realm.<sup>146</sup> Art, in Marcuse's view, could become a "gesellschaftliche Produktivkraft."<sup>147</sup> There is a problem with this conception, for Marcuse lauded aesthetic experience for its quiescent, contemplative approach to life, and yet it is this same attitude which is to influence the production of the necessities of existence. This paradox of the active being passive and vice versa led Marcuse to reexamine the concepts of 'praxis' and 'necessity' in the context of his conceptualisation of the twofold application of aesthetic experience.

Marcuse deployed the concepts of freedom, necessity and praxis in a different way to their traditional usage within Marxist philosophy. Instead of the aesthetics compensating for difficulties encountered by a system of philosophy, as was the case in Adorno's work, Marcuse altered his philosophical framework out of an interest in aesthetics. The new concept of production in Marcuse's theory of aesthetic experience engendered a notion of praxis indebted to aesthetics that is concrete in a manner more physical than that found in classical Marxism, because praxis comes to be grounded in the libido and the senses. By fusing Kantian aesthetics and Marxist politics Marcuse defined praxis as a "Zweckmäßigkeit ohne Zwecke", a "Gesetzmäßigkeit ohne Gesetze."<sup>148</sup> Aesthetics thus becomes the basis for Marcuse's political philosophy.

His conceptualisation of praxis, however, meets with two difficulties.

Firstly, if Marcuse intended his notion of bourgeois art to contrast with instrumental praxis, how would production of anything other than artworks be possible in the future society? If, nevertheless, aesthetic experience governs production, then one must assume that the future society would be rendered one-dimensional in character. It would absorb art's form and style into its fabric and thereby prune art of any transcendent properties.<sup>149</sup>

Secondly, the treatment of nature and the environment as equal subjects rather than as objects implies a passive coexistence with nature instead of a 'working upon' it:

All joy and happiness derives from the ability to transcend Nature - a transcendence in which the mastery of Nature is itself subordinated to liberation and pacification of existence. All tranquility, all delight is the result of conscious mediation of autonomy and contradiction. 150

Because of its grounding in art, the new form of praxis is quietistic - centring on reaction, not action - as had been the case in Adorno's work.<sup>151</sup>

By any meaningful standards Marcuse's concept of 'aesthetic' praxis reveals itself to be a conception of non-praxis, of thought, as it was in Adorno's work:

Freedom originated indeed in the mind of man, in his ability to comprehend his world, and thus comprehension is praxis, in as much as it establishes a specific order of facts. 152

Marcuse's refounding of reason via a passage through aesthetic experience culminates in the replacement of a praxis of appropriation by a mentalized praxis on the part of the beholder of art. Eros opposes Logos, which in the original Greek meant 'action'. Hence, the opposite of Logos must also oppose action. Any change of society must surely be decidedly limited if founded on such a contemplative stance and yet Marcuse set out to find an appropriate catalyst which would generate change using precisely this new notion of praxis. His redefinition of praxis involved Marcuse redefining the category of necessity in aesthetic terms. If praxis and technics are held to be qualitatively other than those at present dominant, then the impetus that produces them will also be new. In this context Marcuse also maintained that necessity took on a new form in present society. Since society was repressive,



libidinous needs remained unfulfilled, the main need thus being for the social structure to be changed.<sup>153</sup> The need for change became true necessity, for without such a change no life could be true in aesthetic or libidinous terms. Marcuse stated:

If freedom is man's ability to determine his own life without depriving others of this ability, then freedom has never been a historical reality - to this very day. 154

In this sense freedom and necessity are closely allied in Marcuse's work. As a consequence, he had to rethink the traditional Marxist opposition of the two categories and the aesthetics again intervene in his social theory and cause it to be modified.

Two possible relations could obtain between freedom and necessity if the aesthetic and libidinous moments were the constituents of freedom, for, as we have seen, Marcuse conceived of such a society in two distinct ways: with automation either affected or unaffected by the aesthetic-libidinous element. On the one hand, if material production is held to be separate from the aesthetic-libidinous social structure, which is by definition free, then the former can be judged to provide for necessity. Necessity and freedom would in this case be completely separated, whereas in late capitalism they are held to interplay. On the other hand, if present technology is perceived to be ideological and the productive forces were thus changed to accord with aesthetic-libidinous criteria in the new society, then within that society freedom and necessity could, and indeed would coincide. Marcuse stated in Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft:

Es ist die Sphäre jenseits der Arbeitsteilung, die die Freiheit und die Erfüllung definiert, und es ist die Definition der menschlichen Existenz im Sinne dieser Sphäre, die die Verneinung des Lustprinzips ausmacht. 155

In other words, by altering the productive forces to accord with aesthetic-libidinous criteria, the very distinction between freedom and necessity would become obsolete.<sup>156</sup>

Marcuse thus used aesthetics to aid his social theory. The aesthetic-libidinous criteria although, as we saw above, essentially passive, ensure

that ideology critique is injected with a subjective moment that is lost in vulgar materialism. In his vision of subject and object meeting in a change of the base Marcuse reintegrated the subjectivity of Marx's Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts into a critique of political economy. However, this interlinking of a theory of aesthetic experience with his theory of society and his philosophical categories is not without its drawbacks for the theory as an aesthetics. The interconnection of political and aesthetic statements deprived Marcuse's work on art of any claim it might otherwise have laid to providing an aesthetics.<sup>157</sup> In the manner in which they are presented in Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft and An Essay on Liberation, Marcuse's remarks on art do not form an aesthetics, for they do not specify how one is to judge artistic properties, rather they ascertain in what fashion art could form the substance of a future life. Art is examined not as a compensation for the cul-de-sac reached by social theory but for the paradigmatic manner in which it shows that social theory in general to be still valid. Unlike Adorno, Marcuse did not outline the current form the aesthetic qualities took, but was interested in their general application in terms of the future. Accordingly, Marcuse did not address the questions central to a Marxist aesthetics, namely the positioning of art as an object in society and society's infiltration into art. Instead he produced a theory of society and then a theory of art's future function within it derived from art's general properties.<sup>158</sup> These criticisms will be discussed once the relationship between the two strands of Marcuse's aesthetics and his political philosophy have been treated in greater depth.

The first link between Marcuse's aesthetics and his political philosophy is formed by the reliance of his aesthetics on his concept of Eros. The founding of Eros in art, and thus the construction of an image of an alternative society, must be seen from this perspective. Here a parallel exists between Marcuse and Adorno, for Marcuse attempted by means of the image of an aesthetic-libidinous society to refound the critique of society, just as Adorno resorted to aesthetics in order to preserve the critique. The philosophical

concepts of nature and instrumental rationality that Marcuse provided are both inadequate to this task with the result that only by using the theory of aesthetic experience was he able to ground the theoretical critique offered by his elaboration of the concept of Eros.<sup>159</sup> The social theory cannot stand on its own two feet, and, consequently, neither can the aesthetics. Marcuse tried, nevertheless, to examine artworks historically in order to give his aesthetics substance. Despite his detaching of aesthetics from an interpretation of artworks, as in the statement: "Nach meinem Begriff ist die Kunst nur Ästhetisierung von Inhalten,"<sup>160</sup> Marcuse still located artworks according to time and place. This is to be seen both in his characterisation of the political moment of art, namely that the artwork had a progressive political function to play in certain historical situations, and in the proposal that in certain situations the sublimation of artistic energy which made art possible was a positive feature in that it opposed the prevalent 'repressive desublimation'. This historical specification, it must be said, applies only to the function, not to the form or quality of art.

A conservative strand inheres in this concern with the possible functions of art. The political function of art was found by Marcuse to be a solely aesthetic property;<sup>161</sup> he situated it in art's transhistorical form. Consequently he rejected such avant-garde artforms such as Surrealism, for he found that the de-aestheticisation which these promoted ran counter to an emancipation of the senses in society. Although this may have been far from the Surrealists' intentions, Marcuse argued that "jede unsublimierte, unmittelbare Darstellung ist zur Unwahrheit verurteilt."<sup>162</sup> He thus repeated Schiller's warning against any emancipation of the 'idea' at the cost of an emancipation of the senses.

Marcuse found the two forms of emancipation balanced in the liberal bourgeois artwork in contrast to most 20th century avant-garde art where this balance was altered quite radically. Unlike Adorno, Marcuse rejected most

avant-garde and 'progressive' artforms on the somewhat lame grounds that a merger of art and revolution had to occur in "der ästhetischen Dimension, in der Kunst selbst."<sup>163</sup> But it is precisely this fusion that most avant-garde art archives. Surrealism (the main target of Marcuse's criticisms) included. At most, therefore, Marcuse's charge can be levelled only against overtly political art, which, be it street theatre or cabaret, documentary theatre or agitprop, automatically lost any status as art if one applies Marcuse's definition (although he was on occasion to praise it). Marcuse's theory of aesthetic experience thus relies on a definition of art culled from the liberal bourgeois artwork rather than from art in general. It is here that the connection of the theory to the other strand of Marcuse's aesthetics, namely his interest in affirmative culture, becomes most apparent. Marcuse's writings on art have been seen above to be political in character. To the extent that they can be called an aesthetics at all one would have to speak of a 'Tendenzästhetik'.<sup>164</sup> His critique of reason as unreason changed in line with overt political considerations at the time of writings,<sup>165</sup> and, as Heinz Lubasz has observed:

Das vielleicht anfälligste Phänomen an dem Wechsel in Marcuses Positionen ist, daß er keineswegs von theorieimmanenten Entwicklungen der Kritischen Theorie selbst herrührt, sondern aus der Praxis. 166

Hence Marcuse's statements on aesthetics changed in the course of the post-War era. In Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft and again in An Essay on Liberation Kant and Schiller's ideas were adopted and adapted in an optimistic theory of aesthetic experience that culminated in Marcuse's conception of a 'new sensibility'. Art was considered to be the instigator of a change in consciousness, but was restricted solely to this role. In contrast, in One Dimensional Man, Konterrevolution und Revolte and, lastly, in Die Permanenz der Kunst, Marcuse changed his approach for those political considerations render his writings more pessimistic in tone. Although still adhering to the fundamental relation between free nature and art, he retracted his claim that aesthetic experience could change the world:

Als ästhetisches Phänomen hebt die kritische Funktion der Kunst sich selbst auf. gerade das Verhaftetsein an die Form entkräftet und verfälscht die Negation der Unfreiheit in der Kunst. 167

He came instead to view bourgeois art as a preserve of truth, thus inverting his 1937 analysis of affirmative culture. In the face of a closed society bourgeois art was held to be progressive: "...der rückschrittliche, politische Inhalt wird absorbiert, aufgehoben in der künstlerischen Form: im Werk als Literatur."<sup>168</sup> The bourgeois canon of literature was now regarded not as the source of the future but as the sine qua non of literature. Marcuse championed the 'form' of art in opposition to the 'artwork' as an historical entity and universalized artistic form for its transcendent properties. Before embarking on further criticism, however, it is necessary to investigate more closely this jettisoning of an aesthetics of experience in favour of an aesthetics of bourgeois art.

#### 7. Affirmative Culture Revisited

In his various discussions of bourgeois art Marcuse suggested that the essence of art was its portrayal of an unfulfilling society; this portrayal linked aesthetic form and Eros. Despite the fact that art itself inevitably functioned as wish-fulfilment, he argued that it nevertheless had a demythologizing, materialist function:

Wo diese Spannung zwischen Affirmation und Negation, zwischen Freude und Leid, zwischen höherer und materieller Kultur nicht mehr besteht, wo das Werk die dialektische Einheit dessen, was ist, und dessen, was sein kann (und sollte), nicht mehr aushält, hat Kunst ihre Wahrheit, ja, sich selbst verloren. 169

On the basis of this definition of art Marcuse was able to propose that the relation between art and reality was one of art's transcendence of society: "Das authentische Kunstwerk steht unter dem Gesetz des Bestehenden, indem es dieses Gesetz übersteigt."<sup>170</sup> Fiction, founded on a metalanguage,<sup>171</sup> created a 'reality' that contested the validity of social reality. This, for Marcuse, was artistic transcendence.

As early as Die Gesellschaftslehre des Sowjetmarxismus, however, Marcuse ascertained that the closed or one-dimensional society threatened such art-

istic transcendence:

Ihrer gesellschaftlichen Basis Widerstand zu leisten beraubt, ist die Kultur zu einem Zahnrad in der Maschine geworden - Bestandteil des verwalteten privaten und öffentlichen Daseins. 172

The one-dimensional society signalled this end of art in a number of ways. Firstly, it tapped the sublimating energies necessary for the production of art by means of 'repressive desublimation',<sup>173</sup> thus eliminating the faculty of imagination.<sup>174</sup> Secondly, the one-dimensional society made impossible any artistic depiction of itself, since its totalitarian nature could not be communicated. In summary:

Das Absterben der Organe für künstlerische Entfremdung ist das Ergebnis materieller Prozesse. Die totalitäre Organisation der Gesellschaft, ihre Gewalt und Aggressivität sind in den inneren und äußeren Räumen eingedrungen, in dem die extremen Qualitäten von Kunst noch erfahren und guten Glaubens akzeptiert werden könnten. 175

The more liberal bourgeois art lost its socially dominant position, however, the more dissynchronous and in so doing the more negative it became.<sup>176</sup> By judging art's dissynchronicity to be negative, i.e. positive, Marcuse simultaneously criticized art's opposite, material culture. Material culture was negative precisely because productive forces lagged behind what could be made of them. It is because of this dissynchronous quality that Marcuse places so much faith in the liberal bourgeois artwork (unlike Lukács, of course, who championed the work of bourgeois writers such as Tolstoy precisely on account of the totalising property he discerned in their work). Indeed, Marcuse commenced the central chapter on art and revolution in Konterrevolution und Revolte by quoting Marx on dissynchronicity.<sup>177</sup> This quality was generated, he maintained, by the structure of fiction from which an artwork drew its vitality:

Die Fiktion schafft ihre eigene Realität: eine Welt von Bedeutungen, die gültig bleibt, auch wo sie von der bestehenden Realität Lügen gestraft wird. 178

It is to the validity of this central position which the dissynchronous character of liberal bourgeois art is accorded in Marcuse's conception of a cultural revolution that we shall now turn, for surely it can be objected

that bourgeois artworks do not contain only transcendent properties but also something of the needs of bourgeois society from whence they originated.

Marcuse grounded the artwork's dissynchronicity in his category of remembrance (the connection between aesthetic and psychological remembrance being suggested in the last sentence of Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft). In the one-dimensional society aesthetic remembrance, in which past artworks jolted and stimulated the memory, jarred the observer into critical thought.<sup>179</sup> At a point in time where 'civilization' dominated 'culture', remembering 'culture' had become a subversive activity and it was the dissynchronous character of the bourgeois artwork, Marcuse argued, which kept such subversion alive. In its opposition to the one-dimensional society, the bourgeois artwork could be seen now as revolutionary in so far as it negated present reality:

Die Theorie bringt die Wirklichkeit auf ihrem Begriff; die Kunst ist Versinnlichung des Begriffs, das bedeutet, verändernde Entwirklichung der gegebenen Realität. 180

Marcuse supported this claim by stating that the erstwhile affirmative values were now objectively negative, i.e. positive with regard to the future. These values persisted in an image of society's 'otherness' by means of the artistic, sublimating form in which they were embedded. This recalls Marcuse's suggestion that artistic form could no longer present such transcendent values, because the production and understanding of such form was precluded by a one-dimensional understanding of the world. In other words, Marcuse contended that as of 1945 (i.e. with the end of overt totalitarianism) it was no longer possible to produce artworks. His theory thereby takes up Adorno's dictum that after Auschwitz no poetry could be written as well as subscribing to the thesis that the end of art had come. This teleological argument thus refers back to the mainpoint made in Marcuse's discussion of the dissynchronous artwork, namely that the form of art was the transcendent value inherent in art.

In the absence of current artistic production, Marcuse maintained, affirmative artworks exhibited a series of qualities lost in the one-dimensional society.

Primarily, they reminded the beholder that a private sphere did once exist, even though this realm of individuality was itself threatened by liberal capitalism.<sup>181</sup> At the same time these anachronistic artworks showed the harmlessness of Idealism by indicating that nothing could be achieved if individuality were established only in the realm of fiction.<sup>182</sup> They indicated that a future artistic sensibility could pervade individuality creating a positive 'unity' of individual and society, whereas at present mass culture's ever-widening domain created a 'negative unity' of the same.

More fundamentally, Marcuse proposed that the autonomous liberal bourgeois artwork was itself an entity that could not be subsumed under society,<sup>183</sup> an opposition mirrored in the artwork's remembrance of individuality. Unlike Adorno, Marcuse did not, however, trace this quality within the contours of the artwork's construction. All these qualities attributed by Marcuse to affirmative artworks are based on certain presuppositions that he made about the character of art. A precondition for the negating properties of these artworks is, for example, that they can be understood to be oppositional, that is to say, that the values they bear are recognisable. Indeed, all Marcuse's remarks on the dissynchronous artwork rely, somewhat paradoxically, on the assumed existence of a beholder of the artwork who is able to view these the artworks in this manner, namely to be able to abstract from the particularity of the artwork's fiction to a more general, universal theoretical attitude. However, Marcuse's conceptualisation started from the assumption that such recognition was impossible. His argumentation that affirmative artworks are now positive would thus indicate that he did not believe society was factually closed, but was only tendentially becoming so, for artworks, at least, function to prevent such an outcome. His aesthetics thus proves the starting point of his social theory to be wrong. In Die Permanenz der Kunst, his last work, Marcuse addressed only the terrain marked out as dissynchronous culture. As had been the case in Konterrevolution und Revolte and One-Dimensional Man, he played Surrealism off



against past liberal bourgeois art on the grounds that Surrealism broke with the artistic form that was necessary if art were to oppose reality. What the outline of dissynchronous art thus essentially depicts is an aesthetics of past art since none can be made in the present, there being no contemporary art. This is quite the opposite of the bridge between theory and praxis that surely had to be provided if the aesthetics of experience were to be anchored in the dissynchronous artwork. In this regard, C Fred Alford's remark is most apt:

In The Aesthetic Dimension, he (Marcuse) comes to terms with the fact that certain elements in his vision of liberation, particularly those pertaining to the 'resurrection of nature' will never be realized. 184

The theory of aesthetic experience and the aesthetics of dissynchronous art do not coalesce, as we had initially supposed, but remain two separate approaches to the question of art's relation to the closed society.

The divergence between the two strands of his aesthetics is most noticeable when Marcuse turns to the connection between artistic beauty and natural beauty. Marcuse's argument had been that the portrayal of beauty as aesthetic form approximated to the portrait of beautiful (as free) nature both in and external to mankind. The nature presented in artistic beauty pertains, however, only to the future: "it (art) presents as being that which is not."<sup>185</sup> Art is thus mimetic in the sense Adorno gave the word. Art's purposive purposelessness mirrors that of a future nature, it mediates between mankind and a future treatment of nature.<sup>186</sup> Consequently, in Marcuse's opinion, nature and art merged only when viewed from the standpoint of a 'new sensibility', i.e. of aesthetic experience. The transcendence innate in artistic form allowed for a transcendent attitude towards nature, freeing reason from naturalisation, i.e. instrumentality.<sup>187</sup>

This relation of art and nature implies, however, an opposition between history on the one hand and nature and art on the other, for nature has to be construed as a quality or quantity outside man's perception of it (otherwise it could not be regarded as transcendent). Precisely this meta-

physical property is omitted from Marcuse's discussion of the relation of art to nature in his analysis of dissynchronous culture where he held nature to exist in a form beyond that accessible to artistic form. He was unable, therefore, to draw a parallel between artistic beauty and natural beauty with regard to bourgeois art:

The beautiful as Form of such a totality (of life) can never be natural, immediate, it must be created and mediated by reason and imagination in the most exacting sense. Thus it is the result of technique..., a technique freed from the destructive powers. 188

Thus, his aesthetics of experience cannot be grounded in his aesthetics of bourgeois art.

This does not mean to say that Marcuse was only able to conjecture as to the relation of art and nature, or between art and history, in his discussion of dissynchronous art. The opposition between art and history in Marcuse's analysis of dissynchronous culture is not reducible to the glaring lack of periodization in his writings,<sup>189</sup> but must be regarded as an unfortunate logical consequence of his having implanted his notion of 'transcendancy' in affirmative culture. Bereft of such transcendancy, affirmative culture would retain no truth content and the stark opposition Marcuse constructed between anti-capitalist capitalist art and late capitalism would be forfeited: "Als 'Ideologie' setzt Kunst die herrschende Ideologie außer Kraft."<sup>190</sup> Marcuse failed to reflect on this relation in terms of the historicity of artistic form, as had Adorno, so that he was unable to explain what forms were anti-capitalist and what made them so. (His over-generalised remarks on Surrealism are particularly revealing in this context.) Rather, for Marcuse, all artistic form per se was anti-capitalist, and all artistic form was dissynchronous,<sup>191</sup> i.e. no art existed other than past, bourgeois artworks, or artworks obeying the rules of these dissynchronous pieces of art. Admittedly, Marcuse is more consistent than Adorno on this point, but he pays a heavy theoretical price for such consistency, as his theory becomes a complete generalisation.

The discussion uncovers a central problem in Marcuse's aesthetics of bour-

geois art. Marcuse held authentic, i.e. liberal bourgeois, art to transcend 'history' (understood as social history)<sup>192</sup> without, however, seeing fit to grant its own authentic history. He argued:

Diese ästhetischen Formen sind geschichtliche Formen der kritischen Transzendenz, mit der die Kunst die Veränderung der Gesellschaft begleitet. 193

Form itself was thus accorded no internal development, but hypostatized in contrast to the de-aestheticisation or deformation of art that Marcuse perceived, for example, in Surrealism. Consequently, Marcuse opposed art to society without relating them, whereas Adorno, Benjamin and Lukács, for example, all devoted much of their work to this problematic relation.

The opposition of art to society and social history must be specified somewhat further. The artistic form that Marcuse opposed to society was the form of affirmative culture understood as aesthetic form in general. Yet, when speaking of such affirmative culture Marcuse referred to early bourgeois culture, to the culture of liberal capitalism. (his references to Brecht, particularly in Kontrevolution und Revolte and One Dimensional Man, cannot be taken as an exception to this rule, partly because of their disastrous maltreatment of Brecht's central ideas and partly because the quotations are meant to depict an ephemeral, intangible image of freedom rather than aesthetic form itself). The opposition he envisaged between art and society must be regarded as being between dissynchronous culture and late capitalism. Marcuse observed in Die Gesellschaftslehre des Sowjetmarxismus that:

Je mehr die Basis auf die Ideologie übergreift und mit der bestehenden Ordnung gleichschaltet, desto mehr wird die ideologische Sphäre, die von der Wirklichkeit am entferntesten ist (Kunst, Philosophie) eben wegen dieser Entfernung zur letzten Zufluchtsstätte der Opposition gegen diese Ordnung. 194

He thus saw a liberal ideology existing alongside a later ideology. The generalisations Marcuse drew from this specific historical context are untenable in that they belie the specificity of such an opposition. Thus, the period of transition from liberal to late capitalism represented in and exemplified by the works of, for instance, Kafka, Joyce and Proust,

or even the Surrealists, is not only left relatively untouched by Marcuse, but reduced falsely to innate properties of artistic form Marcuse derived from the opposition of art to society.<sup>195</sup>

It was an awareness of the importance of this transitional period and of the implications of the three aforementioned authors that led to the antagonism between Adorno and Lukács and to the interest Benjamin and Brecht showed in the period. Whereas Marcuse avoided Adorno and Lukács' repetitive championing of one particular genre to the detriment of others by spanning in his work all of early bourgeois art, he nevertheless offered little more than a tentative piece of literary criticism of that art.<sup>196</sup> In Marcuse's construction of an opposition between past art and present society such art's form should have a social history, for the form must at least in part be the result of the past society in which it originated. However, Marcuse ignored any consideration of such historicity except for his occasional mention of early bourgeois ideals; he engaged in no discussion of the characteristics of, say, autonomy.<sup>197</sup> In this context he failed to mediate the antagonism of art to society in terms of two inter-related, albeit epistemologically separate spheres. He relegated the content of the artwork to social history, while holding the form to be transcendent, although quite how it is so remains unexplained,<sup>198</sup> for often Marcuse's explanations were no more than mere assertions, as for example: "Die künstlerischen Bilder haben an der bestimmten Negation der bestehenden Wirklichkeit und damit an der höchsten Freiheit festgehalten."<sup>199</sup> The quality of transcendence is asserted, but not explained causally, in terms of the bourgeois artwork's autonomy.

This lack of causal explanation is attributable to the function Marcuse judged affirmative art's form to possess in the present. Marcuse deemed early bourgeois artworks to negate the present because of the symbolic value they bore in opposition to the present. This construction of a symbolic opposition goes some way toward explaining why Marcuse offered no socio-historical discussion of artistic form, and yet Marcuse's portrayal of the opposition

of art to society is still devoid of any rigorous historical foundation. The opposition of past art to present society is symbolic and will always be so, even when opposition to society is founded on aesthetic experience, for otherwise Marcuse would reduce art to society in the future free state. In other words, Marcuse's two aesthetics are flawed not just because of the inaccuracies they reveal in their point of departure (the theory of the closed society) but above all in their very linkage. Marcuse's aesthetics of experience can only be erected on general symbolic properties and, as a consequence, his aesthetics of the bourgeois artwork is emptied of any historical materialist content. Art, for Marcuse, can only be a political force as art,<sup>200</sup> but this does not excuse his omission of any mention of art's social constitution. Just as the theory of aesthetic experience was found to contribute little to an historical materialist aesthetics, in the same way the renewed attention that Marcuse paid to affirmative culture created more difficulties than positive new initiatives for such an aesthetics.

#### 8. Conclusion

It follows from the above outline of the problematic character of Marcuse's two aesthetics that a distinction between 'political' and 'aesthetic' causation lies at the heart of his work. His explicitly aesthetic writings are informed by a 'political' intention rather than a wish to further an aesthetics. Hence the hybrid term 'Tendenzästhetik' is an accurate label for his writings on aesthetics. Unlike Adorno, who resorted to aesthetics in the erroneous sociological and epistemological belief that no other form of knowledge of truth was possible, Marcuse made use of aesthetic categories to underpin his social theory,<sup>201</sup> or rather his view of social change. The result is not an aesthetics that can stand on its own but instead two disparate theoretical strands both of which rely on overtly political writings for their legitimation. Die Permanenz der Kunst, as a book solely treating of aesthetic questions, may seem to provide an exception but closer scrutiny reveals its indebtedness to the more specifically socio-political texts,

Konterrevolution und Revolte and 'Protosocialisme et Capitalisme'. Furthermore, the manner in which Marcuse fused his remarks on aesthetics with his thoughts on feminism is typical of his use of aesthetics since Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft.<sup>202</sup> His political intentions go some way towards explaining the drift away from a theory of artistic production in the direction of a theory of art's reception which characterises Marcuse's work<sup>203</sup> and at the same time marks it off from Adorno's writings, despite Marcuse's reference to Adorno's aesthetics as his guiding principle.<sup>204</sup> They do not, however, detract from the evident weaknesses of his aesthetics.

The dominant factors that influenced Marcuse's aesthetic writings were undoubtedly the Cold War, his theory of Eros, the 1960s student movement, and that movement's petering out and refoundation in the 1970s in the ecology and peace movements. It is in the aftermath of the student movement that Marcuse rejects so radically any activist art but, as we have seen, this pessimistic view of such art coexisted with an optimism with regard to Eros. Indeed, the category of Eros essentially links Marcuse's theory of aesthetic experience and his conception of dissynchronous artworks, welding the two together in a concept of aesthetic-political truth.<sup>205</sup> The value of artistic form resides in it being imbued with pleasure and sensuality, i.e. the manner in which the beholder is affected by it, how he perceives it.

Beauty, the central determinant of art for Marcuse, is thus a beauty of an erotic nature.<sup>206</sup> This beauty dons a political mantle in Marcuse's work,<sup>207</sup> for the erotic qualities of beauty are judged to provide a liberating, emancipatory image of a possible future reality, although Marcuse always insisted that the beauty of art was grounded by means of artistic form in the dialectical opposition of affirmation and negation,<sup>208</sup> i.e. in the present. Art's radicality, the power of its beauty, lies in artistic form, for only by virtue of its form can art transcend social determination.<sup>209</sup> Marcuse, however, proceeded to hypostatise this opposition between art and society by declaring that art always had been and always would be diametrically opposed to society<sup>210</sup> (although, as we saw earlier, this general position

is derived from a specific historical situation and is actually contradicted by Marcuse's claims for the future society). With the advent of the 20th century, form, as the unification of the general and the particular, of nature and man, no longer seemed possible for Marcuse, for the contemporary artwork was no longer able to generate an image of 'otherness', of the 'universal', as had earlier narrative fiction.

Marcuse based this hypostatisation of art's opposition to present society on art's innate opposition to any society, owing to its adherence to Eros, a category so fundamental he termed it the 'base beneath the base'.<sup>211</sup> Nonetheless, Marcuse also argued that artistic form itself could only express such conflicts at a certain historical juncture, at a point when the shield of affirmative reception allowed the production of a particular form of art. In other words, the theories of aesthetic experience and of dissynchronous art culminated and converged in Marcuse's location of such external libidinous material qualities in one particular historical artform, one which - moreover - he did not regard as historical. The ontological undertones of Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft and Dialektik der Aufklärung come to the fore in this meeting-point of the two strands of his aesthetics. The difficulties Marcuse faced in grounding concrete change in an ideational sphere have in a sense taken their toll on the epistemological supports of his social theory.

The statement in Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft that death is "ein Ausdruck des ewigen Kampfes gegen Leiden und Unterdrückung"<sup>212</sup> contains in nuce the fatal blow Marcuse delivered to his own aesthetics. The insurmountable differences between an historical materialist theory of society and a psycho-analytical philosophy stultifies the aesthetics at their most crucial point of development, namely when the specificity of art is to be made responsible for art's transcendence of society. The hidden discourse on the relation between mankind and nature that forms the epistemological basis of Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft also extends to Marcuse's writings on aesthetics after 1941. The attempt to refound the concept of reason in the concept of

Eros and thus in the concrete nature of the artwork led to a loss of specificity, if not, indeed, to the creation of a vicious circle in Marcuse's analysis of art. He was not able to characterise artistic forms as historical artefacts without forfeiting the transcendent properties of Eros, and yet he could only describe Eros in concrete form by pointing to specific past instances of art.

Marcuse's solution does not escape from the circularity of his predicament, for the suggestion that a past artistic form is artistic form per se does not remove the difference between the historically particular and the transcendent metahistorical general. Perhaps the flaw can be traced to that point in Enlightenment thinking when art was situated between reason and nature. Marcuse's attempt to ground materialistically art's position as one of intermediary between the two concepts (since to Marcuse's mind reason and nature both obey the rule of Eros) follows the same path, for it begs the question of how, in an historical materialist aesthetics, art can be regarded as both subject and object, as both rational and irrational, as both historical and yet transcendent of history. Here again the problem which both Adorno and Marcuse tried to solve becomes apparent, but their respective solutions are not ultimately adequate to the task. At most they mark out for future research the avenues of inquiry to be avoided. It remains now to analyse how Löwenthal faced up to the problems of Pollock's social theory in the period following the dismantling of the Institut(e) in New York.



C H A P T E R 11 : LÖWENTHAL : LITERARY SOCIOLOGY AND MASS CULTURE

As was the case with Marcuse's work, situating Löwenthal's work in the context of post-War critical theory is made difficult by his geographical separation from the Institut(e). Löwenthal parted company with the Institut(e) at Morningside Heights at roughly the same time as Marcuse but worked with Adorno and Horkheimer on the last section of Dialektik der Aufklärung and to some extent on the Studies in Prejudice project, producing with Norbert Guterman a description of fascist agitation. However, he preferred to remain in the United States rather than return to Frankfurt in 1949, working first in New York for the 'Voice of America' and then as a Professor of Sociology at Berkeley, University of California, where he still lives. In the last few years he has emerged into the limelight once occupied by Adorno, Horkheimer and Marcuse, and his work is now being studied for its own sake rather than as a key to Institut(e) matters in general and critical theory in particular. It is, though, precisely the connection of his work to Adorno and Horkheimer's later work that we wish to study here.

The work that he undertook after 1941 can be divided into two related fields: an elaboration and elucidation of his sociology of literature and an investigation of the background to popular culture. However, the work he has done in both these fields has gone relatively unnoticed.<sup>1</sup> Bar a Festschrift for his 80th birthday, a few reviews of his books and the occasional footnote referring to them,<sup>2</sup> work on the sociology of literature or on popular culture has tended to cite either Adorno or Horkheimer when speaking of the Frankfurt School and thereby to ignore Löwenthal's contribution, a neglect of his works after 1941 which also persists in most readers and texts on the Frankfurt School. In a sense W.Martin Lüdke's comment is representative of attitudes towards Löwenthal:

Sein Begriff der Ideologiekritik ist noch an einem, Hegel wie Marx gleichermaßen verpflichteten, Verfahren der bestimmten Negation orientiert. Löwenthal teilt hier noch nicht die Adornosche Annahme eines 'universellen Verblendungszusammenhangs'. 3

Lüdke refers here solely to Löwenthal's work on the sociology of literature and regards it as bearing no connection with the writings on popular culture Löwenthal authored. As will be outlined below, such a separation seems arbitrary. In the examination of his earlier work we detected a singular purity in his approach to ideology critique and non-identity theory and one which was alien to the alterations in the theories implemented by Adorno, Horkheimer and Marcuse. This need not imply that this distinctness is upheld after the disbanding of the Institut(e) proper. Indeed, a brief glance at Löwenthal's first essay after leaving the Institut(e) Terror's Atomization of Man and at some of his remarks in the interview Helmut Dubiel conducted with him shows that these do not bear out Lüdke's suggestion. In discussing Nazi terror, and its attempt to effect a "complete forgetting of history" and its partial success in making the victim lose "his consciousness of the gulf between himself and his tormentors,"<sup>4</sup> Löwenthal moved in territory similar to that of Dialektik der Aufklärung. In Mitmachen wollte ich nie, he spoke of the new quality of fascism as being neither its political economy nor its petit-bourgeois mythology, but its thorough politicisation of society, i.e. its 'total mobilization' of the population. It was this last quality, Löwenthal maintained, that members of the Frankfurt School found to be fascism's most terrible feature.

In contrast to our findings, he considered the School to have been influenced by this aspect of fascism more than by the theories of Pollock and Neumann and he thus denied the existence of any rigorous connection between political economy and the global historico-political sweep of Dialektik der Aufklärung, attempting instead to force a merger of Marcuse's social theory with that of Adorno and Horkheimer.

Despite his inaccurate assessment of Dialektik der Aufklärung's origins the similarity between his views and those of Adorno and Horkheimer extends beyond their theory of anti-semitism. He stated in Terror's Atomization of Man: "Mankind today has so tremendously improved its technology as to

render itself largely superfluous."<sup>5</sup> He went on to mention the themes Pollock had elaborated on, potential mass unemployment, manipulated production by the state etc., and to adjudge these to be a precondition for future terror and institutionalised administration. In words reminiscent of the chapter in Dialektik der Aufklärung on the culture industry Löwenthal remarked:

It is not so much that people believe in these configurations of stereotypes as that they themselves become stereotyped appendages of this or that big cultural or political monopoly...The cultural monopoly, integrating a whole chain of attitudes, itself exercises a psychologically terroristic impact to which the individual yields... The dreams of Western civilization may still become reality if mankind can free itself from its use of human beings as surplus or commodities or means. 6

The concepts of instrumental rationality and of administered culture clearly converge in the above passage. In the following discussion we will therefore endeavour to pinpoint exactly how this influence exerted by Dialektik der Aufklärung is reflected in Löwenthal's writings and in what manner it coexists with the 'determinate negation' Lüdke correctly perceives as forming the framework of Löwenthal's work on literature.<sup>7</sup> In this way the relation between Löwenthal's work after 1941 and that of his erstwhile colleagues will become clear.

The relation to Dialektik der Aufklärung has to be traced in two separate, albeit interrelated fields, for Löwenthal distinguished starkly between a sociological approach to art on the one hand and to popular culture on the other. He asserted that the two contained different forms of truth and that these truths could only be uncovered by means of divergent strategies.<sup>8</sup> The different forms of truth inherent in the two fields were, in other words, taken by Löwenthal as his respective definitions of 'art' and 'popular culture', and these truths were then subsequently shown to exist by applying the two distinct methodologies in their respective fields. The definitions of 'art' and 'popular culture' therefore predetermined their respective qualities whereas precisely these were supposed to first be established in the course of research.

Löwenthal took an 'immanent' approach to art, one much the same in character

as the methodology Adorno adhered to. Löwenthal explained this methodology as follows:

Emphatically stated, the analysis of literature, even for the sociologist, remains and ought to remain one of immanence. It begins and ends with the artist's statement...an attempt to study the social ambience of intimate and private matters in literature and to try to show that...these are specifically conditioned and determined by ...a specific social climate and ethos. 9

That is to say, Löwenthal commenced his study of literature from within the artwork and attempted to pursue the 'artist's statement', rather than, as is now common in sociological approaches to literature, perceiving the artwork to be located in a wider social context and examining this context.<sup>10</sup>

This wider constellation, however, is not ignored, for Löwenthal scrutinised it carefully in his work on popular culture. Conversely, he suggested that mass culture could be studied and understood reductively, i.e. it could be held to be a direct reflection of society whereas the same could not be said of art.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, an investigation of mass culture provided a description of the framework in which art existed and therefore the definitions of art and popular culture became interlinked, just as the separate studies of each determined one another.<sup>12</sup>

Löwenthal defined popular culture both as signifying spatially the (physical) surroundings of the artwork and also in terms of its content and structure as that which could not be examined by means of the criteria applied to an analysis of authentic artworks. It was, in other words, art's antithesis. Since it could not be examined in the same manner as art, Löwenthal had to conclude that what characterised popular culture was its lack of immanence. The fact that popular culture had a different truth to that possessed by art was a result of its different structure. The truth that defined it was accordingly purely sociological and had no epistemological status. Adorno and Horkheimer had found that mass culture obeyed laws different to those which informed art in that mass cultural products were produced as commodities. Löwenthal took this difference a priori to be the definition of mass culture, rather than subjecting mass culture to critical investigation, as

Adorno and Horkheimer had done, so that it remains to be seen whether this definition can be accorded any other status than that of an assumption. Such an approach, however, has the tactical advantage that it leaves Löwenthal more room to explore the structural functions of popular culture in society instead of having to concentrate on determining its constitution.

The main disadvantage in Löwenthal's definition is that it forced him to define art in terms of it being constituted as "the counterconcept to popular culture":

Today, artistic products are losing the character of spontaneity more and more and are being replaced by the phenomena of popular culture, which are nothing but a manipulated reproduction of reality as it is... 13

This statement can be construed to signify that art, by virtue of the immanence of its form, surpasses a reproduction of society: it is transcendent. Consequently, art can be defined as that which possesses such a transcendent form. Moreover, according to Löwenthal this form allows mankind an "increase in insight" and "genuine experience as a step to greater individual fulfilment."<sup>14</sup> Why this should be the case has still to be assessed. First of all, however, the question must be addressed of whether Löwenthal determined the existence of these qualities in art or whether they were implied a priori by the immanent methodology he used.

Löwenthal did not analyse art either for its contemporaneity or for its dissynchronicity but sociologically,<sup>15</sup> i.e. outside the framework of a prescriptive or a political aesthetics as elaborated respectively by Adorno and Marcuse. Löwenthal avoided both these positions for two specific reasons. Firstly, he argued, a work's conformism or non-conformism could not be decided solely by means of an immanent analysis of the artwork in question,<sup>16</sup> and, secondly, he considered that to treat an artwork purely as a piece of 'culture', e.g. as 'beautiful' form, reduced its "oppositional thrust and impact."<sup>17</sup> Unlike the approaches adopted by Adorno and Marcuse, Löwenthal's sociological method, although functioning from a centre within the artwork, sought to pay attention to a work's reception and to external influences on the author.

Löwenthal applied this method to a wide range of literature starting with the writings of Lopez and Cervantes, moving via discussions of Shakespeare, Goethe, Racine and Voltaire onto the German Romantics and Post-Romantics, and ending with studies of the Naturalism of Strindberg and Ibsen. Löwenthal examined the dominant themes in the texts of these authors from a sociological point of view. He outlined the course he wished to take as follows:

Die gesellschaftlichen Tatsachen der Epoche, in der sie (artworks) geschaffen wurden, und die gesellschaftliche Analyse der Charaktere selbst geben uns das Material, mit dessen Hilfe Sinn und Funktion der Kunstwerke verstanden werden kann. 18

He connected this project, perhaps best referred to as a literary sociology,<sup>19</sup> to studies of literature's social function, reflections on the social position and attitude of the author as well as judgements on the social determinants of a given book's success. Above all, Löwenthal placed some emphasis on an analysis of the interaction of an artwork and its reception in order to ascertain the artwork's social position and effect, and it is here, of course, that the study of popular culture is important.

At a methodological level, this literary sociology - for first and foremost Löwenthal addressed the social character of the artwork's material - is to be distinguished from sociology of literature as it is commonly practised, in as far as Löwenthal's method insisted on the priority of the artwork in the analysis, an importance he derived from his conception of artistic truth. Löwenthal's literary sociology was founded on the assumption that each artwork was both private and social in nature.<sup>20</sup> An artwork was private in the sense that its production was the intimate concern of one person, "Kunstwerke sind immer von einzelnen Individuen hervorgebracht worden,"<sup>21</sup> particularly as the author was an "auf den Einzelmenschen spezialisierter Denker".<sup>22</sup> Löwenthal claimed that the artwork was equally social in its constitution, for it was possible to reconstruct the general social climate and the specific socio-cultural relations, "die Leute bewegen, über bestimmte Sujets auf eine bestimmte Art und Weise zu schreiben."<sup>23</sup> Löwenthal hoped that this literary sociology would reveal certain sociological character-

istics of the inhabitants of the society in which a text was written that were not to be found via other forms of sociological analysis. In other words, he carried the artwork into society, instead of society into the artwork as is usual in contemporary sociological studies of literature.

In keeping with critical theory, Löwenthal used psychoanalytical tools in his literary sociology, for above all he judged artworks to retain an image of the psychology of the particular period that was objective and not just attributable to the subjective traits of the author. He spoke of "Literatur als Dokumentation der gesellschaftlichen Vermittlung des psychischen Innenraums."<sup>24</sup> Society's infiltration of each person could therefore be traced both in the artwork's overt description of a character's attitudes and in the assumptions about society on which the description was based. Löwenthal stated in this context:

What I believe is unique to literature is that it can help us to understand the successes or failures of socialization of individuals in typical moments and situations in history. <sup>25</sup>

As a consequence, Löwenthal paid great attention to such themes as 'love' or 'sorrow' in various works of literature. In the case of Ibsen, for instance, Löwenthal studied the manner in which Ibsen had portrayed how the laws of the market-place had entered into human relationships and completely transformed them.<sup>26</sup>

In addition to this psychological mode of enquiry Löwenthal argued at an epistemological level that 'great' literature showed the audience of its time important images of human 'types' which portray the essence of humanity. The greater the author, he suggested, the more accomplished the portrait of humanity, and how it was viewed at that particular time. (Greatness in Löwenthal's terms is determined idealistically as the presence of this property). An analysis of these types was fruitful, he observed, because "die Analysen solcher Werke können die zentralen Probleme aufdecken, von denen der Mensch sich in verschiedenen Zeiten betroffen fühlte."<sup>27</sup>

When analysing literature Löwenthal concentrated on only one historical type of literature, namely that which can be classed as bourgeois, and restricted

his study to two genres within this type, namely the novel and the play. Löwenthal viewed this investigation into bourgeois literature as in keeping with a critical theory of society that wished to understand contemporary society, for he claimed that:

Das Wichtigste an bürgerlicher Kunst ist, daß sie das Schicksal des Individuums in der modernen Gesellschaft unter der Perspektive seiner Bedrohung schildert. 28

In effect, then, Löwenthal's study of bourgeois literature took as its starting point the conclusions which the authors of Dialektik der Aufklärung had reached. He related the specific quality he attributed to bourgeois literature to a general property of literature which he considered to be its 'truth':

Die Literatur weckt in den Lesern immer wieder das Bewußtsein für den unüberbrückbaren Abgrund zwischen den Kontrollansprüchen der gesellschaftlichen Institutionen und den wahren Interessen der Mehrheit der Menschen. 29

In this sense, Löwenthal globally held all literature to be 'progressive' in that it was adjudged by definition innately to criticize society, although he had deduced this quality from one historical form of literature. It follows from this that either only the latter constitutes literature or his definition must be considered ahistorical.

Literature's sociological 'truth' could be discovered, Löwenthal maintained, by means of a sociological explanation being given both for the form this inherent artistic criticism of society took in a work of literature and for its absence at a particular time and place. Thus, by conducting a study of literature at certain historical junctures, a series of diachronic and hence comparable sociological truths could be established that were both theoretical and 'empirical' (i.e. exhibited in the texts in question).<sup>30</sup> Löwenthal's main writings on bourgeois literature involved precisely such a series of studies, the purpose of which was:

Die Werke der künstlerischen wertvollen Literatur als Hauptquellen für die Interpretation der Vorstellungen über das Ich und die Gesellschaft zu benutzen. 31



Although the logic behind the pre-given concept of artistic value is far from transparent, this statement indicates the critical intention mentioned earlier, just as the titles of Löwenthal's work do, namely that Löwenthal studied literature in order to discover what it revealed about a particular society at the time either of writing or of reading. The sociological truth he found concealed in literature is one pertaining to the relation between individual and social environment, for as he remarked pertinently of bourgeois art:

Die bürgerlichen Schichten wünschten zwar, sich im Spiegel zu sehen, sie wünschten aber zugleich, daß ihr materialistisches Ich in zarten Gefühlen verhüllt und dadurch anziehender gemacht wurde. 32

This investigation of society through the medium of art involved Löwenthal studying various forms of the relation between the two, but rather than consider all the works Löwenthal interpreted the discussion will focus on a number which illustrate his main findings.

In Das Bild des Menschen in der Literatur, Löwenthal devoted much praise to Cervantes, seeing Don Quixote as the first depiction of bourgeois individuality which was positive in that it did not involve an affirmation of society:

Don Quixote symbolisiert einen Konflikt, in dem das Individuum am Ende an der Gewalt der gesellschaftlichen Gegebenheiten zerschellt. Dieser Konflikt sollte ein durchgängiges Motiv in der Literatur während der folgenden Epoche der Neuzeit werden. 33

It is typical of his work that Löwenthal regarded Cervantes' characters as symbolizing certain properties. Löwenthal paid as much attention to symbolization as he did to the content of that which was actually symbolized and refrained from searching for a direct correspondence between content and social critique. This process of symbolization was described as follows:

Cervantes ist, kurz gesagt, in allen seinen Werken auf dem Wege zur Entdeckung der menschlichen Natur. Der Prozeß ist kritisch und non-konformistisch, realistisch in der Methode und idealistisch in der Intention. 34

Unlike, for example, Lukács' comments on literature, the symbolism Löwenthal referred to cannot be attributed solely to realistic portrayal in the narrative, but derives from a variety of factors such as time, place, time of interpretation, authorial intention, and the code of the fiction. Löwenthal interlinked all these qualities in his work and did not single one of them out at the cost of the others. While in one context he might underline the first two, for example in his comment on classical French plays "sie entspringen im zunehmenden Maße der Beziehung des selbstbewußten Menschen zu seiner Gesellschaft"<sup>35</sup> he did not then proceed to derive the other categories from the first two. This equivalency of the categories is illustrated in a remark Löwenthal made on Mörike:

Er leidet an dieser Welt, und er haßt sie, weil er aufgrund der herrschenden gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse das Leben eines Spießbürgers in ihr führen muß. 36

Löwenthal thus uncovered a causation underlying Mörike's non-conformism different to that informing Cervantes' work and went on to demonstrate how this causation affected Mörike's style. Löwenthal suggested that Mörike wrote melancholically and psychologically, but did not reduce this form of writing to his position in society. Löwenthal discussed Mörike's works precisely because they provided a good example of a literature that could not be allocated comfortably to any one specific social class. Indeed, Löwenthal speculated elsewhere that:

it is exactly in marginality, that is to say in a situation overtly as far removed as possible from social reality, that the social character of feeling and actions in literature becomes most visible. 37

The critical tone of Mörike, or Cervantes, or for that matter Shakespeare, was deduced from this social marginality, as was the dissatisfaction that accompanied their critical attitude. In other words, to Löwenthal's mind it was not the place in society, but the absence of a place in society that determined good literature.

Löwenthal did not, however, try to investigate the positive social characteristics to be gained from a sociology of literature. This becomes particularly clear in the studies he made of the 'Junges Deutschland' movement. It is noticeable that Löwenthal detected in such works certain negative qualities of the dominant social structure of the time. Löwenthal remarked that in the character of Wally, Gutzkow, for example, unwittingly criticized the grand bourgeoisie of his time partly through a realistic appraisal of extant social power relations and partly because Wally represented "ein Ausdruck der Unsicherheit des deutschen Bürgertums über seine eigenen Interessen."<sup>38</sup> The realism of the mid 19th century, Löwenthal concluded, symbolized the growing "ideologisation of social conflict;"<sup>39</sup> i.e. the gradual intrusion into literature of an explicit delineation made according to social class. From this point onwards an underlying ideology could be identified in German literature, for instance in Gustav Freytag's work Löwenthal found that "Der selbstzufriedenen Haltung des Bürgers entspricht die Schilderung der wirtschaftlich unselbständigen Klasse."<sup>40</sup>

Löwenthal's study of these hidden ideologies can be summed up as representing a critical portrayal of social conformity in literature. It forms the opposite of his remarks on critical bourgeois individuality in the works of Cervantes, or even of Ibsen, and remains true to his project of creating a socially critical literary sociology that unearths ideological and non-ideological positions. The period of conformity he studied stretches from the beginning till the end of the 19th century. Löwenthal mooted that such conformity, expressed by, as it were, 'inauthentic' literature might at least have been triggered off by the influence of new modes of the mass production of literature. For the wider the potential audience, the greater the effect literature could have and thus the stronger the pressure on the author to produce texts that serve to legitimate the status quo. In other words, for Löwenthal it was only at this point that affirmative culture came into its own or

indeed came into being, whereas Marcuse in his essay on the subject had considered all bourgeois culture to be affirmative. Löwenthal observed:

Die zugrundeliegende Frage war, ob das 19. Jahrhundert mit seiner starken materialistischen Prägung ein guter Nährboden für die Entwicklung von Größe sein konnte. 41

This chronological precision can be seen, for instance, in the fact that while in Molière's work Löwenthal had found conformity to be healthy in that it furthered individuality<sup>42</sup>, because of the time of its writing Goethe's Wilhelm Meister lay "on the borderline between conformism and individual protest."<sup>43</sup> Löwenthal proposed more generally that:

Hinter aller Tragik, die sich durch das Drama der deutschen Klassik zieht, liegt letztlich ein tiefes Vertrauen in allgemein anerkannte Tugenden und Werte verborgen. 44

In this sense Löwenthal drew a line from social conformity as depicted in literature and tacit authorial agreement with social values or customs.

This connection between affirmative character and authorial intention is the focus of Löwenthal's studies of Spielhagen and Keller. Spielhagen was found to be a non-conformist precisely because he had refused to follow social trends and find a 'deep' meaning in life, despite the political attitudes he may have had.<sup>45</sup> Rather, Spielhagen tried to present society as accurately and as objectively as possible, even down to his use of first person narrative. Löwenthal traced an opposite tendency, namely a "Prozeß der endültigen Einordnung ins schweizerische Kleinbürgertum"<sup>46</sup> in Gottfried Keller's disparagement of all matters economic and his espousal of 'natural', 'organic' ties:

Die organische Einordnung des individuellen Lebens ist von Kellers kleinbürgerlicher Haltung aus gesehen die Aufnahme des Menschen in einen 'mütterlichen' Schoß oder in väterliche Führung. 47

For Löwenthal, this amounted, nolens volens, to a legitimation of conservative world views antagonistic both to social change and to an awareness of the world's true essence. Keller thus created an ideology

in the sense of a veil cast over an object to hide its true meaning.

This coupling of conformity and ideology, of non-conformism and criticalness, permitted Löwenthal to posit a concept of truth in literature different in causality and construction to those constructed by Adorno and Marcuse.<sup>48</sup> Like Marcuse, Löwenthal stated:

Kunst ist wirklich die Botschaft der Spannung, des gesellschaftlichen nicht Erlösten. Kunst ist in der Tat das große Reservoir des geformten Protestes gegen das gesellschaftliche Unglück, der die Möglichkeit des gesellschaftlichen Glücks durchschimmern läßt. 49

He suggested, as had Marcuse before him, that this was the case because art provides a 'promesse de bonheur':

Die Frage, die der Künstler der Menschheit stellt, ist, ob Schmerz und Angst notwendige Elemente menschlichen Schicksals oder bloß eine Folge der gesellschaftlichen Bedingungen sind. 50

Löwenthal thus held artistic truth to be the image presented in literature of the human condition in a state of 'Eingedenken' beyond the immediate confines of time and space. From this definition of artistic truth he concluded that art provided a form of knowledge otherwise unattainable: "Deshalb ist es der Künstler, der das darstellt, was wirklicher ist als die Wirklichkeit selbst."<sup>51</sup> In Löwenthal's conception it was only in this sense that art is transcendent, i.e. in its critical examination of the interaction of individual and society.

The artistic portrayal of such interaction was more 'real' precisely because its validity was of a transcendent quality. Cervantes' description of non-conformism, which Löwenthal uncovered by contrasting Cervantes' portrait of individuality to the suffocating confines of feudalism, was, like Shakespeare's Tempest, for Löwenthal the exemplification of the true artwork in its weaving of such a transcendent, symbolic image. Thus, although such literature was and continued to be socially affirmative, it nevertheless also broke the boundaries of its own affirmative character:

Obwohl auch die Literatur immer wieder zur Rechtfertigung der gesellschaftlichen Machtverhältnisse dient, hält sie trotzdem immer jenes Sehnen des Menschen lebendig, das im allgemeinen in der bestehenden Gesellschaft keine Erfüllung finden kann. Kummer und Trauer sind die wesentlichen Elemente der bürgerlichen Literatur. 52

Löwenthal clearly viewed this process of de-affirmation as having continually to reassert itself. This would seem to imply that the dominant social ideology needs to be constantly reiterated if it is to be effective, which in turn suggests that the affirmative character of art can never be completely negated by its criticalness. In this manner, Löwenthal deduced the symbolic truth of art from a positioning of that truth in social marginality (a conception dissimilar to Adorno and Marcuse's respective grounding of artistic truth) and simultaneously uncovered the nature of the dominant social ideology. Not only does this conception of sociological truth complement the truth of anti-domination inherent in the artwork, but it also implies a particular notion of ideology. Löwenthal defined the experience of beauty as "sich von der überwältigenden Herrschaft der Natur über den Menschen zu befreien."<sup>53</sup> An ideological position in literature thus consisted in his view both of an advocacy of conformism (either in the content or in the form) and of an adherence to a certain instrumental logic vis-à-vis nature.<sup>54</sup>

Löwenthal did not, however, investigate the ideology within 'artistic' nature, the closest he came to it being a discussion of the portrayal of nature in Strindberg,<sup>55</sup> or the concept of beauty itself. Indeed, when Löwenthal mentioned ideology he meant by that an ideology external to the artwork which was then carried into the artwork. Artistic form, for instance, cannot be classed as ideological in such a frame of reference. Löwenthal's analysis thus tends to suggest that artworks are per se non-ideological. Löwenthal founded the ideological character of certain pieces of literature, i.e. 'inauthentic' literature, in their implicit championing of the dominant social class:

Im tatsächlichen Geschichtsverlauf fügt sich die Literatur recht gut in den gesamten Herrschaftsapparat der herrschenden Schicht ein. Denn die Literatur dient immer vornehmlich dazu, ein gesellschaftliches Bewußtsein zu schaffen, das mit den Interessen der herrschenden Mächten übereinstimmt.<sup>56</sup>

This accommodation of the artwork by its integration into society via its treatment as a 'cultural' object, and therefore the artwork could exercise no influence on the shape of the social structure:

Die oppositionelle Stoßkraft radikaler Literatur und radikaler Tendenzen in der Literatur wird erheblich verringert, indem man sie bloß als Kulturinhalte, als amüsante Zerstreuung oder gar als schöne Form hinstellt.<sup>57</sup>

Paradoxically, artworks were defined by Löwenthal as being beautiful form. Nevertheless, according to the above quotation, all art would seem by definition to be non-ideological until used or treated by society in a particular manner. If literature is at least in part defined by its reception, then Löwenthal must consider it as passing from a virgin non-ideological state to an ideological phase, the meaning of the artwork also changing with the passage of time. This being the case, art's truth must also change, and how can art then be distinguished from mass/popular culture?

Löwenthal's inexactitude is, however, quite deliberate. By avoiding a discussion of the intrinsic ideology or non-ideology of art, or to be more specific, literature, Löwenthal was able to present a determinate negation of the explicit class ideologies symbolised in particular works of literature. He was then able to define art as the platform from which the "Stimme der Verlierer im Weltprozeß"<sup>58</sup> made itself heard. Since all the works he treated were from the 18th or 19th century, and most certainly pre-1945, he was able to find an ideology either in them or in an understanding of them, and what is more it was an ideology that could be negated. He applied the method to Modern literature only rarely and to post-War literature not at all, and for good reason: the method could not be applied to modern literature.<sup>59</sup>

Although Löwenthal was ambiguous as to whether art was still forced to affirm society (i.e. in keeping with Marcuse's work he left the question open of whether or not dissynchronous art and truth still existed) it followed from his definition of authentic art that any art produced in a closed society would possess no clear class ideology: it would itself be ideology. If such art is ideological, then - at least in Löwenthal's construction - it cannot be art. In other words, in tacit agreement with Dialektik der Aufklärung's hypothesis of a closed society, Löwenthal considered that art could no longer be produced, for it could not be so without ceasing to be art. Therefore the lack of an investigation of 20th century literature is not a quirk or predilection for earlier literature, but evidence that Löwenthal assumed society after 1945 tendentially to be closed. It is hardly surprising that in Mitmachen wollte ich nie he returned to Adorno: "Adornos Position, daß die Kunst immer mehr in Defensivpositionen hereingedrängt wird, ist nach meiner Ansicht vollkommen berechtigt."<sup>60</sup> Adorno offered an analysis of various forms that could oppose society whereas Marcuse discussed how artistic form per se opposed society. Löwenthal complemented these arguments in that he described how the social origin of one particular form of bourgeois literature led to such literature possessing dialectical properties both at the time of its production and in the present. The bourgeois novels and dramas he discussed are, if 'authentic', both affirmative and negative, because of the society in which they arise and the completely affirmative character of the present. In effect, then, Löwenthal did not construct an aesthetics, but rather perfected a certain type of literary sociology.

This literary sociology, the tracing of society in the immanence of the artwork, is expanded to become a sociology of the artwork in



Löwenthal's analysis of popular culture.<sup>61</sup> It is in this latter analysis that the ambiguity he showed towards the question of the closed nature of present society is somewhat clarified. When approaching popular culture, Löwenthal used analytical techniques different to those deployed in his discussion of literature.<sup>62</sup> In his work on popular culture he resorted far more to empirical-evaluative methods such as were used in critical theory's post-War appropriation of American sociological techniques. He justified this change by assuming a priori that popular culture was of such a nature that it could only be treated reductively, suggesting, for example, that "Die kulturelle Massenproduktion dient uns in erster Linie als Hinweis auf die sozialpsychologische Struktur der Masse."<sup>63</sup> However, he refrained from restricting himself to an investigation of the psychological effects of mass culture on its consumers<sup>64</sup> and instead, took into account that a study of mass culture was a study of mediation of the social and the personal, so that to concentrate only on one side of this relation would be to ignore its bipolar nature.

In order to avoid such an error Löwenthal implanted the analysis of socio-psychological effects within a general historical and cultural theoretical framework.<sup>65</sup> He then constructed a set of criteria according to which the nature of mass culture could be evaluated: the effect of the dissemination of mass culture, the relation between it and the social conditions of the lower classes, the effect it had on serious art, the relation it bore to contemporary criticism, the question of whether it was a solely economic phenomenon or not and, finally, the general social climate and conditions surrounding intellectual and cultural production as a whole.<sup>66</sup> The conclusions at which Löwenthal arrived having applied these criteria to the study of mass or popular culture - the two are synonyms in Löwenthal's work - will be interpreted

with respect to the relation they bear to the concept of the 'culture industry'.

The very titles of Löwenthal's essays on popular culture imply a correction to Adorno and Horkheimer's concept of the culture industry, for Löwenthal altered significantly the time span in which popular culture was judged to exist, thus challenging the 'culture industry' hypothesis on mass culture's sudden increased influence. "Die populäre Kultur als solche ist keine spezifisch moderne Erscheinung,"<sup>67</sup> Löwenthal argued, it only seemed so because of the preoccupation all critics had with high culture and that despite the fact that undeterred the public continued to buy bestsellers.<sup>68</sup> Löwenthal even went so far as to suggest that popular culture was as old as human culture per se.<sup>69</sup> However, in his actual analysis he limited the time span and concentrated on the manner in which the debate on the effects of popular culture first arose. He traced this discussion, and with it the existence of mass culture, back to the opposing positions Pascal and Montaigne had taken on the subject.<sup>70</sup> He frequently referred to these two opponents for they had, to his mind, laid the ground for all subsequent debate on whether popular culture was, as Montaigne believed, 'good', or whether, as in Pascal's position, it was 'bad' for mankind. Löwenthal also pointed out that Goethe anticipated modern criticisms of organised entertainment when complaining about the public's desire for novelties.

Empirically, Löwenthal studied the origins of popular culture in 18th century England, or to be exact, in the first case of marketable literary goods "produced to meet the interests and demands of the new reading public"<sup>71</sup> there. He propounded:

In short, the decisive change which took place in the world of literary communication in the seventeenth century was the change, substantially, from private endowment and a limited audience to public endowment and a potentially unlimited audience. 72

Löwenthal did not, therefore, derive the advent of popular culture as a mass event primarily from a technical change (as is implied in the concept of the culture industry) but from the presence of both a market and consumers.<sup>73</sup> As a consequence of the existence of a potential market, the production and dissemination of literary works became profitable, facilitated by the upsurge in the number of people who could read. The nature of popular culture, Löwenthal asserted, was determined not by a wish to limit deliberately the information available to the lower classes but was tailor-made to suit their abilities:

Das neue Publikum besaß keine gediegene klassische Bildung, und es interessierte sich mehr für Schaustellung von Gefühlen als für vernünftige Argumente. 74

This deriving of popular culture from its potential reception parts company with Adorno and Horkheimer's concept quite radically. Whereas the latter had pinpointed electronic reproduction as being of key importance for the existence of popular culture, Löwenthal's analysis reveals that changes

grow from the social subsoil of middle class society; they clearly demonstrate that the whole controversy, far from depending on the introduction of electronics, is part and parcel of the historical development. 75

Popular culture in its present form is thus situated in the evolution of the petit-bourgeoisie as a class after the Reformation.

Not only does Löwenthal's argument contradict Adorno and Horkheimer's assumptions with regard to the origins of mass culture (unless we are to understand 20th century mass culture to be something utterly different from that to the popular culture that had gone before it) but Löwenthal challenged their conclusions as well. He pointed out in a letter of February 1942 to Horkheimer that his study of popular biographies showed that

this phenomenon also contains the dream of a future mankind who might center its interests around happiness not in the harshness of work and labour but in the enjoyment of sensual goods in the broadest meaning of the term. 76

Popular magazines were thus bestowed with qualities Löwenthal had otherwise reserved for art. Further to this potential insight accorded to popular culture Löwenthal also believed that as a structure it could benefit mankind, a sentiment quite opposed to the views of Adorno and Horkheimer. Löwenthal ironically enquired:

Da die Verdammung der populären Produkte immer einhergeht mit einer Verurteilung der Massenmedien, könnte man schließlich fragen, ob die Massenmedien unwiderruflich dazu verurteilt sind, nur als Vermittler minderwertiger Produkte zu dienen. 77

Clearly, he felt that the mass media could be instilled with an emancipatory content and thus rejected Adorno and Horkheimer's belief that the very substance of the mass media was ideologically negative.

At this point the question arises as to why Löwenthal nevertheless usually spoke of 'popular culture', rather than using the term 'mass culture' and the reason for the terminological differentiation would seem to be of the utmost importance for Löwenthal's assessment of the culture industry. Löwenthal often referred to the 'mass media' when speaking of popular culture after 1945. This mass culture was held by Löwenthal to oppose psychology, for it destroyed any interiority mankind might possess.<sup>78</sup> Such mass culture, he suggested, could be studied completely reductively; it was no longer necessary to study what, for example, 'taste' was, for the important thing was how it was administered to the masses. In this sense post-War mass culture was completely ideological, creating a commodity-like façade to veil its emptiness. Even the language it used and propagated was commodified, to the extent that it was effected by planned obsolescence.<sup>79</sup>

The sparse comments on 'mass culture' scattered in Löwenthal's writings form a sort of empirical base in support of the chapter on the culture industry in Dialektik der Aufklärung. Löwenthal's remarks in 'Biographies in Popular Magazines' on falsified appearances of individuality which are

then in turn destroyed would fit this interpretation, as would his mention of stereotypy, advertising and standardisation as hallmarks of mass culture in 'Historical Perspectives of Popular Culture', although these all jar with the tone of his letter to Horkheimer. In 'Historical Perspectives of Popular Culture' he asserted:

We want to know what standardization means in industry, in behaviour patterns, and in popular culture. We think that the specifically psychological and anthropological character of popular culture is a key to the interpretation of the function of standardization in modern man...We want to know the mechanisms of interdependence between the pressures of professional life and the freedom from intellectual and aesthetic tension in which popular culture seems to indulge...We hold that the stimulus and response is preformed and prestructured by the historical and social fate of the stimulus as well as of the respondent. 80

This statement reads like an outline of empirical research to be undertaken to prove the validity of Adorno and Horkheimer's thesis on the culture industry. The popular culture to which reference is made in this passage, thus showing some inconsistency in Löwenthal's use of the term, differs in structure from that which Löwenthal had discussed in his study of 18th century English popular culture insofar as he now examined only the effect, so that the original bipolar concept became one-dimensional, for he now considered the wishes of the audience no longer to be of any importance.

In the same vein, Löwenthal emphasized technical changes in his examination of popular culture after 1945, whereas the significance of these was disregarded for earlier periods. In the study of 18th century English popular culture Löwenthal had attributed only limited importance to industrialisation, namely for its mechanisation of paper production.<sup>81</sup> In modern society he assumed a different pattern to exist and viewed mass culture as a "specific outgrowth of the technological, political and economic conditions and interest of the masters in the sphere of production."<sup>82</sup> He declared:

Es könnte also durchaus sein, daß schon allein die Produktionsbedingungen, (i.e. in the productive forces) unter denen die Massenkunst für eine moderne Gesellschaft hergestellt wird, die echte Kunst...daran hindert, in diesem Bereich Eingang zu finden. 83

The technics in question no longer encourage a coexistence of popular culture and authentic art under ameliorated conditions, but tendentially cut off art's social existence, and thus its existence altogether.

Löwenthal's characterisation of technological progress engendering a change in the nature of popular culture and in the structure of culture as a whole accords with the views of Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse and Benjamin.<sup>84</sup> If art can no longer exist, in the sense that its truth content can no longer be produced, then the realm of culture has become (or is becoming) one-dimensional. This careful differentiation within Löwenthal's work allows a clear view to emerge of the manner in which Löwenthal's analysis supports, even if it does not prove, Adorno and Horkheimer's thesis of the culture industry's establishing and perpetuation of a closed society. Löwenthal's work can thus be held to reaffirm Dialektik der Aufklärung's main epistemological claims, in that Löwenthal described in empirical terms the change which transformed the central premise of Diälektik der Aufklärung. He stated, for example:

Massenkommunikation baut auf der ideologischen Sanktion der Autonomie des einzelnen, um gleichzeitig die Individualität zugunsten der Massenkultur auszubeuten.

and further

Kommunikation ist Teil der Konsumentenkultur geworden, in der die, die produzieren, und die, die verbrauchen, nur schwer zu unterscheiden sind, weil sie beide als Hörige eines Lebensstils der Konformität und Regelmäßigkeit erscheinen. 85

Although Löwenthal's work initially relativises the validity of Dialektik der Aufklärung, and of the concept of the culture industry, it does so in such a manner as to render the concept more precise in its temporal validity and offers an approach that can ascertain the exact nature of the culture industry's effects. This precision in the dating of mass culture is, in turn, borne out by Löwenthal's writings on literature, namely in the transition he made from a literary sociology to a sociology of literature when studying the 20th century.

In his discussion of art and mass culture Löwenthal described the interaction

of the two in the 18th and 19th centuries without lambasting mass culture.

Indeed, he granted it certain positive qualities:

Dieser Wunsch der Leserschaft und des Theaterpublikums nach immer Neuem machte es beinahe jedem Schriftsteller möglich, einmal für einige Zeit Popularität zu erringen, vorausgesetzt daß er sein Publikum überzeugen konnte, er biete etwas noch nie Dagewesenes. 86

As Robert Sayre points out, this provides the basis for an historical theory of reception<sup>87</sup> which, it must be said, would not dissolve into a literary history as Hans Robert Jauss' work tends to. Prior to the advent of the mass culture of the post-War era, the interaction of mass culture and literature, of mass public and literature, did not necessarily effect literature negatively. Despite its continued wish to consume something new, the presence of mass culture's public did not, in Löwenthal's view, endanger literature or authorial or aesthetic intentions, even if it did highlight the dilemma in which intellectuals and artists found themselves.<sup>88</sup> In the final instance, however, Löwenthal failed to address the question of whether the structure of popular culture from the outset encouraged passivity from the audience, as Adorno and Horkheimer assumed it did.

This relation of art to mass culture changed significantly after 1945, for now mass culture was judged to have a highly detrimental effect on art, encroaching on it and robbing it of its territory:

Wenn man dieses Material (comics etc.) dann mit dem ideologischen und emotionalen Inhalt der traditionellen, bürgerlichen Literatur vergleicht, könnte sich noch klarer erkennen lassen, wie sehr der moderne Leser hin- und herschwenkt zwischen der Notwendigkeit, die Mechanismen der Anpassung und des Konformismus zu erlernen, und den Tagträumen von einem glücklicheren, obwohl unerreichbaren oder historisch nicht mehr möglichen Lebensstil. 89

A sociology of literature was more important now than it was for the analysis of 18th and 19th century literature. Whereas these past literary products could be studied for their internal social content and the effect of their environment was not radical with respect to their construction and existence, literature after 1945 has to be regarded from the viewpoint of its surroundings, its outerdirectedness. This was the case because the surroundings, the socio-cultural matrix in which literature was embedded, threatened to

engulf literature and suffocate it:

The counterconcept to popular culture is art. Today artistic products are losing the character of spontaneity more and more and are being replaced by the phenomena of popular culture, which are nothing but a manipulated reproduction of reality as it is; and, in so doing, popular culture sanctions and glorifies whatever it finds worth echoing. 90

Planning eroded the very basis of spontaneity in art, which itself becomes nothing more than a planned commodity and thus divested of any facility for transcendence it might have formerly had.

Clearly in this emphasis on a sociology of literature Löwenthal perceived a stark difference between pre-War and post-War popular culture. The first allowed art to flourish, the second closed off the space art had inhabited. If one treats these two periods as the Modern and the post-Modern, then it would seem that, in agreement with Marcuse, Löwenthal saw art in the post-Modern era as being restricted to that which was produced in earlier periods. This interest in dissynchronicity is reflected both in Löwenthal's interpretations of bourgeois literature, explaining his particular interest in non-conformity, and his use of literary sociology and a sociology of literature. The transcendent truth he identified in bourgeois literature is designated as transcendent as much with regard to the present as to the past. The sociological investigation of the absence of art in the post-War era of popular culture's domination thus complements the theory of 'transcendence as art' set out by the literary sociological investigation of the earlier period.

Despite his comments to the contrary, Löwenthal's work is clearly linked both to Adorno and Horkheimer's philosophy and to Marcuse's conception of art. Indeed, close consideration of the ambiguities in Löwenthal's work leads to the conclusion that Adorno, Horkheimer and Marcuse's theories serve as the basis for Löwenthal's own theoretical framework. The dialectic of Enlightenment functioned as the starting-point from which Löwenthal looked back on bourgeois literature and forward to art's present and possible future. Marcuse's theory of dissynchronicity informed this analysis. This is not to say that Löwenthal's literary sociology and sociology of mass



culture are not problematic. Löwenthal asserted that a difference existed between art and popular culture, but did not ground this difference in the course of his work on 18th and 19th century literature. Rather the difference increasingly assumed the status of an a priori. This assumed opposition between art and popular culture was examined for its effects on art, an examination which formed the clearest point of convergence with Adorno and Horkheimer's theory. Löwenthal's examination created an absolute opposition of mutual exclusivity between art and popular culture that was then projected back into the 18th and 19th centuries and undermines his own comments on the possible emancipatory function of the mass media. The argument becomes Pascalian in its treatment of popular culture after 1945 as purely detrimental, although this is simply the consequence of Löwenthal's initial absolutisation of the difference between art and popular culture as the definition of the two.

Löwenthal failed to devote sufficient attention to the interconnection of mass culture and art after 1945. His remarks in this area remain completely programmatic, for he raised questions which may be valid but which were left unanswered.<sup>91</sup> Accordingly, he was unable to found any theory of dissynchronicity, for there is no apparent reason in his construction to explain why previous artforms should continue to exist in the present. It is here that his use of determinate negation becomes problematic. Determinate negation is possible between an artwork in the 18th and 19th centuries and society now, for no concept of ideology avails itself if everything is ideological. The only theoretical justification for assuming that such artworks determinately negate the present would be if one were to regard artistic transcendence as completely ahistorical,<sup>92</sup> as was clearly the assumption in Marcuse's work. Society now tendentially incorporates all artworks and robs them of their negative value. In his historical determination of artistic transcendence Löwenthal could not conceive of ahistorical transcendence without simultaneously contradicting himself.

In his study of past bourgeois literature Löwenthal made use of a literary sociology that took full account of the interconnection between literature and popular culture, from the point of view both of the author's choice of material and approach and of the effect that popular culture had both directly and indirectly on the artistic product.<sup>93</sup> Nevertheless, the problem of the constitution of artistic truth arises in this context also. Although Löwenthal described quite accurately the processes whereby such cultural structures evolve so as to permit the production of what is usually termed autonomous art,<sup>94</sup> and the manner in which that art interacts with popular culture, he could not determine why autonomous art should have precisely such a truth. The relation between autonomy and truth is left unexplained, for Löwenthal approaches artistic truth only from the angle of its sociological impact, thus assuming its a priori existence. If it were purely sociological, it could not be transcendent, and yet being transcendent it burst the structures of a literary, historical analysis. Löwenthal was able to state in sociological terms why truth occurred but not, despite his own admitted interest in the question, why it took such a shape.<sup>95</sup> In Löwenthal's work, literary sociology is thus confronted by its own limitations.

The a priori assumption of a mutual exclusivity between popular culture and literature (although Löwenthal frequently denied having made any such assumption) can be derived from the stark opposition in the present between the two, hence the mention earlier of 'back-projection'. As a consequence of this opposition, Löwenthal only studied popular culture for its difference to art, i.e. reductively for its socio-psychological influence, and art was, in turn, studied for its 'truth', namely the difference between it and popular culture. Whether products of popular culture could be art was left unexamined. Löwenthal thus ignored certain historical problems that may arise from his approach, e.g. that social indicators of truth may have indeed been or become market products and yet nevertheless have retained their power of negativity. The spheres of production and consumption are examined only for their products and not for the constraints that they exert on each

other, for Löwenthal, in line with Pollock, held the second sphere to be completely informed and dominated by the first. Distribution has in this configuration ceased to exist.<sup>96</sup>

This omission of a discussion of autonomous art and the death of autonomy is perhaps attributable not just to the underlying influence of a Pollockian paradigm of contemporary society, but also to the difficulties involved in merging the approaches of a literary sociology and of a sociology of literature, as well as then connecting these to a theory of social change that requires transcendent images to keep the theory alive. What can be said is that Löwenthal's immediate rejection of the idea that art can coexist with post-War popular culture, indebted as it is to Adorno and Horkheimer's theory of a closed society and yet more consistent in the conclusions it drew from this than Adorno's own aesthetics, posed insolvable problems for Löwenthal's sociological approach. As a consequence of the death-knell he sounds to autonomous art, his theory of an historical artistic truth, so central to his whole enterprise of creating a literary sociology of bourgeois literature, appears somewhat hollow, if not indeed in a state of complete collapse since it is based on the assumption that such truth still persists today.

C H A P T E R 12 : CONCLUSION

The purpose of this dissertation has been twofold. First of all, it is meant to provide a systematic chronological and epistemological account of the divergent aesthetic theories devised by members of the Frankfurt School. Secondly, it is intended as a refutation of the charge frequently levelled at the Frankfurt School that it possessed no theory of the base of society, an accusation allowing critical theory to be omitted from consideration of Marxist aesthetics. Thus far, little space has been devoted explicitly to this criticism, for the discussion has consisted of developing a case which points in precisely the opposite direction. This strand of criticism arose in the mid-1960s and persisted in the secondary literature on critical theory throughout the 1970s. It is to be encountered both in works dedicated to studies of individual theorists and in the small number of investigations of the School as a unity.

The first significant statements on the subject of the Frankfurt School's attitude to the base of society are to be found in two articles on Marcuse. In an influential discussion of One-Dimensional Man for the journal Merkur, Gerd-Klaus Kaltenbrunner declared that Marcuse had restricted his analysis to the superstructure, a fact which rendered his work idealist. Marcuse's position is derived in this context from Fourier and utopianism, rather than from Marx.<sup>1</sup> A few months later Hans Heinz Holz put the case even more strongly. In a monograph on Marcuse's utopianism he argued:

Weil Marcuse eine Analyse der ökonomischen Basis versäumt, kommt er zu einer grundsätzlichen Fehleinschätzung der im Überbau wirkenden Kräfte...

and

Marcuses Studien zur Ideologie der fortgeschrittenen Industriegesellschaft bleiben selbst ideologisch: sie enthalten sich nämlich der Analyse der ökonomischen Basisverhältnisse. 2

By 1970 this line of argument had also taken root in the Anglo-Saxon world.

In a comparison quite typical of the time, namely of Marcuse and Marx,

Edward Andrew found Marcuse indebted to Fourier rather than Marx and concluded from this:

Thus Marcuse is not concerned with a transformation in what Marx called the 'base' or the infrastructure of society but only with the 'superstructure'. 3

This form of categorical rejection missed the point that Marcuse was trying to show a shift in Marxism to be necessary if it were to retain its scientific validity as a theory of society.

This approach was not confined to studies of Marcuse, for Winfried Schoeller's 1969 edition of essays on Adorno's work adopts a similar stance. In it Frank Böckelmann, for example, suggested:

Adornos Anspruch, der zumindest implizite der marxschen Orthodoxie die Behauptung von einer Verwandlung des Wesens der kapitalistischen Gesellschaft im 20. Jahrhundert entgegenstellt, wird nicht eingelöst. Dieser läßt sich um so bündiger bestreiten, als Adorno sich, im Gegensatz zu Habermas, auf eine Problematisierung der marxistischen Politischen Ökonomie gar nicht erst einläßt. Deren Geltung im Spätkapitalismus ist vielmehr ein integrales Moment seiner theoretischen Konstruktion. 4

Böckelmann maintained that not only did Adorno not try to examine how the base might have changed, but that he also could only assert that such a change had indeed occurred. Konrad Boehmer described another aspect of this argument in his essay on Adorno's musicology. Firstly, he argued that Adorno's view of human history was "bar ökonomischer Einsicht, zum Werk eines Weltgeistes erklärt,"<sup>5</sup> and then deduced from this that:

Der gesellschaftliche Überbau gewinnt hierdurch - allerdings nur theoretisch - ein Gewicht, das ihm zum Regulativ der Produktions-sphäre erheben soll. 6

This criticism is carried over into the 1970s. In 1974 John Fry was to conclude of Marcuse's work that:

In sum, it appears that Marcuse's present analysis and long-term projections regarding the stability and prosperity of North American capitalism significantly excludes consideration of numerous and often serious economic contradictions facing the system both now and in the future. 7

This criticism is repeated in various studies of the Frankfurt School published in the 1970s and serves in each case to underpin a condemnation or rejection of critical theory. Michael Landmann's far-fetched and globalised

criticism of the Frankfurt School that forms the introduction to Zoltan Tar's monograph on the subject is perhaps the most antipathetic form the criticism takes in this period. Landmann claimed:

In sum, one can say that the later Frankfurt School persisted in a political attitude that might have been plausible in the 1930s but failed to take into consideration worldwide historical developments since then.

and continued

The late Frankfurt School offers a more ominous view: the misfortune of mankind is not the result of certain historical developments; it is something inherent in man's being. 8

Christel Beier's close examination of the interweaving of social theory and epistemology in Adorno's work made the same point from a different angle.

Having decided somewhat arbitrarily that Adorno did not analyse the contradictory forms of socialisation which arise owing to a particular production process. Beier proposed:

Weil die kritische Theorie die Fortbildung ökonomischer Konzepte nicht zu ihrem Gegenstand macht, ist sie, gemäß ihren Vorstellungen von einer Konfrontationstheorie der Erkenntnis ..., darauf verwiesen, Gesellschaft aus der Perspektive geschichtsphilosophischen Erwägungen zu begreifen und zu kritisieren. 9

Two recent English inquiries into Frankfurt School epistemology contain similar statements. Although couched in more cautious terms David Held nevertheless suggested that:

There is something to be made of the oft-repeated charge that the Frankfurt School failed, ultimately, to integrate studies of the individual and social consciousness with political economy and institutional analysis. 10

Paul Connerton's investigation into the complex structure of the dialectic of Enlightenment led him to assert that the critique of political economy was compromised by the 'myth of enlightenment'.<sup>11</sup> He stated:

For whereas Marx has connected the principle of commodity exchange with a specific system of property ownership, Adorno detaches commodity exchange from a particular historical type of economic organisation, and views it instead as the most complete expression of instrumental rationality. 12

The argument thus moves from the straightforward claim that the Frankfurt School ignored an analysis of the base, to a perhaps more subtle suggestion that the Dialektik der Aufklärung disengaged the critique of political

economy from a logical or epistemological foundation. This does not, however, alter the substance of the argument. Recent studies thus rarely put the case directly, but tend to present it in a disguised form or as a tacit assumption on which the argument each study has to offer is nevertheless based.

Two further variants exist on this theme of the Frankfurt School's analytical predilection for the superstructure, which, while not stating that critical theory failed to attribute primacy to the base or that it did not even bother to pay it any attention, nonetheless assert that critical theory violates Marxism. The first of these is to be found in a misunderstanding of critical theory as an analysis solely fixated on one historical moment, namely fascism. The Frankfurt School's overall analysis is judged to be a generalised theory of fascism (as a consequence of this fixation), resulting in an omission of any general theory of society. Anselm Skuhra, for example, spoke of critical theory's criticism of fascism as only being an "Überbaukritik".<sup>13</sup> Consequently, he went on to propound the view that domination was no longer conceived of as economic in origin but as rooted in technological rationality.<sup>14</sup> By deciding that fascism was the exclusive heuristic key to interpreting critical theory, this approach foreshortened the Frankfurt School's field of vision for all other aspects recede in importance and become subordinated to the Institut(e)'s view of fascism. It goes without saying that this interpretation cannot do justice to the Pollockian elements of critical theory for, as we have seen, Pollock intended his theory to pinpoint a new stage of capitalism, not just to represent a reflection on fascism. This is not to detract from the importance which the very real experience of fascism undoubtedly had for the members of the School.

The second variation - often met as a subposition of the first variant - is based on a reduction of a theory of universal history and can be found particularly in discussions of the Frankfurt School which centre on the theme of domination and the dialectic of Enlightenment. In his examination of Adorno's philosophy Gerd Kaiser suggested, for instance, that Adorno

reduced social antagonisms to some primordial form of domination:

Der Kapitalismus wird als Enthüllung des verhüllten Wesens der Geschichte gedeutet...In dieser Kritik an der Geschichte geht Adorno hinter den Marxismus zurück. 16

Walter Jopke put a similar case when he wrote:

Völlig falsch und vulgärökonomisch ist Adornos Auffassung, wenn sie den Grad der Naturbeherrschung unmittelbar, eindimensional, auf die Grundbestimmung der Menschen, ihre gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse verlängert. 17

In substance this argument rests on the claim that critical theory became unspecific by having supposedly addressed itself to 'society'<sup>18</sup> as an abstract entity, rather than to any contemporary concrete economic form of society. It is my contention that the strength of this criticism lies purely in its frequent repetition by various authors, for its accuracy is not sustained by a closer reading of the total theoretical output of the School. It cannot be the purpose of this summary to undertake an inquiry into the origins of this argument in the debates amongst the various groups of the German Left in the 1960s although it is in this context that the argument must be understood. In a sense the political motivations behind views of critical theory (in the late 1960s) have stigmatised many subsequent studies of the Frankfurt School published in the 1970s. The imperatives of anti-authoritarian politics in the 1960s may have informed the first debates on the Frankfurt School and may have gone a long way towards developing a wide audience capable of discussing critical theory, but such political interests cannot simply be transferred on to subsequent analyses which have since arisen in a different political and social climate.

The argument that the Frankfurt School had no theory of the base has therefore become the invisible hand that writes in later approaches to the material whereas, in truth, it has never occupied anything other than the status of an unverified assertion. The fact that this assumption has been questioned over the last few years perhaps attests to a welcome change in the reception of the Frankfurt School.

Current reception of the Frankfurt School has in a few cases emphasised the



economic foundation of critical theory without, however, embarking on an explicit rebuttal of the charge that critical theory was superstructure-oriented or 'un-Marxist'. In the course of this dissertation an attempt has been made to rectify this situation by demonstrating how critical theory envisaged a shift in the determining power of the base over the form of society. The Frankfurt School's analysis of the constitution of the base revealed it to be losing importance when compared to the superstructure. A genuinely Marxist approach to critical theory would take this asserted change as food for thought rather than condemning it out of hand as 'un-Marxist'. Burkhardt Lindner and W. Martin Lüdke's close reading of critical theory's texts permits them to outline the framework for a more adequate reception of the Frankfurt School. They say of Horkheimer:

Seine Aufsätze 'Juden und Europa' und 'Autoritärer Staat' markieren jedoch den Wendepunkt. Zum letzten Mal werden hier politisch/ökonomische Kategorien als solche diskutiert...die ökonomischen Kategorien werden in einen geschichtsphilosophischen Rahmen gestellt. 19

Our study has endeavoured to show in what fashion this transformation of categories occurred and what effect this had on the aesthetic theories. In a sense this provides an explanation for the findings voiced in the following statement from Über Th. W. Adorno:

So stark das kritische Engagement der kritischen Sozialtheorie ist, so verhältnismäßig mager ist das, was man als 'Theorie der Gesellschaft' in ihr findet. 20

In his systematic and sympathetic study of early critical theory Dubiel proposed that critical theory remained an 'unfulfilled programme'.<sup>21</sup> He overlooked precisely the change in framework that Lindner and Lüdke detect and thus failed to see that for its producers critical theory could not be a completed project in its original form, but had to be altered to fit a new theory of society. The present study has concentrated on determining this change in critical theory by means of a comparison of the aesthetic positions held by the members of the Frankfurt School. It has been established in the course of this project that the various aesthetic theories devised by members of the Frankfurt School were all rooted in one body of

thought, namely in a particular theory of society. This rested in turn on the concept of state capitalism that Pollock had developed in the 1930s. As has been suggested here and argued rigorously by Moishe Postone and Barbara Brick in their discussion of Horkheimer's work,<sup>22</sup> critical theory can only be understood in the context of the Pollockian concept of the base.

However, the ensuing social theory the Frankfurt School developed was highly problematical, for Pollock's socio-political theory leads only to an irredeemable theoretical position. Not only does the concept of state capitalism offer a wholly inadequate account of the configuration of late capitalism, it also allows only a static, pessimistic view of society to be erected on it. As a consequence the collocation of aesthetic theory and social theory exacts a high price from the individual theorists because their individual aesthetic theories become flawed as a result of their positioning with regard to their social theory.

Pollock's theory, despite having originated as a paradigm to describe the 1930s, persists via Adorno and Marcuse's writings, regardless of Marcuse's oscillation with respect to the nature of technology, up until the 1970s, an era which it was not intended to portray. As a result, Adorno's aesthetics was forced into a vacuum for all its unique foundation of 'aesthetic knowledge' in mimesis, while Marcuse was compelled to retreat anachronistically into the art of the 19th century in order to avoid the consequences of state capitalist society. Löwenthal's work circumvented this problem of the social theory, but suffered from a resulting opacity in its conception of the mediation between social fact and artwork. Thus, the various branches of Frankfurt School aesthetic theory can only be judged properly if their engagement with Pollock's socio-political theory is examined carefully and in such a way that they can then be disentangled from it, for the aesthetic theories not only ground themselves in this social theory, significantly they also answer some of the questions posed by it. (The critics mentioned earlier were correct in the last instance in their sentencing of critical theory, but incorrect in their reasoning.)

This is not to say that the three aesthetic positions outlined correspond to an equal extent with the Pollockian theory of capitalism on which they are founded. A chronological study of these aesthetics reveals various modulations and ambiguities with regard to the characterisation of late capitalism as state capitalism. However, given the basic theoretical congruence with Pollock's work, one must view the School's aesthetic theories as forming a cohesive body of thought, although this unity does not preclude distinct differences between the individual aesthetic propositions. Indeed, precisely this differentiation between the aesthetic positions allows them to be located as alternative postulates or proffered solutions to one single problem, that of the continued existence and epistemological founding of critical theory.

The aesthetic theories of Adorno and Marcuse, as well as Löwenthal's sociological theory of popular culture and literature, provide a mutually referencing set of concepts designed to pinpoint the function of 'high' bourgeois autonomous art in relation to the hermetically sealed society highlighted in Pollock's theory. Both Adorno and Marcuse attempted to solve the epistemological problem presented by the conception of a closed social universe by counterposing autonomous art to such a society. It is this diametrical opposition that allowed them to challenge the closed society. To create this opposition they fused within art both reason and nature dissolving these concepts' traditional theoretical separation so as to project a new form of rationality. However, in order to set up a barrier against the closed society they developed a conception of autonomous art (and/or modernity) that verged on the properties of such artworks being hypostatized as art per se. The works of both theorists were thus unable to solve the problem of how art was to be defined beyond its autonomous form, i.e. in the past or in the future, if it were to be both sensuous and intellectual, both Platonic 'eidos' and Aristotelian 'mimesis'. Löwenthal endeavoured to deduce a systematic solution to the problem from a socio-historical survey of the properties of popular culture rather than by means of an aesthetic perspect-

ive. Accordingly, his work will be omitted from the following discussion.

The major question posed by the filtering of Adorno and Marcuse's aesthetic theories through Pollockian social theory is whether that theory is a necessary part of these, or whether they can be detached from it and are compatible with another more accurate analysis of society. Furthermore, it must be asked whether such a linking would indeed provide an example for the Marxist aesthetics Adorno sought to construct. If, for the sake of argument, one could detach Adorno's theory of mimesis and his concept of 'adequacy' from the Pollockian theory in which they have their origin, the further question would arise as to whether one could connect these two central ideas to a contemporary theory of late capitalism. (The compatibility of Adorno's concept of mimesis and current debates on ecology, for example, could then be considered.)

It is first necessary to look briefly at the main characteristics a Marxist aesthetics should exhibit since it is such an aesthetics that one would hope to build using either Adorno or Marcuse's concepts. The cornerstone on which an historical materialist aesthetics rests is its 'objectivity', a term which in turn hinges on the concepts of reflexivity and of political commitment. Political engagement and influence cannot be deemed to divest an aesthetic theory of its objectivity, as long as that theory is able to reflect on its being embedded in a political analysis. Objectivity in an historical materialist understanding of the term thus bestows upon the theory an historically limited truth. It signifies a political and socio-historical analysis of a given set of circumstances with respect to the essence of the society at the time, an analysis, moreover, that reflects within its theoretical concepts that these were designed to describe precisely their own spatio-temporal

determination. Only if constructed in this fashion can an aesthetic theory hope to give a truthful, objective analysis of art. The important epistemological step involved in this definition of objectivity as truth is that by thinking both of the object of study and of oneself thinking of the object, the spatio-temporal position of concepts are taken into account in the act of thinking, that is in the act of positing them. Objectivity thus means grasping the objects of study, in this case artworks, both as concrete objects and as historically-determined ideas of their concreteness, i.e. meta-historically. For an aesthetics to be objective in Marxist terms it therefore has simultaneously to think both of its determination and that of art. This process lays down an exceptionally rigid framework for a Marxist aesthetics, because it permits only a historical truth to be discovered in art. Aesthetics would thus become in essence a subdivision of historical inquiry. In summary, the truth uncovered by such an aesthetics cannot be transcendent, as Marcuse tried to make it, but is restricted at most to mooted a future 'potentiality' inherent in the art of the present owing to art's current social position.

The positioning of aesthetics within historical materialist theory has posed a problem ever since Marxists first started showing interest in aesthetics at the turn of the century. No systematic study of Marxist interest in this area exists to date, but such an investigation would undoubtedly reveal that the added attention paid to art went hand in hand with a shift away from more economic theoretical models of society to theories placing greater emphasis on the role of the superstructure and on their own position within it. Lukács and Benjamin were the pioneers in this area. By the 1930s the European communists and socialists were paying far more heed to mass cultural movements and

theories of culture than had their nineteenth century predecessors. In the 'Expressionism Debate' in the 1930s questions were raised concerning the status of bourgeois culture (the bourgeois heritage) and the shape art had to assume in order to be progressive, thus taking up all the points which had been discussed by the Surrealists, Dadaists, Futurists and Constructivists in the 1920s.

This connection between social and aesthetic theories was lost in the caesura in left-wing discourse caused first by the Nazi era and then by the Cold War. Debates on the subject were revived in the middle and late 1960s within the various anti-authoritarian movements, but since the demise of these movements they have excited little interest outside the academic world. The interest in Frankfurt School writings that flared up in the 1960s waned abruptly in the 1970s, so that, broadly speaking, the coupling of aesthetics to a social theory was thus rediscovered only for it to be lost by the activist subjugation of aesthetics to social theory so characteristic of the post-1968 Left.

Marcuse's work can be most clearly distinguished from Adorno's in this context, i.e. according to the degree to which their respective work can be salvaged from the wreckage of Pollockian theory and grafted fruitfully on to a contemporary theory of society. From the study of Pollockian elements (that is, of a theory of the base) in Marcuse's writings we have discovered that, far from being absent, such a theory played an overwhelming role in his aesthetics. So central is this theory of the base to Marcuse's aesthetics that his analysis of art becomes completely saturated in the socio-political judgement to which they were intended as a response. His aesthetic theory is informed by the social theory he developed to such an extent that the social theory no longer provides simply a background to the aesthetics but actively intervenes in it and becomes the foreground in Marcuse's thought.

Seen from this viewpoint Marcuse does not and cannot construct an aesthetics. His political theory determined the need for a future agent of change in society and located it in the erotic properties he had uncovered in art. Thus his aesthetics become steeped in activism, as if tailor-made to suit a political situation prevalent at the time of writing, but not transferrable beyond that moment. In other words, Marcuse designed an aesthetics that fed back into the socio-political theory from where it originated. Consequently, his aesthetics has no immanent level of reflexivity, a failing that we traced in Marcuse's problematic handling of art's transcendence of society. Anyone wishing to detach the one branch of his theory from the stem of socio-political theory thus faces insuperable difficulties.

Adorno's aesthetics - which is the only aesthetics in the full meaning of the word that was written by a School theorist - contains elements potentially worthy of recuperation, despite the fact that critical opinion has most recently denied the value of such an undertaking.<sup>23</sup> The fatal entrenchment of aesthetics in socio-political theory characteristic of Marcuse's writings does not occur in Adorno's work. It is my contention that as a result of the careful, selective methodology he sets up for it. Adorno's aesthetics surmounts, albeit unintentionally, some of the hurdles inherent in the concept of state capitalism. His concentrated focussing on aesthetic matters prevents his methodology from being submerged under Pollockian theory. This can be seen in the fact that Adorno's aesthetics is not politically informed to the same degree as Marcuse's and thus contaminated by contemporaneity. Admittedly, as we have seen, it was socio-political considerations that led Adorno to construct an aesthetics in the first place but these did not infiltrate that process. Adorno was, after all, adamant that art should not intervene in the course of society, but should reflect instead on

social change, just as he argued that conversely society should not penetrate into art overtly, As a consequence of what is often supposed to be his elitism his aesthetics is not inextricably entangled in the underlying social concepts, the cornerstones of his theory. Indeed, his aesthetics itself constitutes a social theory in that it reveals social truths otherwise inaccessible to theory. It should be possible, then, to extract from Adorno's work, but not from Marcuse's, the concepts that are still valid and survive the social theory on which they were originally based and to assess whether these would serve as the foundations for a new Marxist aesthetics.

Adorno's work stands out in aesthetic discussions as a persistent attempt at least to face up to, if not solve, the problem of connecting an aesthetics to a social theory. Indeed, it is this connection of art and socio-political analysis that can be reforged in Adorno's work. His aesthetics must be welded on to a different, dynamic view of capitalism, if some or all of the aesthetic concepts are to be recuperated and instilled with renewed vitality and validity. This is to ignore for the moment the unavoidable danger in such a refounding, namely that the aesthetics becomes grafted on to a social theory that is historically limited, i.e. the aesthetics becomes as before, meta-historical when compared to the social theory.

Any analysis of late capitalism centred on both its corporate nature and the continuing presence of structural crises within it would suffice to refound Adorno's aesthetics. Painted in broad strokes such an analysis would outline the manner in which capitalism potentially generates its own antithesis within the contradiction of the productive forces and the relations of production, i.e. capitalism's dynamic character; which is not to say capitalism will automatically collapse. Above all, the analysis would have to address the problem of the



capitalist nature of the productive forces themselves; in other words, it would have to pinpoint the extent to which certain forms of technology are in themselves capitalist. It is precisely at this point that Adorno's theory of mimesis as the antipole to dominatory technics could be utilized fruitfully by the main body of the social analysis.

An analysis of late capitalism as a dynamic, contradictory social system possesses a further interface with Adorno's aesthetics, for both conceptions share a common notion of non-dominatory, intersubjective freedom. In this context, Habermas' attempt to elaborate a philosophical paradigm for a free society by means of a concept of communicative action provides a bridge which could join Adorno's aesthetics to a socio-economic analysis of late capitalism,<sup>24</sup> and yet prevent the overall analysis from degenerating into an abstract and cryptic exhortation of the 'new', as was the case with Adorno's social theory. A concept of intersubjectivity as communication (latent in Adorno and Horkheimer's work) provides a liberating link, hitherto ignored, between mankind and nature, or between man and men, for the concept does not position the subject, mankind - homo faber - in such a way that it is dominant logically over the object.

Before a fusion of such an analysis of late capitalism and Adorno's aesthetics can be attempted we need to assess whether the methodology Adorno has bequeathed us is objective in the sense we have lent the term and can therefore be disconnected completely from the Pollockian social theory. That is to ask, to what extent, for example, the central concept of mimesis as non-identity is still valid beyond the parameters of Pollockian theory and not merely a reflection on and of it, an excessively abstract one at that. Some critical attention must therefore be paid to the nature of the linkage between Adorno's aesthetics and his social theory.

To a certain degree Adorno's aesthetics is tainted by its very merit, namely its historical reflexivity, which unavoidably raises doubts as to the validity of his work. He had to adopt a metaphysical logic in order to posit his

theory in the first place, as otherwise his judgement of what was true would never have been constant and yet precisely these aesthetic constructs must be temporally limited. The meta-historical quality of these judgements within Adorno's theory must be determined more closely, if the objectivity of his methodology is to be assessed.

The nature of the value judgements inherent in an aesthetics evidences their historical and objective nature. Two forms of value judgement are involved here: first of all, a value judgement based on particular political criteria, which may be false, if that political preference rests on an inaccurate analysis of society; secondly, accurate value judgements, the truth content of which can itself be historically limited without that truth being invalidated. For instance, with his investigation of the commodity form Marx uncovered 'alienation' as 'exploitation' in the form of surplus labour, a finding that was based on empirical material taken from a particular period (and thus limited) and yet one that transcended the confines of such an historical examination. In a similar manner an historical materialist aesthetics has to judge both what constitutes capitalist and anti-capitalist art and simultaneously determine what art itself is. The simultaneity of these two judgements means that the determination of truth and art may coincide. Such simultaneity logically results in the claim that what is untrue cannot be art, and thus if only one form of art is good (true), i.e. anti-capitalist, then all other forms are not art, as they cannot be true.<sup>25</sup>

An historical materialist aesthetics thus makes three judgements which are historically relative, a pattern Adorno's work follows. Firstly, he decides what art is capitalist or ideology. For Adorno mass culture is an example of such 'art'. Secondly, his aesthetics identifies what constitutes anti-capitalist, i.e. ideologically true, art. For Adorno this alone is true art. Thirdly, assessments are made of past artforms. Adorno's equation of true art and the hermetic, non-communicative artwork is historically relative in that he views such artworks as the necessary contemporary (1950s) response to the constraints Pollock had found in state capitalist society.

However, his judgement that authentic, true art is, of necessity, anti-capitalist, transcends that historical moment, i.e. it is incorrect to allege that his aesthetics opposes communicative artworks. Adorno's political judgement on artworks may support such a case, but the core of his aesthetic concepts does not, for his judgement that artworks must be non-communicative now, suggests that this need not to be the case if society were different. Since society has, indeed, changed, Adorno's analysis of society is false, which means, furthermore, that there remains no need for his aesthetic theory to champion the cause of hermetic artworks.

In other words, Adorno's investigation, and the concepts he devises to analyse its products, cannot be considered to be dependent on anhistorically relative judgement as to the particular material form artworks should assume at the time of his writing. His value judgements cannot necessarily be considered to implicate the methodology in which they are found and thus the methodology can still be objective. The thesis on the hermetic artwork is therefore to be regarded as an extension, but not as an essential component, of his theory of artistic technics and construction, even though this theory may have been deduced from a study of such artworks. A study of apes can lead to a theory of evolution, without mankind still having to be viewed misanthropically as apes. The thesis on the hermetic artwork is therefore to be regarded as false, but, since it is not part of the underlying methodology, it cannot be held to infect Adorno's aesthetics, e.g. his particular theory of mimesis as non-identity. The value judgements of the theory are addenda to it, not the cornerstone of the theoretical edifice.

This brief discussion of value judgements within aesthetics pinpoints a crucial problem that is faced by any contemporary attempt to design an historical materialist aesthetics and one that has already been adumbrated in the discussion of objectivity: how is the artwork to be considered both, on the one hand, as a commodity produced at a particular historical juncture a specific geography and thus having only sociological importance, and on

the other hand, as art, and therefore as something more than a commodity? Can something be both historical and ahistorical, both a commodity at the time of its production and transhistorically beautiful for successive generations of beholders? No aesthetics has, as yet, solved this problem of the adequate definition of the artwork and perhaps one should ask whether indeed it can ever be resolved satisfactorily in historical materialist terms, or whether it must remain as a continuous thorn in the flesh of Marxist aestheticians. Perhaps the mediation of social essence and social appearance in the artwork cannot be adequately defined.<sup>26</sup>

These questions cut to the core of Adorno's aesthetics, exposing the main problem it contains, namely the fusion of aesthetic and social judgement in his theory of the artwork. To remain objective, an historical materialist aesthetics has to avoid reducing the artwork to its socio-historical origin, a difficulty, for example, that plagued Lukács throughout his writings to the extent that he subsumed artistic knowledge under scientific knowledge. Such a reduction ignores any self-reflexive level in the theory with regard to the artwork. Equally, however, such an aesthetic must be careful not to hypostatise the 'ahistorical' side of the artwork as absolute - a tendency prevalent in Adorno's work. A view of the ahistorical nature of the artwork as absolute only serves to reject any self-reflexive moment in the theory and opens the floodgate to ahistorical definitions. Both these approaches involve singling out as all important one of the three value value judgements to the detriment of the remaining two.

In this context a further, extremely important point arises, namely that in light of the above guidelines some justification exists for the assertion that the question of the historicity of art may be Sisyphean in an historical materialist aesthetics. Complete objectivity in the manner in which we have defined it is probably unattainable in an aesthetic theory owing to the very nature of the object of study. To this extent, Adorno's aesthetics remains within the tradition of Marxist aesthetic theory, but tries to

provide a novel solution to its problems.

Marxist aesthetics has always faced three aporetic choices. It could reduce art to its commodity form and thus attribute no importance to artistic beauty or aesthetic experience; or it could view art solely in terms of political ideas carried into the artwork from outside and thus not specific to art; or lastly it could jettison any such historical determinacy, and with it its Marxism, in order to define art by its bourgeois definition, i.e. by its beauty. In the first two modes of analysis art's quality as art is granted no epistemological status other than one already found, formed and defined by sociology or social history. In this reading there could be no discipline of aesthetics in Marxism, and indeed usually this question has been avoided altogether - Marxists writing literary criticism rather than aesthetic theory. Structuralist Marxists, to their credit, have attempted to shake the assumptions inherent in these three approaches to the constitution of the beautiful by emphasizing less economic determinacy of the 'last instance', and creating instead a permeable membrane separating commodity existence and social knowledge from artistic beauty. (Unfortunately, they only manage to extend the historical time span of reflexivity, to be befallen by historical relativity in the final instance.) It should perhaps be remembered that even Hegel, the founding father of materialist dialectics, was not able to accord art an independent status qua beauty in his philosophical system but had to subordinate it to 'Spirit'. Further, Hegel's instrumental logic becomes apparent in his aesthetics, where he allocates natural beauty no place whatsoever. Adorno's aesthetics is exceptional in this context, for it pushes back the barriers confronting any Marxist aesthetics and those that confronted Hegel, by returning to the Kantian impulse of positioning aesthetics between practical and theoretical knowledge, i.e. beauty becomes both reason and nature, the study of art both science and non-science. In so doing, Adorno's aesthetics treads gingerly along a line between

historical materialism and idealism, for the determination of the historical existence of the artwork is often somewhat neglected in his writings. Nevertheless, Adorno is able to claim that art, by virtue of its constructed mimesis of nature, approximates to truth and yet still remains a commodity. In this fashion he avoids collapsing art into its existence as a social artefact, stripping it of any quality as art, and instead grants it an epistemological standing far beyond its 'Dinghaftigkeit', i.e. its being as an object. In this manner, Adorno's aesthetics highlights problems which traditional Marxism was unable to address, such as the ideological nature of technics.

Adorno's aesthetics is also unique in that not only does it locate both social knowledge and existence of the artwork from within an historical materialist framework, but it also manages simultaneously to bestow upon art an epistemological independence; art is judged as a social entity and yet at the same time as a meta-social property, namely beauty. Rather than collapsing aesthetics into literary criticism, Adorno provided the first example of an aesthetics that can justifiably claim to be Marxist and still remain an aesthetics.

Before turning to the crucial question as to the artwork's truth, some preliminary remarks similar to those on objectivity need to be made on the notion of 'appropriateness'<sup>27</sup>. Thusfar the term has been used as a desideratum for an aesthetic position to be constructed around Adorno's concept of mimesis. The notion of appropriateness, however, refers also to the most debated component of Adorno's aesthetics, i.e. his advocacy of hermetic artworks. Those value judgements are 'appropriate' that are made out of political preference, e.g. the pronouncement that one particular art form is most 'appropriate' - or adequate - to society at one specific historical juncture. In other words, the concept of appropriateness assumes that art has a truth content which is communicable,

for it implies that one particular art form is true or rather that such a form unveils a social truth with regard to a particular socio-historical formation. The uncovering of this truth within the artwork is perceivable to the beholders of the artwork, even if the portrayal of truth is effected by the artwork's very attempt to prevent communication with its beholders. The question that immediately arises from this is whether such a truth is attained only by one particular artform at a given time, as Adorno and Lukács would both maintain, or whether it can exist in various forms at once.

To clarify this question of truth and appropriateness a little space must be devoted to the similarity between Lukács' and Adorno's respective work, an important point that has up till now only been mentioned by Lindner.<sup>28</sup> At first sight the writings of Adorno and Lukács seem diametrically opposed to one another, and yet an examination of their theoretical assumptions reveals that there is considerable congruence in some areas. Adorno and Lukács both shared the view, for example, that artworks attained to a level of truth, although Lukács distinguished more precisely between scientific and artistic truth than does Adorno.<sup>29</sup> Even Lukács' more dogmatic writings of the 1950s evidence this shared conception that the artwork exposes the essence of society<sup>30</sup> (although Adorno and Lukács differ as to what precisely constituted this essence.) However, Lukács conceived of the artwork's visualisation of the general in the appearance of the particular by means of a concept of aesthetic form which is quite the opposite to that devised by Adorno. Artistic form, Lukács suggested, occurred as a generalisation of a particular, concrete circumstance, thus heightening the concreteness of the event,<sup>31</sup> not as the result of a merging of the general with the particular. Lukács had to adopt a concept of particularity as the

central informing principle of art if the artwork was to be able to depict social essence in his construction:

Nur die Besonderheit, als Mittelpunkt der ästhetischen Widerspiegelung der Wirklichkeit, ist imstande, die spezifische dialektische Einheit des subjektiven und objektiven Faktors als widersprüchlich bewegendes Prinzip der ganzen Sphäre zu erhellen. 32

The difference between Adorno and Lukács' respective emphasis on the categories of truth, particularity and generality lies in the choice the two theorists made as to what constitutes an appropriate artwork in contemporary society. Lukács was scathing in his critique of the avant-garde, accusing it of overweighting technics and of "abstract particularity."<sup>33</sup> The conceptual terminology of these criticisms is similar to that used by Adorno to prove the opposite case and to damn artworks that 'reflect' society directly. Lukács' advocacy at various times in his career of realism as practised by such as Tolstoy and Thomas Mann would thus appear to mark off his theorising from Adorno's. He remarked:

Die Geschlossenheit des Kunstwerks ist also die Widerspiegelung des Lebensprozesses in seiner Bewegung und in seinem konkreten bewegten Zusammenhang. 34

Adorno and Lukács' choices of different 'appropriate' artworks are indeed diametrically opposed to one another owing to their different theories of society, but this cannot belie the similarity of their analyses of what artworks are. This similarity can be seen in Adorno's extension to all art in general of his definition of artistic truth as both a knowledge of society and a paradigm of the new, i.e. in his inconsistent and arbitrary reduction of truth to one particular art form; (the last step, as we have seen, was necessitated by Pollockian social theory.) If Adorno's option for hermetic artworks such as Beckett's Endgame is, however, cast aside and with it his limitation of artistic truth to one specific art form at one given historical juncture (an argument, for which in any case he, like Lukács, cannot



provide a binding proof), then the remaining methodology could serve as the core for contemporary aesthetics. His aesthetics could be upheld even though its conclusions have to be rejected.

An acceptance of Adorno's methodology means taking up the approximation of aesthetic truth to philosophical knowledge contained in his alignment of sensuous experience and knowledge. Aesthetics for Adorno, is primarily a study of the beautiful, because it is through the medium of beauty - of sensuous appearance - that art approximates to truth, or at least to one form of truth. This relationship of beauty to truth permitted Adorno to construct various equivalent levels of truth. Surprisingly, a direct line leads from Adorno's concept of truth to work by Post-structuralists, who unwittingly resurrect in a different form the idea of beauty. Without naming the word beauty, Poststructuralism claims that the artwork pertains to various levels of meaning which are meta-subjective and not directly social in any way.

In general, three possible avenues are open to a Marxist study of artistic beauty. Firstly, the interpretation of art can adopt a historical approach in the form of an ideology critique, exposing particular forms of beauty as hegemonic and class-specific at any one given time. Such a method differs only marginally from traditional literary history or reception theory as practised by Wolfgang Iser and Hans Robert Jauss. Secondly, a study of art can judge the form of beauty to be historically specific, as in an ideology critique, and yet also attribute to art historically transcendent properties. Thirdly, it could resituate aesthetics in the manner pioneered by Aristotle, i.e. it would treat art merely as a mode of production as 'techne', and would study it for the difference between artistic and scientific modes of ideational production. However, art cannot be judged as a non-scientific mode of

production without categorising it in scientific terms in order to undertake the comparison. Thus art would only be grasped in scientific terms, and science would therefore always be placed hierarchically above art. Yet, how is art to be defined in terms other than those designed by the natural sciences?

Adorno had in common with Benjamin the attempt to provide a bridge between the three approaches outlined. A major difference between the two men lies in their respective evaluation of the current forms of these three approaches and their respective progressive or regressive potential. Adorno held artistic beauty to be a form of truth because of its depiction of the non-identical by means of mimesis. The limitation of this aesthetics lies in its concentration on the construction and production of the artwork. If one views it with the aid of Roman Jakobson's paradigm of literary communication, namely sender  $\frac{\text{context}}{\text{message}}$  receiver,<sup>35</sup>  $\frac{\text{contact}}{\text{code}}$  then it becomes clear that Adorno and Benjamin address different areas. Adorno's aesthetics relies on formed content, i.e. social and technical codes and their relation to past codes, and all but ignores the receiver, the media through which the receiver receives, and the situation of the sender. These are, however, latent in Adorno's conception of artistic beauty. Benjamin does not make such an omission, although it can be said that he over-emphasises the technical codes without studying their historically limited character.

Adorno has in common with Benjamin his treatment of aesthetics and literary criticism, although it is the equation of the two that explains his contraction of the Jakobsonian model and his restriction of art to music in Ästhetische Theorie. To put it in John Berger's terms, Adorno regards aesthetics as 'ways of hearing and reading', without thinking of the person engaged in these activities (by definition there are only a very few!). Nevertheless, it

is the analysis of the internal construction of music and literature which permits him to elaborate concepts of mimesis and non-identity in art. The question must be asked, therefore, as to how his broad model of aesthetics and with it the abovementioned concepts, would take shape in an up-dated version of his aesthetic theory. The concept of mimesis as 'Eingedenken' has clear affinities to the notions of alternative technics developed within the present ecological movement and might thus gain a new political validity, without this entailing a vision of a hermetically sealed world. In this manner the concepts could be used, but the judgements as to the concrete art form that corresponds to the concepts would have to be changed.

If society is conflict-ridden, i.e. open, artistic form while still being based on Adorno's 'anti-logical' logic, must, nevertheless, be able to embrace and depict that openness. It is of note that Adorno started to modify - if not revise - his condemnation of film as he got older, for it is in filmic juxtaposition, i.e. in montage, that to my mind a depiction of an open society can be given which still follows the course of negative dialectics. The closed vacuum of the hermetic artwork cannot perform such a task, because it lacks the open-ended, multi-level generative capacity of montage. It is through this last category that Adorno's aesthetic theory can be salvaged and provided with a new home, however paradoxical such a combination might at first seem.

Montage avoids the domination contained both in a person's 'objective' certainty that 'A is A' and in the artistic portrait of reality as a transparent entity. Reality, the Deconstructionists have claimed with some authority, is essentially opaque in nature and cannot be described by a crystalline approach, which would be in the final instance self-defeating. Only montage can be appropriate to the task of creating an artwork that is both open and mimetic, for only a juxtaposition of images

can both provide a constructed picture of reality while also leaving that portrait undominated by the hand of the artist, and thus overdetermined. Furthermore, montage is mimetic in Adorno's sense because it generates from its images a - quite concrete - image of society, which each person creates or re-creates in the act of reading, hearing or viewing, and in which each part has a determining function on the whole and yet is equally determined by the whole. In this fashion, an artwork constructed according to the principles of montage is non-identical with itself and with society both in its inner construction and in the image of an open, dynamic and fragmented society that it provides. Thus, montage, if fitted into Adorno's aesthetics, would seem to offer an answer to the question raised by contemporary aesthetic theory in general and literary theory in particular, namely the question of what an artwork should be.<sup>36</sup> It would provide a concrete form for the 'decentring' of meaning advocated by Deconstructionist theory while still retaining a political link to the present.

This reference of the Deconstructionists in a discussion of Adorno is not as out of place as it might seem. Deconstructionism, or Poststructuralism, regards the subject as something at present either objectified or opposed to other subjects. In like manner Adorno foresaw in his designing of a concept of non-identity in terms of damaged subjectivity a future state of resuscitated (or, to use his terminology, reconciled) subjectivity; Thus he also rejected rigorously logocentrism, but in terms of the future overcoming the necessity of adhering to such a form of thinking. Adorno regarded the Cartesian Ego as something mythic, since he judged it to be dominatory in its conceptualization of reason as a solely instrumental mode of thinking. Logocentrism is another word for the same mode of thought. Adorno's critique of instrumentality also rejects any concept of reason based on such a false, uniform subjectivity, just as do the Deconstructionists. In other words, in his conception of mimetic subjectivity Adorno

displays assumptions common to the Poststructuralists with regard to a philosophical interpretation of the present.<sup>37</sup> Equally, his concept of a 're-centred' subject of 'Eingedenken', that is a median of subject and object in the traditional understanding of the terms, rejects logocentrism.

This rejection of Enlightenment subjectivity by Adorno (and, of course, by Horkheimer and Marcuse as well) not only prefigures Poststructuralism by three decades, but also culminates in a discussion of art and its construction. Adorno ignores authorial intention for the same reasons as the Deconstructionists have turned away from it to notions of intertextuality. Adorno considered such intention to be a domination of the text's manifold possibilities, and thus an interpretation of a text based solely on an interest in authorial intention dominates the text and diverts attention away from its construction. Adorno's concept of construction and its derivation from a notion of non-authorially intended, historical material is the logical obverse of a praxis of deconstructing artworks and, in addition, it treats the artwork's historicity from the outset, a feature less obvious in much Deconstructionist work. The idea of an artwork being constructed from historical material which takes on a different meaning at different historical junctures leads back to the question of what historical material is appropriate to the task of providing an image of mimesis in the present. Here, the line between Adorno and the Deconstructionists ends.

The rejection of a positive or posited subject of knowledge implies relinquishing a view of ideology that considers such to be class-based, for numerous ideologies can now be defined beyond either bourgeois or working class ideology. Accordingly, the practice of ideology-critique wanes. In the absence of a determinate class ideology to negate as the consequence of both the above historical considerations and of the absence

of one specific dominant ideology characteristic of corporate capitalism, artworks cannot reveal the 'truth' of society in the manner Lukács had envisaged, but must turn to areas other than hegemonic ideology and its portrayal. Here again Adorno's concept of non-identity can be welded (so productively) on to the principle of montage.

Montage is appropriate to the 1980s, for it takes a middle line between artistic determinate portrayal of reality and uncertainty. It reconstructs the world, and yet simultaneously deconstructs it in the juxtaposed images it provides. In so doing it generates a plurality of meaning through which society is teased into revealing parts of itself and its truth. The interdependence of the parts, and of the parts and the whole, serve to enhance the uncertain, oscillating picture that results.<sup>38</sup> The presence in such artworks of an 'anti-logical' logic similar to Adorno's is often overlooked in this context because of Adorno's adamant rejection of the use of montage in art. Nevertheless, in his native Germany, literature making use of the principle of montage, such as that produced by Peter Chotjewitz, Gerd Fuchs or Heinar Kipphardt, is imbued with such a logic.<sup>39</sup> Such literature's inheriting of avantgarde forms which date from the first third of this century highlight the manner in which Adorno's own theory arose as a rejoinder to the thought of that period in history. If late capitalism is a continuation of high bourgeois capitalism by other means, then a contemporary aesthetics must examine the problems of the earlier period in order to understand the problems of the present more clearly.

The principle of montage resumes the attempt to produce appropriate art, i.e. to describe current society and to provide an antithesis to it. It implicitly acknowledges two things in this undertaking: firstly, the necessity of producing communicative literature despite the predominance of a capitalist network of distribution and capitalist market relations

(both structures that render art pointless in Adorno's eyes); and, secondly, that the technics of writing are themselves potentially capitalist in origin and have to be used in a particular manner, i.e. according to the principle of montage, if they are to reflect on and thus break free from the yoke of affirmation. Montage achieves this by dismantling and subsequently reassembling pieces of reality.

Artforms which obey the principle of montage recognize the 'real' subsumption of the technics of art and yet also perceive optimistically that such subsumption is dialectical. For example, Peter Chotjewitz narrates in the traditional form and style of bourgeois novel writing, for he is well aware that only in this form will his work sell and be digested by a wide public. However, because the traditional third-person and first-person narratives are presented in such a way that chunks of reality are juxtaposed and opposed to one another, so that neither narrative standpoint is made to hold sway over the text. As a result the determination of reality is left open. At the same time, any affirmative web of meaning can be avoided. It should be remembered at this point that Adorno did not advocate that artwork had always to be non-communicative, but rather they had to be so only in order to confront the Cold War era of conservatism. Whether artworks need to readopt this tactic to counter New Conservatism is doubtful. Unlike the work of Beckett or the multiple possible meanings of the French nouveaux romans, the communication of meaning is not forfeited in such montage as is used in Chotjewitz's writing, despite its transcendence of individual-based, logocentric narrative. Thus, despite its external appearance, such work does not relapse into the bourgeois novel form.

In being used for a new purpose and for different ends in the production of constructed artworks, capitalist technics of art can indeed, contrary to what Adorno thought, be made to reveal the extent to which they can

transcend such ideological limitations. Furthermore, the principle of montage allows a certain form of a value theory of art to be established that does not ignore art qua art.<sup>40</sup> Montage acknowledges that artworks possess an exchange value, i.e. are sold on a market to the extent that it deliberately sets out via a juxtaposition of images to prevent itself being sterilised in the act of its being sold. The existence of a market place can be taken to indicate that the contemporary artwork cannot be examined purely with regard to its consumption, as Adorno had assumed, but that a socio-historical framework of technics and production must be included in the examination. In producing an artwork constructed by use of montage the author accepts that the piece of art has an exchange-value, for he must assume that it can only exist within the capitalist cultural market, just as he himself exists within that market (the existence of small publishers or self-publishing facilities does not alter this, for the apparatus of distribution remains the same.) However, the author also assumes that his artwork has a 'use-value', albeit one distinct from the immediate satisfaction to be gained from beholding it. This value lies in the transcendent quality which the artwork based on montage generates and is not to be confused with the Marxist concept of 'use' value on which the capitalist bases his promotion of an artwork and ultimately his ability to make profit from it. The term here signifies a functional value inherent in the production of a constructed artwork and specific only to those commodities that are artworks. In this fashion, artworks are commodities and yet are not reducible only to exchange and use values. They possess both these values in the Marxist sense of the terms and yet they are inhabited by an overarching value that is neither of these, namely the 'functional' value of the artwork, what Adorno termed its truth content.

This functional value is the causal origin of artistic transcendence and is created (as Adorno correctly perceived) by forming material into art.



A theory of this function of art, or artistic beauty, might help theorists to get close to the problem of objectivity in historical materialist aesthetics, although it involves a vicious circle. If beauty is defined as transcendence of reality, and such transcendence is regarded as art, then art is beauty and vice versa: and the terms become self-defining.

It is this functional value that montage attempts to produce in the face of a capitalist market wishing only to sell commodities. To the seller, the artwork is only interesting in so far as it is a commodity offering intellectual or libidinal satisfaction which people will buy. The fact that such a functional value of transcendence is possessed by the same artwork is usually irrelevant to the seller's calculations: autonomy persists in a new form. This is probably not the case if such transcendence is also encoded in a content that openly opposes the capitalist system, by virtue of which the seller is after all profiting materially, be it by his production, sale or distribution of artworks. In this manner, the concept of a 'functional' value has the advantage that it weds an aesthetic and a sociological view into one concept. In the light of these brief remarks montage can thus be considered as a principle of aesthetic construction which produces certain qualities within the artwork, namely an image of non-dominatory praxis, of mimetic juxtaposition, a portrayal of the world as not logocentric and a picture of society as a multi-levelled, open-ended system. Furthermore, the same artwork exists quite happily in a capitalist market, for its functional value cannot be subsumed under that market or system. Therefore the principle of montage can be used to depict the social system of late corporate capitalism in terms of its changeability and, in communicating this, the artwork claims to illustrate a social truth that is embedded in artistic form, just as Adorno had suggested artworks had to.

Accordingly, the principle of montage with its deliberate character of construction, its abdication of the author's overt intervention in or directing of the artwork in the face of the complexity of reality and the artwork's generation both of non-identity and of an image of mimesis, fulfils in an updated form the requirements Adorno made of authentic artworks. In so doing, however, montage breaks through the confines of Adorno's social theory and re-establishes his aesthetics on a new footing, one more appropriate to the present and one in which the fruitful concept of the culture industry does not stifle the equally fecund concept of artistic construction.

GLOSSARY OF GERMAN TERMS TRANSLATED

befassbar	conceivable
begriffen	that which can be described in terms of a concept
Doppelcharakter	double or dual character
erkannt	conceptually understood
erkennbar	recognizable
falsches Ganze	false whole
geschlossene Gesellschaft	closed society
Glück	physical happiness
Gesamtprozeß	totality of social relations
Genuß	enjoyment
Gehalt	content, in terms of everything which gives the particular object meaning
Geist	spirit
Herrschaft	domination
immergleich	ever-similar
immanente Vermittlung	internal constructedness or mediateness
Kunstgewerb	art manufacture
Lebensphilosophie	philosophy of life, 'Lebensphilosophie'
Leiden	suffering
lückenlos	seamless
nichtbegrifflich	non-conceptual
Nichtkultur	non-culture
Prozeßcharakter	processual character
Primat des Zusammenhangs	primacy of interconnectedness
sinnlich	sensuous
Schein	appearance
Sinnlosigkeit	meaninglessness
Trauer	sorrow
traumlos	dreamless
umfunktionieren	refashion

umschlagen	switch over into the opposite
Vermittling	mediation, intermediateness
Vergnügen	amusement, entertainment
Verblendungszusammenhang	a context within which everything is blinded, i.e. unable to penetrate ideology
Verstummen	fall silent, be deprived of the ability to express oneself
Zweckmäßigkeit	purposiveness

FOOTNOTES

Abbreviations used:

ÄT - Ästhetische Theorie; AF - Autorität und Familie; Bild - Das Bild des Menschen in der Literatur; Briefe - Walter Benjamin's Briefe; Dialektik - Dialektik der Aufklärung; TG - Triebstruktur und Gesellschaft; Eingriffe - book of the same name by Adorno; EL - An Essay on Liberation; Gespräche - Gespräche mit Herbert Marcuse; G.S. - Adorno's Gesammelte Schriften; GK - Gesellschaftstheorie und Kulturkritik; Ideen - Ideen zu einer kritischen Theorie der Gesellschaft; KR - Konterrevolution und Revolte; Das Kunstwerk - Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit; K.G.I & II - Kultur und Gesellschaft I & II; Kritik - Kritik der instrumentellen Vernunft; KT - Kritische Theorie der Gesellschaft; Literatur - Literatur und Gesellschaft; Mitmachen - Mitmachen wollte ich nie; ND - Negative Dialektik; Noten 2 - Noten zur Literatur 2; Notizen - Notizen zur Literatursoziologie; ODM - One Dimensional Man; OL - Ohne Leitbild. Parva Aesthetica; PK - Die Permanenz der Kunst; SM - Die Gesellschaftslehre des Sowjetmarxismus; SPSS - Studies in Philosophy and the Social Sciences; TT - Traditionelle und kritische Theorie; VR - Vernunft und Revolution; ZfS - Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung.

For details on the above works please turn to the bibliography.

Chapter 1

1. Jürgen Habermas, 'Psychic Thermidor and the Rebirth of Rebellious Subjectivity', in Berkeley Journal of Sociology, XXV, 1980.
2. Martin Jay, The Dialectical Imagination, (London, 1973).
3. David Held, Introduction to Critical Theory, (London, 1980).
4. See Martin Jay, op cit; Phil Slater, Origins and Significance of the Frankfurt School, (London, 1977); Alfons Söllner, Geschichte und Herrschaft, (Frankfurt/M., 1979); and Zoltan Tar, The Frankfurt School, (New York, 1977).
5. See Harold Bleich, The Philosophy of Herbert Marcuse, (Washington, 1977); and Morton Schoolman, The Imaginary Witness, (Boston, 1980).
6. See Helmut Dubiel, Wissenschaftsorganisation und politische Erfahrung, (Frankfurt/M., 1978).
7. The inaugural lecture was entitled 'Die gegenwärtige Lage der Sozialphilosophie und die Aufgabe eines Instituts für Sozialforschung', and was published as Frankfurter Universitätsreden XXVII, (Frankfurt/M., 1931).
8. See Dubiel, op cit, particularly Section A.
9. In the ZfS, VI, H.2, 1937.
10. Originally published in Paris in 1936, it contained sections by Erich Fromm, Max Horkheimer and Herbert Marcuse. A section by Friedrich Pollock was not finished in time to be included. All quotations that follow are from the 1971 reprint (Graz, Austria). Marcuse's 'History of Ideas' section has been reprinted in his Ideen.
11. This periodization is not perfect, however, for it breaks down in the case of Löwenthal's work, which hovers uneasily between the two periods' respective epistemologies.
12. See the bibliography of sources used for a list of the few titles available in translation.
13. The interest in this debate can be seen by the fact that Erich Fried even saw fit to compose a poem about it (entitled 'Negative Dialektik', it appeared in his Die Beine der größeren Lüge, Cologne, 1969).
14. Julian Roberts, Walter Benjamin, (London, 1982).
15. Hans Magnus Enzensberger, Einzelheiten I, (Frankfurt/M., 1962).
16. Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge, Öffentlichkeit und Erfahrung, (Frankfurt/M., 1972); and Dieter Prokop, Faszination und Langeweile, (Stuttgart, 1979).
17. See Heinz Jahnsohn, Herbert Marcuse. Grundlagen seiner Philosophie, (Bonn, 1974); and Matthias Tichy, T.W. Adorno: Das Verhältnis von Allgemeinem und Besonderem in seiner Philosophie, (Bonn, 1977).
18. See Dubiel, op cit, and Wolfgang Bonß and Axel Honneth, (eds) Sozialforschung als Kritik, (Frankfurt/M., 1982).
19. See Telos, numbers 14, 19, 20, 32, 34 and 35 and also Susan Buck-Morss' essay 'Th. W. Adorno' in Salmagundi, 36, 1977.
20. In Telos, 10, Winter 1971.

21. See in particular Paul Breines (ed) Critical Interruptions, (New York, 1970); Edward Andrew 'Work and Freedom in Marcuse and Marx', (Canadian Journal of Political Science, III, No. 2, June 1970); and William Leiss' reply 'Technological Rationality: Notes on 'Work and Freedom in Marcuse and Marx'', (Canadian Journal of Political Science, IV, No. 3, Sept. 1971).
22. This arbitrary cut-off point is also adopted by Dubiel and Söllner in their respective books.
23. Russell Jacoby 'Marxism and the Critical School', a review of Martin May's The Dialectical Imagination, (in Theory and Society, I, 1974).
24. Quite why Jacoby omitted to review Tar's book when he so thoroughly demolished those by both Jay and Slater is slightly puzzling. Perhaps the book was deemed unworthy of the effort and best left unadvertised. The unscholarly, and at times insidious argumentation Tar offers leaves little worthy of mention in the book.
25. See Susan Buck-Morss The Origin of Negative Dialectics, (Hassocks, Sussex, 1977). Other examples would be Bleich's and Schoolman's monographs and Barry Katz' Herbert Marcuse and the Art of Liberation, (London, 1982).
26. Frederic Jameson Marxism and Form, (Princeton, 1971); Diane Waldeman, 'Critical Theory and Film: Adorno and the Culture Industry Revisited', (New German Critique, 12, 1977); Richard Wolin, 'The De-aestheticization of Art', (Telos, 41, Fall 1979); and Marshall Berman, 'Adorno, Marxism and Art', (Telos, 34, Winter 1977).
27. The three main texts on the Frankfurt School to originate in German Departments were Roberts and Slater's respective books and Roy Pascal's 'The Magic Mountain: Adorno's Critique of the Traditional Novel' in Keith Bullivant (ed), Culture and Society in the Weimar Republic, (Manchester, 1977).
28. The approach taken as a result of this introduction of French structuralist thought into English discussion is perhaps best exemplified by Rosalind Coward and John Ellis, Language and Materialism: Developments in Semiology and the Theory of the Subject, (London, 1977), which first endeavoured to present such (post) structuralist thought to an English audience.
29. Such a condemnation of the Frankfurt School is also to be found in the Italian theorist Lucio Colletti's work (for example his Marxism and Hegel, London, 1973) which has also been influential in England over the last decade.
30. Göran Therborn, 'Frankfurt Marxism: A Critique', (New Left Review, 63, Sept-Oct 1970); and Perry Anderson, Considerations on Western Marxism, (London, 1976).
31. Aesthetics and Politics, (London, 1977).
32. Gillian Rose, The Melancholy Science. An Introduction to the Thought of Theodor W. Adorno, (London, 1978); David Held, op cit; and Michael Billig, Ideology and Social Psychology.
33. Roberts, op cit.

34. See David Lodge's re-issued Twentieth Century Literary Criticism, (London, 1982), which still has no entry by Adorno. Equally Tom Bottomore, The Frankfurt School, (London, 1984), makes various assertions all of which recent research has proven untenable.

## Chapter 2

1. The notable exceptions are Alfred Schmidt, Zur Idee der Kritischen Theorie, (Frankfurt/M. and Berlin, 1979); Giacomo Marramao, 'Political Economy and Critical Theory', (Telos, 24, Summer 1975); and Moishe Postone and Barbara Brick, 'Critical Pessimism and the Limits of Traditional Marxism', (Theory and Society, 11, 1982).
2. The new manifesto on Marxism of which Horkheimer speaks was never expounded in the SPSS, although drafts of it were written as early as 1938 and were spoken of in correspondence with Adorno (cf., for example, Horkheimer's letter to Adorno, 20.11.1939).
3. In Jürgen Habermas et al, Gespräche mit Herbert Marcuse, (Frankfurt/M., 1978, p. 17).
4. Reprinted in 1971 by Verlag Neue Kritik, Frankfurt/M.
5. The earlier period saw the production of two main essays: 'Die gegenwärtige Lage des Kapitalismus und die Aussichten einer planwirtschaftlichen Neuordnung', ZfS, I, 1932 and 'Bemerkungen zur Wirtschaftskrise', ZfS, II, 1933. Pollock wrote two essays in the later period: 'State Capitalism: Its Possibilities and Limitations', SPSS, IX, 1941 and 'Is National Socialism a New Order?', op cit. During the existence of the ZfS/SPSS, Pollock also co-authored two articles with Kurt Mandelbaum, one of the Institute's assistants: in ZfS, II, 1933 under the pseudonym Kurt Baumann (according to Alfred Schmidt in his Die Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung, (Munich, 1970, p. 54) and in ZfS, V, 1936 under the name of E. Baumann (according to Giacomo Marramao op cit). Martin Jay in his essay 'Kurt Mandelbaum: His Decade at the Institute for Social Research', Development and Change, 10, 1979 disputes this dual authorship, attributing both articles to the pen of Kurt Mandelbaum. However, since all three researchers base their respective claims on personal communications with the authorial parties concerned, it is hard to state conclusively who is correct or incorrect. Because of this lack of clarity as to the authorship of the two essays, they will not be referred to in our discussion. See Kurt Mandelbaum and Gerhard Meyer's six essays for the ZfS on planned economies and economic crises.
6. 'Die gegenwärtige Lage...', p. 16, my emphasis.
7. 'Bemerkungen...', p. 348; Pollock here modifies Marx' notion of 'Gesamtkapital', changing it into 'Gesamtinteresse', a form that lends greater emphasis to the conscious nature of the capitalist interests.
8. *ibid*, p. 350, my emphasis.
9. *ibid*, p. 350.
10. 'Die gegenwärtige Lage...', pp. 25-26.
11. 'State Capitalism...', p. 204.
12. 'Is National Socialism a New Order?', p. 445.



13. *ibid*, p. 449.
14. See, for example, Phil Slater's book.
15. See, for example, Wilhelm Beyer, Die Sünden der Frankfurter Schule, (Frankfurt/M., 1971).

### Chapter 3

1. I quote from the reprint of the essay in the book of the same name, (Frankfurt/M., 1970), p. 49.
2. Bemerkungen über Wissenschaft und Krise ZfS, I, 1932  
Geschichte und Psychologie ZfS, I, 1932  
Materialismus und Metaphysik ZfS, II, 1933  
Zu Henri Bergson ZfS, II, 1933  
Materialismus und Moral ZfS, II, 1933  
Zum Problem der Voraussage in den Sozialwissenschaften ZfS, II, 1933  
Zum Rationalismusstreit in der gegenwärtigen Philosophie ZfS, III, 1934  
Zu Bergsons Metaphysik der Zeit ZfS, III, 1934  
Bemerkungen zur philosophischen Anthropologie ZfS, IV, 1935  
Zum Problem der Wahrheit ZfS, IV, 1935  
Egoismus und Freiheitsbewegung ZfS, V, 1936  
Der neueste Angriff auf die Metaphysik ZfS, VI, 1937
3. See Paul Connerton, The Tragedy of Enlightenment, (Cambridge, 1980), p. 40.
4. KT, p. 95.
5. AF, p. 21.
6. *ibid*, p. 26.
7. KT, p. 6, my emphasis.
8. AF, p. 5.
9. See 'Materialismus und Metaphysik', 'Materialismus und Moral' and Bemerkungen zur philosophischen Anthropologie'.
10. See AF, p. 21.
11. TT, p. 12 ff.
12. *ibid*, p. 41.
13. *ibid*, p. 19.
14. *ibid*, p. 54.
15. *ibid*, p. 44.
16. *ibid*, p. 38.
17. *ibid*, p. 47.
18. *ibid*, p. 33.
19. *ibid*, p. 56.
20. *ibid*, p. 49.
21. *ibid*, p. 54 ff.
22. *ibid*, p. 42 ff.
23. *ibid*, p. 43.
24. *ibid*, p. 49.

25. See Horkheimer's 'Nachtrag' to the Traditionelle ...', essay originally in ZfS, VI, H. 3, and in TT, pp. 57-64, in particular p. 61.
26. TT, p. 50.
27. *ibid*, p. 51.
28. *ibid*, p. 52.
29. *ibid*, p. 52.
30. *ibid*, p. 61 (i.e. in the 'Nachtrag') and see also AF.
31. TT, p. 49. This is what was meant by the adjective 'bewußt' in the quotation given in footnote 21.
32. The first set of essays comprises the following:

Montaigne und die Funktion der Skepsis	<u>ZfS</u> , VII, 1938
Die Philosophie der absoluten Konzentration	<u>ZfS</u> , VII, 1938
Die Juden und Europa	<u>ZfS</u> , VIII, 1939/40
Die gesellschaftliche Funktion der Philosophie	<u>ZfS</u> , VIII, 1939/40
Art and Mass Culture	<u>SPSS</u> , IX, 1941
The Relation between Psychology and Sociology in the work of Wilhelm Dilthey	<u>SPSS</u> , IX, 1941
The End of Reason	<u>SPSS</u> , IX, 1941

The second set consists of two essays written for a mimeographed edition of the SPSS issued in 1942 in memoriam Walter Benjamin. The two essays were, however, written prior to that date. They are 'Autoritärer Staat' (in Horkheimer: Gesellschaft im Übergang, Frankfurt/M., 1972, pp. 13-35) and Vernunft und Selbsterhaltung, Frankfurt/M., 1970.
33. Horkheimer used three terms synonymously: 'authoritarian state', 'state capitalism' and facism.
34. 'Die Juden und Europa', p. 115.
35. 'Autoritärer Staat', p. 13.
36. 'Die Juden und Europa', p. 115.
37. 'The End of Reason', p. 379.
38. 'The End of Reason, p. 378.
39. *ibid*, pages 376 and 378.
40. 'Die Juden und Europa', p. 120.
41. In this sense, Horkheimer could claim that people were 'administered'.
42. 'End of Reason', p. 376.
43. 'Autoritärer Staat', p. 28.
44. Vernunft und Selbsterhaltung, p. 19.
45. *ibid*, pp. 37 - 38.
46. 'The End of Reason', p. 378.
47. 'Art and Mass Culture', p. 294 ff.
48. *ibid*, p. 302.
49. *ibid*, p. 302.
50. Vernunft und Selbsterhaltung, pp.42-43.
51. 'Autoritärer Staat', p. 20.
52. *ibid*, p. 34.

53. Vernunft und Selbsterhaltung, p. 55.
54. See Adorno's remarks on radio music in Chapter 4.
55. Vernunft und Selbsterhaltung, p. 31.
56. 'The End of Reason', pp. 386 - 387; see Vernunft und Selbsterhaltung, p. 54 for an identical statement.
57. 'The End of Reason', p. 380 and Vernunft und Selbsterhaltung, p. 57.
58. See Chapter 5.
59. 'Art and Mass Culture', p. 290.
60. See Chapter 2.
61. 'Art and Mass Culture', p. 294.
62. *ibid*, p. 296.
63. Dubiel, *op cit*, p. 124.
64. See his 'Notes on Institute Activities', SPSS, IX, 1941. James Schmidt in his essay 'Offensive Critical Theory?' (Telos, 39, Spring 1979) remarks (p. 64) "It is clear that by the 1941 'Notes on Institute Activities', in which Horkheimer offered a concise redefinition of the conceptual basis of critical theory, this general approach had been replaced with something much closed to Adorno's notion of immanent critique."

#### Chapter 4

1. Susan Buck-Morss' The Origin of Negative Dialectics is an extensive study of precisely this relationship.
2. James Schmidt argues (*op cit*) that the change in Horkheimer's work after 1938 occurred as a result of Adorno's influence on Institute affairs. As we have seen, however, the change is attributable primarily to the influence exerted by Pollock's work.
3. From letter to Kracauer, 1.7.1930, all letters quoted with kind permission of the curators, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach.
4. Adorno stated in a letter to Benjamin of 2.8.1935 (in Briefe, Vol 2, Frankfurt/M., 1966) "Der Fetischcharakter der Ware ist keine Tatsache des Bewußtseins, sondern dialektisch in dem eminenten Sinne, daß er Bewußtsein produziert."
5. Clearly, this second level rests on a notion of freedom and necessity unlike that encountered in classical Marxism, which kept the two separate, (rather it is Hegelian in the sense that Adorno held a thing to be true and free if it was, - like 'Spirit' - what it could be, i.e. what it by necessity should have been.
6. Lukács proposed in Literatursoziologie, (Berlin, 1961, p. 118), that the proletarian-revolutionary writer was not interested in pure art or 'Tendenzkunst' because these writers were able to depict society directly.
7. The two exceptions to this are the essay 'Zur gesellschaftlichen Lage der Musik', (ZfS, I, 1932) and his Philosophie der neuen Musik, Frankfurt, 1958.

8. Adorno addressed this question specifically in 'Über den Raritätenladen von Charles Dickens' written in 1931 (in GS. 11).
9. Much of this reconstruction of Adorno's work hinges on his analyzing artworks in terms of their form. Indeed, form plays a pivotal role in Adorno's aesthetics. It has been suggested that this concern with aesthetic form resulted from Adorno's training as a musician.
10. As an example, Adorno comments in 'Wirtschaftskrise als Idylle' written in 1932 (GS.11) that Yeats views the idyll ideologically, for such a form is founded on a harmony alien to the cut-throat entrepreneurialism Yeats seeks to describe.
11. GS.11. This similarity to Benjamin's analysis of literary historians is not surprising, for both Adorno and Benjamin base their remarks on a notion of the artwork as a cypher.
12. See Waltraud Beyer 'Tradition als Spur von Leiden', (Weimarer Beiträge, 25, 1979, H.2); Dieter Ullé 'Bürgerliche Kulturkritik und Ästhetik', (Weimarer Beiträge, 18, 1972, H.6); and Wilhelm R. Beyer, Die Sünden der Frankfurter Schule, (Frankfurt/M., 1971).
13. ZfS, I, 1932.
14. Adorno thus differentiates between the spheres of distribution and production, which refutes Giacomo Marramao's suggestion (op cit, pp. 76-78) that Adorno only spoke abstractly of the production process.
15. 'George und Hofmannsthal. Zum Briefwechsel', written from 1939 - 1940, published in the special mimeographed SPSS in 1942, and reprinted in Prismen, 1978. I have chosen to include this essay in my discussion of Adorno's earlier writings although it was written at a later date. Adorno's exposition of the categories of 'market' and 'anti-market' art in the essay both clarify the meaning of the two terms and indicate that they were meant to describe the transition from liberal to monopoly capitalism and not late capitalism. Adorno perhaps selected this essay to dedicate to Benjamin's memory, for the latter's work on Goethe's Elective Affinities had been published under Hofmannsthal's sponsorship and explicitly criticized the ideology of the George-circle, which, according to Martin Jay (op cit, p. 204) "resulted in his being ostracized from the scholarly world."
16. In 'Über Jazz', ZfS, V, 1936, published under the pseudonym of Hektor Rottweiler, p. 237.
17. See 'George und Hofmannsthal', op cit, where the term is used when describing monopoly capitalism in connection with the label 'marktfähig', p. 272 ff.
18. First printed in part as 'Fragmente über Wagner', ZfS, VIII, 1939 - 1940, and then in total as Versuch über Wagner, Frankfurt/M., 1952.
19. Adorno said of Versuch über Wagner in his Ästhetische Theorie (Frankfurt/M., 1977, p. 421): "Das Buch interessiert sich an den objektiven Vermittlungen, die den Wahrheitsgehalt des Werks konstituieren, nicht an Genese und nicht an Analogien. Seine Absicht war philosophisch-ästhetisch, nicht wissenssoziologisch."
20. In that it investigates the contradictions facing the bourgeois artwork, the monograph follows the path of study taken by Horkheimer in his essay 'Egoismus und Freiheitsbewegung', to which it was dedicated.

21. The term 'phantasmagoria' is borrowed from Karl Marx, who speaks of the social relations between people as having taken "für sie die phantasmagorische Form eines Verhältnisses von Dingen" (Das Kapital, I, M.E.W., Vol. 23, Berlin (GDR), 1977, p. 86).
22. Versuch über Wagner, p. 84.
23. In ZfS, VII, 1938. This essay was intended as a rejoinder to Benjamin's essay 'L'oeuvre d'art à l'époque de sa reproduction mécanisée' (ZfS, V, 1936). Adorno's attempt to systematize his theoretical work can perhaps be attributed to the fact that he had started working on the subject of radio music for Paul Lazarfeld's Radio Research Unit which undertook mainly empirical work. Just as Horkheimer's later essays all centred around an analysis of the authoritarian state, so Adorno's later essays in the ZfS/SPSS also focussed on the nature of mass culture. The essays are 'On Kierkegaard's Doctrine of Love' (ZfS, VIII, 1939-40), 'On Popular Music' (with George Simpson, SPSS, IX, 1941); 'Spengler Today' (SPSS, IX, 1941); and 'Veblen's Attack on Culture' (SPSS, IX, 1941).
24. ZfS, VII, 1938, p. 332.
25. Unpublished letter from the Max Horkheimer Archive, Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek, Frankfurt/M. Printed here with kind permission of the custodians.
26. G.S.10.1, p. 98.
27. See G.S.8, p. 376 for remarks on this continued antagonistic character of society.
28. We will meet this figure of thought again in Marcuse's writings, illustrating once more the manner in which certain topics were discussed by the inner circle of the School and then treated by the individual theorists in articles specific to their own discipline.
29. See Heinz Paetzold, Neomarxistische Ästhetik, (Vol. 2, Düsseldorf, 1974). Paetzold reaches similar conclusions on the role of technics in Adorno's work, but discusses this only with reference to Adorno's major works on aesthetics in the post-War era.
30. G.S.8, p. 396.
31. This has led some observers to claim that Adorno reduces man to history, rather than positing man as interacting with nature in history. As can be seen from Adorno's discussion of the historical character of technics, this charge is inaccurate.
32. This proposition runs counter to Benjamin's equation of 'demystifying' artworks with political progressiveness and opposes Brecht's reliance on the 'use-value' of the artwork as adequate criticism of commodified art. Both theorists imputed a neutrality to mechanized technics (whereas Adorno viewed this as a renewed mythologisation) and ignored the critical potential of specifically artistic technics in contrast to mass cultural technics. Adorno's 'Über Epische Naivität' (G.S.11, pp. 34-40) discusses this point. For discussions of this difference between Adorno, Benjamin and Brecht see Susan Buck-Morss, op cit; Michael Scharang, Zur Emanzipation der Kunst, (Neuwied/Berlin, 1971), and Lienhard Wawrzyn, Walter Benjamins Kunsttheorie, (Neuwied/Berlin, 1973).

33. Philosophie der neuen Musik, (Frankfurt/M., 1978). Originally published in 1958, it was completed in 1948. The first half, dealing with Schönberg, was written between 1940 and 1941, hence its inclusion here. The only analysis Adorno undertook of what art had to be if it were to counter the challenge of state capitalism is to be found here. The findings on Schönberg's music must be considered to hold true for the avant-garde in general, for Adorno ascribed a paradigmatic character to the former's music.
34. Philosophie der neuen Musik, p.52ff. Adorno speaks of a 'Durchorganisation der Elemente', of "totale Durchführung" and of "die integrale Organisation des Kunstwerks."
35. See Philosophie der neuen Musik, p.118 where Adorno states of radical modern art: "Sie ist keine Ideologies mehr. Darin kommt sie, in ihrer Abseitigkeit, mit einer großen gesellschaftlichen Veränderung überein. In der gegenwärtigen Phase, in der der Produktions- und der Beherrschungsapparat miteinander verschmolzen werden, beginnt die Frage nach der Vermittlung von Überbau und Unterbau - gleich allen gesellschaftlichen Vermittlungen - ingesamt zu veraltern."
36. *ibid*, p. 119.

#### Chapter 5

1. 'Philosophie und kritische Theorie', ZfS, VI, 1937.
2. See Morton Schoolman, *op cit*, for a close study of Marcuse's existentialism.
3. See Helmut Dubiel, *op cit*, p. 97.
4. See Morton Schoolman, *op cit*, Chapters 1 and 2 for a detailed discussion of the two texts.
5. ZfS, III, 1934.
6. *ibid*, p. 174.
7. *ibid*, p.191.
8. The essays for the ZfS/SPSS were:
 

Der Kampf gegen den Liberalismus in der totalitären Staatsauffassung	<u>ZfS</u> , III, 1934
Zum Begriff des Wesens	<u>ZfS</u> , V, 1936
Über den affirmativen Charakter der Kultur	<u>ZfS</u> , VI, 1937
Philosophie und kritische Theorie	<u>ZfS</u> , VI, 1937
Zur Kritik des Hedonismus	<u>ZfS</u> , VII, 1938
An Introduction to Hegel's Philosophy	<u>ZfS</u> , VIII, 1939-40
Some Social Implications of Modern Technology	<u>SPSS</u> , IX, 1941 .
9. See David Held's discussion of this point, *op cit*, p.244ff.
10. ZfS, V, 1936, p. 26.
11. His work for the Institut publication AF follows this course, as he provided a history of ideas section on the notion of authority.
12. This observation not only reflects Horkheimer's influence but also points forward to his last essay for the SPSS.
13. KG.1, pp.112 - 113.
14. See Helmut Dubiel, *op cit*, for an elaboration.
15. Horkheimer Archive, printed with kind permission of the custodians.

16. in TT, p. 149.
17. K.G.II, p. 63.
18. ibid, p.82. The plural use of 'authoritarian state' indicates its applicability to both East and West.
19. ibid, p. 82.
20. ibid, p. 64.
21. See Jürgen Habermas, 'Bewußtmachende oder rettende Kritik - die Aktualität Walter Benjamins' (in Siegfried Unseld (ed), Zur Aktualität Walter Benjamins, Frankfurt/M., 1972).
22. Walter Benjamin, Das Kunstwerk, originally published in French in the ZfS, V, 1936.
23. See Jürgen Habermas, op cit, pp.183 - 184. Habermas' view that Marcuse wished to prepare a change in the relations governing life (p.185) by exposing the sich-fulfilment embodied in art ignores this connection to the present state of totalitarianism and is thus somewhat oversimplified. This is not to deny the validity of Habermas' implicit analysis of the concepts of interest and happiness in Marcuse's concept of culture.
24. See ibid, p. 182.
25. 'Some Social Implications of Modern Technology', p. 421.
26. ibid, p. 437.
27. This makes Dubiel's argument, referred to in footnote 3, inaccurate.
28. VR, (Neuwied, Berlin, 1977) pp.24 - 25.
29. Jürgen Habermas, op cit, p. 185.
30. Lecture delivered at Columbia University, 1942. Quoted by Adorno in Prismen (Frankfurt/M.,1955), pp. 135 - 136.

## Chapter 6

1. In 'Introduction to Löwenthal Tribute' (Telos,45,Fall 1980).
2. ' Individuum und Gesellschaft im Naturalismus' quoted from Notizen (Stuttgart, 1975). In the introduction to this book Löwenthal says the essay was written in the late 1930s. In a letter to me he says that it was not printed in the ZfS because parts were incorporated in his Ibsen essay (see below, footnote 10), meaning that it was written before 1936. 'Die Biographische Mode' Mss. 1938, quotations from Sociologica (eds. Th.W.Adorno and Walter Dirks, Frankfurt/M.,1974, 2nd edition) a shortened version that contains all the substantial points. The essays were  
Zur gesellschaftlichen Lage der Literatur ZfS, I, 1932  
Conrad Ferdinand Meyers heroische  
Geschichtsauffassung ZfS, II, 1933  
Das Zugtier und Sklaverei ZfS, II, 1933  
Die Auffassung Dostojewskis im  
Vorkriegsdeutschland ZfS, III, 1934  
Das Individuum in der individualistischen  
Gesellschaft ZfS, V, 1936  
Knut Hamsun. Zur Vorgeschichte der  
autoritären Ideologie ZfS, VI, 1937.
3. 'Zur gesellschaftlichen Lage...' is the only completely theoretical essay from which his methodology can be drawn.
4. 'Die Aufassung...', p. 343.

5. Notizen, p. 44.
6. 'Conrad Ferdinand Meyers...'
7. 'Die Auffassung...'
8. *ibid*, p. 357.
9. *ibid*, p. 362.
10. It could thus be said that a certain psychologism lies at the heart of Löwenthal's sociology of literature.
11. 'Das Individuum...'
12. *ibid*, p.37 .
13. *ibid*, p. 11.
14. 'Knut Hamsun...'
15. 'Die Biographische Mode'. It was not published in the ZfS because many of the authors discussed were Jewish refugees at the time. To have exposed their innate authoritarianism would have been in somewhat bad taste.
16. *ibid*, p. 381.
17. In this respect Löwenthal's work resembles that of Lucien Goldmann, who detected a parallelism between class ideology and literature (he termed this 'genetic structuralism').
18. See footnote 4. Goldmann's opinion that Löwenthal informs only about society, not about literature (quote in Robert Sayre, 'Löwenthal, Goldmann and the Sociology of Literature', Telos, 45, Fall, 1980) and Sayre's assertion that Löwenthal elucidates social but not literary phenomena are both questionable if Löwenthal's use of two levels of analysis is kept in mind. Phil Slater's proposition (*op cit*, p.119) that Löwenthal never questions "the effects of that work within its society", would appear, in the light of our discussion, to be completely unfounded. David Gross raises a more serious point in his essays 'Löwenthal, Adorno, Barthes: Three Perspectives on Popular Culture' (Telos, 45, Fall, 1980). Although approving of the historical dimension in Löwenthal's work, he questions whether literature is indeed a key to society.
19. Alfred Schmidt, *op cit*, p. 38.
20. John Hall, The Sociology of Literature (London, 1979, p. 48).
21. Goldmann, Gross and Sayre all take this to be the case, so one must conclude that they assume all analyses of content for ideology are implicitly sociological and not aesthetic in character. I shall take up this argument in Chapter 11.
22. Alfons Söllner, *op cit*, p. 19.

#### Chapter 7.

1. This mimeographed edition was circulated only privately and included the sole published version at the time of Benjamin's 'Theses on the Philosophy of History'.
2. Der Strategie im Literaturkampf: zur Literaturwissenschaft, (ed. Hella Tiedemann-Barthels, Frankfurt/M., 1972).
3. The quote given to support this claim is out of context and in context does not support the assertion. The Horkheimer letter referred to is not in the Horkheimer Archive correspondence between the two, and a letter of the 6th of September, 1938 gives quite a different impression. The latter letter suggests the Conference was only a meeting to be held between Institut(e) members and Benjamin.



4. Briefe, Vol.2, p. 723.
5. These are said to be housed in the Institut(e) Archives in Montagnola, Switzerland.
6. Briefe, Vol.2, p. 843.
7. Letter from Horkheimer to Benjamin contained in the Horkheimer Archive and quoted with kind permission of the custodians.
8. Walter Benjamin, Gesammelte Schriften I Frankfurt/M., 1977, p. 788.
9. Richard Wolin, Walter Benjamin, p. 266.
10. Julian Roberts, op cit, pp.2 - 5, and 70 - 75.
11. It hinged on articles published in the Berlin journal Alternative. See Chapter 1, footnote 13.
12. Walter Benjamin, Gesammelte Schriften II, pp. 798 - 9. In a recently published book Walter Benjamin und der Rundfunk (Munich, 1984) Sabine Schiller-Lerg has shown just how involved in cultural production Benjamin in fact was. The book documents and analyses the numerous radio plays and broadcasts Benjamin made.
13. Briefe, Vol.2, p. 665, to Adorno, 31st of May, 1935.
14. See the discussion in Buck-Morss, op cit; Roberts, op cit and Wolin, op cit.
15. See Bertolt Brecht, Gesammelte Schriften, Vol.19, (Frankfurt/M., 1967) p. 387.
16. Walter Benjamin, Gesammelte Schriften III, p. 471.
17. Briefe, Vol.2, p.785.
18. *ibid*, p. 785.
19. Quoted from Walter Benjamin, Charles Baudelaire (Frankfurt/M., 1969) p.149.
20. Wolin, op cit, p. 178ff.
21. *ibid*, p. 266.
22. Roberts, op cit, p. 196ff.
23. Walter Benjamin, Gesammelte Schriften I, p. 1225.
24. Peter Sloterdijk's Kritik der zynischen Vernunft takes this remark (discussed by Benjamin in Das Kunstwerk, p.74ff) as its starting point, without, however, mentioning Benjamin's original discussion of it.
25. Das Kunstwerk, p. 76.
26. Letter in the Horkheimer Archive, quoted with kind permission of the custodians.
27. Das Kunstwerk, p. 69.
28. *ibid*, p. 69.
29. *ibid*, p. 70.
30. *ibid*, p. 71.
31. in Versuche über Brecht (Frankfurt/M., 1966).
32. See Schiller-Lerg, op cit, for a description of Benjamin's personal experiences as a producer.
33. Briefe, Vol.2, p. 785.
34. Löwenthal's 'Zur gesellschaftlichen Lage der Literatur', for example, and Benjamin's 'Literaturgeschichte und Literaturwissenschaft' (1932 and 1931 respectively) have a great deal in common.

Chapter 8

1. I shall omit any discussion of the Studies in Prejudice for it was written both later and by a larger group of authors. Horkheimer's later work - largely a collection of essays - will also not be discussed, primarily because it has no bearing on aesthetics, but additionally because Horkheimer changes his view of society quite radically in the post-War period.
2. Dialektik der Aufklärung, (Amsterdam, 1947 and Frankfurt/M., 1971). Kritik der instrumentellen Vernunft, (Frankfurt/M., 1967), Minima Moralia, (Frankfurt/M., 1951).
3. Anselm Skuhra, Max Horkheimer, Stuttgart, 1974. He suggests (p. 54 ff.) that Adorno wrote the Exkurs I, and the chapter on the culture industry. Furthermore, he notes that Kritik der instrumentellen Vernunft is based on a series of lectures held at Columbia University from 1944 to 1945 on work done with Adorno. Jürgen Habermas suggests in his essay 'Die Verschlingung vom Mythos und Aufklärung' (in Karl Heinz Bohrer (ed) Mythos und Moderne, (Frankfurt/M., 1983, p. 405) that the Dialektik der Aufklärung is based on notes taken by Gretel Adorno of discussions between her husband and Horkheimer.
4. Minima Moralia, pp. 11-12.
5. Dialektik can safely be assumed to be the projected book on dialectics Adorno and Horkheimer had wished to co-author in the early 1930s. Work on the book, if not on paper, then at least in mind, commenced in 1938. Horkheimer wrote to Benjamin on 6.9.1938: "Ich selbst habe dabei die längst geplante Arbeit über Dialektik im Sinne" and this with reference to Benjamin's 'Fuchs' essay, showing once more the relation between that essay, TT, and Dialektik (Letter in Horkheimer Archive, printed with kind permission of the custodians). Dialektik is dedicated to Pollock the occasion of his 50th birthday. Among the drafts of the book in the Horkheimer Archive there are some dating from 1939 or a purely economic nature. These coincide with Horkheimer's work on the 'Autoritärer Staat' article.
6. For the former point see András Gedö in Johannes v. Heiseler (ed). Die Frankfurter Schule im Lichte des Marxismus, (Frankfurt/M., 1970): Michael Landmann's introduction to Tar, op cit; and Slater, op cit. For the latter point see Trent Schroyer, The Critique of Domination, (New York, 1973), and Skuhra, op cit.
7. See Therborn, op cit; Landmann, op cit; Connerton, op cit; and Heinz Matzat's review of Dialektik in Philosophischer Literaturanzeiger, Vol. 1, H.1, Oct. 1949.
8. Dialektik, p. 1.
9. *ibid*, p. 5, see pages 12 and 14 for identical statements, terminologically speaking.
10. Kritik, p. 125, see also p. 104 ff. and Dialektik, pages 32 and 99.
11. Dialektik, p. 51.
12. *ibid*, p. 15.
13. *ibid*, p. 12; see p. 39, my italics.

14. see *ibid*, p. 16.
15. *ibid*, p. 10.
16. *ibid*, p. 18.
17. see Kritik, p. 19.
18. Dialektik, pp. 27 - 28.
19. see *ibid*, p. 23.
20. Kritik, p. 33.
21. Therborn, (op cit, p. 82) states erroneously that 'The main offender is not the market and the relations of production, but the natural sciences and their empiricist counterpart in epistemology.' His suggestion is related to his equally inaccurate critique of the Frankfurt School, which rests on his assertion of their 'un-scientific' (sic) approach.
22. see Dialektik, p. 84.
23. see *ibid*, p. 85.
24. *ibid*, p. 94.
25. *ibid*, p. 109.
26. Kritik, p. 84.
27. Dialektik, p. 77; see also pages 75 and 76 and Kritik, p. 19.
28. see Kritik, p. 61.
29. *ibid*, p. 34; see also p. 74.
30. Dialektik, p. 204.
31. Kritik, p. 94.
32. This is argued by Michael Theunissen, Gesellschaft und Geschichte, (Berlin, 1969, p. 18 ff.); by Walter Jopke in (v. Heiseler, op cit, p. 55) and by Landmann, (op cit, p. XIV). All consider this point to encapsulate the 'essence' of the dialectic of Enlightenment. Alfons Söllner, (op cit, p. 190), remarks more pertinently of the critique of domination "In ihr wird der systematische Bezugspunkt greifbar, von dem her die gesamte Nachkriegsentwicklung der Frankfurter Schule und das für sie repräsentative Spätwerk vor allem Adornos verstanden werden muß."
33. See Chapter 10.
34. See Minima Moralia's sub-title.
35. *ibid*, p. 86; the concluding pages of 'Begriff der Aufklärung' in Dialektik bear this in mind in their construction, as does the semi-independence of the chapters of Dialektik from one another.
36. See Kritik, p. 157.
37. Minima Moralia, p. 57.
38. Dialektik, p. 191; see also Minima Moralia, pages 16, 22, 24, 32 and 58.
39. Minima Moralia, p. 42.
40. Dialektik, p. 169.
41. See Minima Moralia, pp. 90 - 91.

42. See Dialektik, p. 173.
43. See Kritik, p. 173; see also Dialektik, p. 278.
44. Minima Moralia, p. 333.
45. See Dubiel, op cit, p. 100.
46. Letter in Horkheimer Archive, printed with kind permission of the custodians.
47. Letter in Horkheimer Archive, printed with kind permission of the custodians.
48. Dialektik, p. 30. Connerton is thus mistaken (op cit, p. 131) in claiming that there is no precise connection between technology and economy established in the Dialektik.
49. Skuhra (op cit, p. 67) relates in a vague fashion the ideology of the whole to the loss of the circulatory sphere.
50. Dialektik, p. 79.
51. ibid, p. 94. This point refutes Dubiel's proposal (op cit, p. 112) that political domination is regarded as no longer mediated with the economy.
52. Dialektik, p. 188.
53. See ibid, p. 194.
54. Kritik, p. 101.
55. Dialektik, p. 183.
56. Gerd-Walter Küsters, Der Kritikbegriff der kritischen Theorie Max Horkheimers, (Frankfurt/M., 1980), p. 109 omits mention of this. Küsters' book provides a very detailed and otherwise thorough discussion of the philosophical premises of the Dialektik. Jopke, op cit, p. 51; Dubiel, op cit, p. 113 and Schroyer, op cit, p. 136 all provide analyses that miss this point.
57. Dialektik, p. 29.
58. Connerton (op cit, pp. 127 - 128) proposes mistakenly that Adorno does not see commodity exchange historically. Connerton himself fails to see Dialektik historically, i.e. what it addressed itself to.
59. This is the reason behind Lukács belief that the proletariat formed the subject and object of history, and thus innately possessed a knowledge of the truth of society.
60. See Minima Moralia, p. 8.
61. See Dialektik, p. 58 "Radikale Vergesellschaftung heißt radikale Entfremdung."
62. ibid, p. 36.
63. See Minima Moralia, p. 286.
64. Jürgen Habermas has argued decisively (in Bohrer, op cit, pages 412 and 415 respectively) that because of this "Die Dialektik wird dem vernünftigen Gehalt der kulturellen Moderne, der in dem bürgerlichen Idealen festgehalten/.../worden ist, nicht gerecht."

- and that as a consequence, that book "verselbständigt der Kritik noch gegenüber den eigenen Grundlagen. Habermas takes this point as indicative of the Dialektik's indebtedness to Nietzsche's philosophy of power.
65. Kritik, p. 133.
  66. *ibid*, p. 96; see also pages 97 - 100.
  67. Dubiel (in Bonß, *op cit*, p. 470) has tried to outline this staticism by situating it in a change in Adorno and Horkheimer's concept of culture that follows from this figure of thought. Culture, he claims, is no longer based in the mode of production of a particular historical epoch, but forms the "gesamte Kulturgeschichte der abendländischen Zivilisation." We have seen, however, that such a change in the concept of culture does indeed involve a particular historical epoch in terms of an illustration of that culture's most dire form. However, the change in the concept of culture leads to a devastating change in the concept of ideology, which is no longer metaphysical and real, as it had been for Marx, but real in that it informs the whole life-world.
  68. Dialektik, p. 166.
  69. See Minima Moralia, p. 11, and Dialektik pages 11, 168, 176 and 198.
  70. It is consequently questionable whether 'objective reason' can be posited in individuality, as Adorno and Horkheimer seem to think it can.
  71. See Kritik, p. 145; Dialektik, pages 40, 50, 70 and 77, and Billig, *op cit*, for an excellent discussion of the psychoanalytical positions of the Frankfurt School.
  72. I shall outline this indebtedness only rudimentarily, since any more extensive discussion would lie beyond the bounds of my project. The concepts of remembrance, mimesis and suffering will be treated in detail in the next chapter.
  73. Kritik, p. 125.
  74. Dialektik, p. 51; see also pages 40, 51 and 168.
  75. See *ibid*, pp. 94 - 95.
  76. See Kritik, pp. 105 - 110 and p. 113.
  77. See Dialektik, pages 72 and 20.
  78. See Kritik, p. 135.
  79. See Jürgen Habermas, Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns, Vol. 1, Frankfurt/M., 1981, p. 461 ff.) for a reduction of Horkheimer's theory of individuality to a Weberian model of internalisation.
  80. See Billig, *op cit*, p. 98 and p. 100 ff.
  81. See Dialektik, p. 182 and Kritik, p. 118.
  82. See Bonß, *op cit*, p. 409.
  83. Dialektik, p. 33.
  84. *ibid*, p. 15.
  85. *ibid*, p. 39.
  86. *loc cit*.

87. See Söllner, op cit, p. 194; Küsters, op cit, pages 96, 98 and 115; and Connerton, op cit, p. 75 for three other interpretations of this confounding of individual and social domination.
88. For this and the following point I am grateful for discussions with Michael Billig.
89. Marcuse adheres more strictly to Freud's own projection of history in terms of a linear development of the ego and of phylogeny as an expression of this in collective terms.
90. See Russell Jacoby's review article (Theory and Society, I, 1974), where he argues that domination as a category complements the notion of class conflict.
91. See, in particular, Küsters, op cit, p. 124.
92. Thus I cannot agree with Habermas' view (in Bohrer, op cit, p. 417) that Adorno and Horkheimer conceived of a symbiosis of production forces and relations.
93. See Dialektik, p. 110.
94. *ibid*, p. 108.
95. *ibid*, p. 110.
96. *ibid*, p. 119.
97. *ibid*, p. 120.
98. *ibid*, p. 118, *my italics*
99. *ibid*, p. 108.
100. See *ibid*, p. 149.
101. *ibid*, p. 115.
102. *ibid*, p. 110.
103. *ibid*, p. 113.
104. See *ibid*, p. 133.
105. *ibid*, p. 112.
106. *ibid*, pages 117 and 31; see also Minima Moralia, p. 267.
107. See Küsters, op cit, p. 131 ff. for a detailed discussion of this.
108. Dialektik, pages 127 and 132; see also Kritik, pp. 149 - 151 and p. 136.
109. Dialektik, p. 133.
110. *ibid*, p. 136, *my italics*.
111. See *ibid*, p. 143.
112. *ibid*, p. 123.
113. See *loc cit*.
114. *ibid*, p. 131.
115. See *loc cit*.
116. Minima Moralia, p. 187.
117. Dialektik, p. 114, *my italics*.
118. See Slater, op cit, p. 135 "The analysis of manipulation is highly incisive."

119. See Dialektik, p. 123.
120. Minima Moralia, p. 267.
121. Dialektik, p. 120.
122. *ibid*, pp. 128 - 129.
123. *ibid*, p. 130.
124. *ibid*, p. 141.
125. Benjamin, having detected this loss of 'aura', did not draw the same conclusions from it. Far from damaging mass society, he felt that the technology it created could lead to positive forms of art. See Chapter 7.
126. Dialektik, p. 142.
127. *ibid*, p. 142.
128. *ibid*, p. 145.
129. *ibid*, p. 145.
130. See *ibid*, p. 144.
131. *ibid*, p. 147.
132. See Küsters, *op cit*, p. 131.
133. Dialektik, p. 110.
134. *ibid*, p. 135. Peter U. Hohendahl ('Critical Theory, the Public Sphere and Culture", New German Critique, 16, 1979, p. 90) remarks "The theory of the culture industry remained abstract insofar as it assumed the existence and influence of organized capitalism without demonstrating it materialistically."
135. Dialektik, p. 150.
136. See *ibid*, p. 117.
137. Minima Moralia, p. 75.
138. See Bonß, *op cit*, p. 403.
139. Kritik, p. 167, N.B. It does not create a conceptual understanding of it.
140. This perhaps shows the limits of Freudian theory.
141. This is a combination of Kantian, Hegelian and Marxist forms of critique.
142. This can be regarded as the paramount reason for the rejection of Critical Theory by the student movement in the Federal Republic in the late 1960s.
143. Minima Moralia, p. 22.
144. i.e. Kritik, p. 167, see footnote 132 above.
145. Dubiel, *op cit*, speaks of Adorno and Horkheimer developing a hermeneutics of the culture industry that decyphers the true condition of society.
146. Minima Moralia, p. 187.
147. Dialektik, p. 19.

148. See *ibid*, p. 20.
149. *ibid*, p. 20.
150. *ibid*, p. 117.
151. Kritik, p. 47.
152. *ibid*, p. 47.
153. See Minima Moralia, p. 301.
154. See *ibid*, pages 159 and 298.
155. See *ibid*, pp. 302 - 303.
156. Dialektik, p. 142; see also p. 224. Skuhra (*op cit*, p. 65) terms this a "versöhnter Bezug zur Realität." Landmann (*op cit*, p. XIV) for some reason finds this feature particularly objectionable.
157. Dialektik, pp. 32 - 33.
158. *ibid*, pp. 72 - 73, see also p. 125.
159. *ibid*, p. 20.
160. See Slater (*op cit*, p. 135) for he bases his whole analysis of the Frankfurt School aesthetics on this point.
161. Nazism must therefore be viewed as only of limited importance for the genesis of their theory. Many observers place too much emphasis on the constitutive role played by Nazism and overlook or cannot account for the presence of the USA in the descriptions embodied in the chapters on the culture industry and anti-semitism in Dialektik.
162. See Postone and Brick, *op cit*, for a thorough analysis of this point. I am deeply indebted to Moishe Postone for his observations on the limitations of Pollockian theory and for the fruitful discussions we had on this question.
163. See Thomas Baumeister and Jens Kulenkampff, 'Geschichtsphilosophische und philosophische Ästhetik: Zu Adornos Ästhetische Theorie', (Neue Hefte für Philosophie, 5, 1973), for an often ignored and highly incisive essay relating Dialektik to Adorno's Negative Dialektik.
164. See Marcuse's description of a 'material base beneath the base' analysed in Chapter 10.
165. Walter Benjamin, Illuminations, (Glasgow, 1970, p. 259), The VIIth Thesis on the philosophy of history. On the previous page, Benjamin stated in a manner reminiscent of and preceding the culture industry analysis: "There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism." Andreas Huyssen has recently asserted ('Critical Theory and Modernity', New German Critique, 26, 1982, p. 5) of the Dialectic: "But it still represents one of the best developed, theoretically most sophisticated attempts to understand the problems of modernity, modernisation, and modernism in a 20th century setting. The Frankfurt School's theory (or theories) of modernity can still be productive today in great part because it never lost sight of the project of mediation, a project which has been all but abandoned in recent French interpretations of modernity because of its allegedly totalitarian and metaphysical logic."



Chapter 9

1. See Baumeister and Kulenkampff, op cit, for a brief attempt to relate Adorno's aesthetics and his social theory.
2. Karl Markus Michel 'Versuche die Ästhetische Theorie zu verstehen' in Burkhardt Lindner & W. Martin Lüdke (eds) Materialien zur ästhetischen Theorie T.W. Adornos. Konstruktion der Moderne, (Frankfurt/M., 1979) suggests the opposite to be the case.
3. Günter Figal, T.W. Adorno: das Naturschöne als spekulative Gedankenfigur, (Bonn, 1977), rejects the existence of any connection between AT and ND.
4. Baumeister and Kulenkampff, op cit, were the first to suggest the possibility of such a relation obtaining.
5. Noten 2, p. 192.
6. Christel Beier, Zum Verhältnis von Gesellschaftstheorie und Erkenntnistheorie, (Frankfurt/M., 1977), rejects this socio-theoretical basis as does Franz Böckelmann, Über Marx und Adorno, (Frankfurt/M., 1972).
7. See his essay on 'Spätkapitalismus oder Industriegesellschaft?', in GK.
8. See GK, pages 163 and 172.
9. See Martin Puder, 'Zur Ästhetischen Theorie Adornos', Die neue Rundschau, 82, 1971, No. 3 and ND, pages 264 and 265.
10. G.S.8, pages 125 and 126.
11. GK, p. 165.
12. Salmagundi, p. 149; see further G.S.8, pages 25, 39, 40 and 161 as well as Jürgen Kuczynski and Wolfgang Heise, Bild und Begriff, (Berlin and Weimar, 1975).
13. Prismen, p. 327; see also p. 339 and Burkhardt Lindner 'Brecht, Benjamin, Adorno' in Text und Kritik, Sonderband Brecht, (Munich, 1972) and 'Herrschaft als Trauma' (in Text und Kritik, Adorno, Munich, 1977).
14. See Prismen, p. 329.
15. G.S.8, p. 175; see pages 172 and ND, p. 359.
16. The essays in Winfried Schoeller Die neue Linke nach Adorno, (Munich, 1979), all try to deny this last point.
17. ND, p. 15; see further pages 73, 74, 93, 95, 219, 262, 301, 309, 341 and 349 in particular.
18. ibid, p. 17.
19. See ibid, p. 159.
20. ibid, p. 314. Remarks on this subject can also be found in Traugott Koch, 'Negativität und Versöhnung' Philosophisches Jahrbuch, (78, 1971, No. 2); Thomas Mirbach, Kritik und Herrschaft, (Frankfurt/M., 1979); and Günter Wohlfart, 'Anmerkungen zur ästhetischen Theorie Adornos' in Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft, Vol. 22, 1977, No. 1).
21. Friedrich Tomberg, 'Utopie und Negation', Das Argument, (26, 1963), bases his whole critique on this.

22. ND, p. 185; see further pages 187 and 193.
23. See ibid, p. 385 "Nichtig ist Denken, welches das Gedachte mit Wirklichem verwechselt."
24. ibid, p. 55.
25. ibid, p. 36.
26. See ibid, p. 57.
27. ibid, p. 164.
28. ibid, p. 322.
29. ibid, p. 99.
30. See ibid pages 117 and 292 - 293.
31. See ibid, p. 133.
32. ibid, pp. 148 - 149.
33. ibid, p. 341.
34. ibid, p. 229.
35. See Beyer (Wilhelm), op cit, who makes this equation of thought a praxis the sole focus of his critique.
36. ND, p. 230; see ibid, p. 266.
37. ND, p. 384, see Devra L Davis, 'T.W. Adorno: Theoretician through Negations', Theory and Society, (Vol. 2, No. 3, Fall 1975); and Ivo Frenzel 'Kritik und Verheißung', (Frankfurter Hefte, 2, 1956).
38. See ND, pages 346 and 367.
39. See Über T.W. Adorno, with contributions by Kurt Oppens et al, (Frankfurt/M., 1968).
40. See ND, pages 396 and 397.
41. This contradicts W. Martin Lüdke's conclusions in Anmerkungen zu einer Logik des Zerfalls, (Frankfurt/M., 1981).
42. See ND, pages 396 and 397.
43. ibid, p. 396.
44. Friedemann Grenz's Adornos Philosophie in Grundbegriffen, (Frankfurt/M., 1974) would be an example of this fault.
45. Norbert Bolz, Geschichtsphilosophie des Ästhetischen, (Hildesheim, 1979).
46. See G.S.11, p. 25.
47. See ibid, p. 32.
48. See ibid, p. 18.
49. See Schoeller, op cit, p. 91.
50. Carl Dahlhaus, 'Musik und Gesellschaft', (Deutsche Universitätszeitung, 7, 1953, p. 1195).
51. Tichy, op cit, p. 134; and Martin Puder, 'Adornos Philosophie', (Neue Deutsche Hefte, 23, 1976, pp. 3 - 11).
52. Karol Sauerland, Einführung in die Ästhetik Adornos, (Berlin, 1979).
53. See ÄT, p. 11.
54. See OL, pp. 186 - 187.

55. Noten 2, p. 164.
56. See OL, p. 177.
57. Noten 2, p. 43.
58. See ÄT, pages 529 and 532.
59. ÄT, p. 531.
60. ibid, p. 397.
61. See ibid, p. 406.
62. See ibid, p. 528.
63. See ibid, p. 513.
64. See ibid, p. 19.
65. See ibid, p. 313.
66. ibid, p. 345.
67. See ibid, p. 26.
68. ibid, p. 428.
69. See ibid, p. 188.
70. G.S.11, p. 425.
71. See Kenyon Review, 7, 1945, p. 680.
72. Both Michel (op cit, p. 96) and Peter Bürger, Theorie der Avantgarde, (Frankfurt/M., 1974, p. 83) criticize this equation.
73. See Grenz, op cit, p. 14 and Manfred Jablinski, Th.W. Adornos 'Kritische Theorie' als Literatur- und Kunstkritik, (Bonn, 1976, p. 83).
74. See G.S.11, p. 333.
75. Noten 2, p. 162.
76. See Noten 2, p. 162. Burkhardt Lindner, 'Il faut être absolument moderne', in Lindner/Lüdke, op cit, p. 273 establishes that for Adorno the Modern is equatable with autonomous art.
77. See ibid, pp. 49 - 50.
78. ÄT, p. 39.
79. See Prismen, p. 190.
80. G.S.11, p. 70.
81. Lindner/Lüdke (op cit, p. 27) take this as the reason for Adorno's reconstruction of the Modern. Peter Bürger (op cit, pp. 83 - 84) has argued that Adorno's notion of modernity and the avantgarde is derived from a study of Schönberg and the Surrealists and that, as a consequence, it presents a lop-sided view of the Modern. Kaiser (op cit, p. 339) criticizes Adorno for he judges Adorno to use no other chronology than that dating the Modern.
82. ÄT, p. 9.
83. GK, p. 65.
84. Prismen, p. 223.
85. G.S.11, p. 425.
86. See ibid, p. 505.
87. ÄT, p. 209.

88. See OL, p. 45.
89. ÄT, p. 370.
90. See Einleitung in die Musiksoziologie, p. 228.
91. See ÄT, p. 141.
92. See ibid, pages 133 and 251.
93. OL, p. 11.
94. ÄT, p. 216.
95. Noten 2, p. 164.
96. G.S.11, p. 436.
97. ÄT, p. 287.
98. ND, p. 165.
99. Einleitung in die Musiksoziologie, p. 238.
100. See ÄT, pages 317 and 322.
101. Einleitung in die Musiksoziologie, p. 230.
102. See G.S.11, p. 98.
103. See ÄT, p. 168 and G.S.11, p. 14.
104. Berman (op cit, p. 166) refers to this as the "underlying productivism" of Adorno's work.
105. See ÄT, p. 85 and OL, p. 174.
106. G.S.8, p. 138.
107. Einleitung in die Musiksoziologie, p. 232.
108. See Prismen, p. 168.
109. This contradicts the conception of Schoeller et al, op cit, pages 47, 49, 50 and 81 in particular.
110. Peter Bürger 'Das Vermittlungsproblem in der Kunstsoziologie Adornos' (in Lindner/Lüdke, op cit, p. 172) examines this loss of specificity in details.
111. Kaiser (op cit, pages 316 and 318) has maintained erroneously that the two are equated with each other by Adorno.
112. See Jürgen Fredel, 'Kunst als Produktivkraft' (in Michael Müller et al, Autonomie der Kunst, Frankfurt/M., 1972, p. 251) for a detailed discussion of this problem.
113. Einleitung in die Musiksoziologie, p. 239.
114. G.S.11, pp. 47 - 48.
115. OL, p. 97; see further Einleitung in die Musiksoziologie, p. 238.
116. See G.S.11, p. 439 and Einleitung in die Musiksoziologie, p. 230.
117. See G.S.11, p. 120 and Prismen, p. 203.
118. G.S.11, p. 421.
119. Jablinski (op cit, p. 169) misunderstands Adorno's position, in that he views ideology critique and immanent criticism as both evident, but as left unconnected. Both are designed by Adorno to inform the other.
120. ÄT, p. 93.
121. Susan Buck-Morss, 'T.W.Adorno', (Salmagundi, 36, Winter 1977, p. 91) claims the opposite to hold true for Adorno's writings.

122. See Adorno's essay on Valéry: 'Der Artist als Statthalter', 1953, G.S.11.
123. Marc Jiminez, 'Théorie Critique et Théorie de l'art', (Revue d'esthétique, 1975, No. 1/2, pages 150 and 156) criticizes this point for being paradoxical.
124. Noten 2, p. 168.
125. ÄT, p. 374; see further Einleitung in die Musiksoziologie, p. 240.
126. See GK, p. 56.
127. See G.S.11, p. 51. Adorno states: "Kunstwerke jedoch haben ihre Größe einzig darin, daß sie sprechen lassen, was die Ideologie verbirgt."
128. ibid, pp. 63 - 64.
129. See ÄT, p. 128.
130. ibid, p. 154.
131. Hartmut Scheible, 'Geschichte im Stillstand: zur Ästhetischen Theorie T.W. Adornos', (in Text und Kritik, Adorno, Munich, 1977, p. 96) for a discussion of this point.
132. ÄT, p. 131.
133. OL, p. 124.
134. See ibid, pp. 89 - 93 and ÄT, p. 47.
135. See ÄT, pages 182, 184 and 187.
136. ibid, p. 188.
137. G.S.11, p. 11.
138. Wohlfart, (op cit, p. 126) takes this up.
139. ÄT, p. 450.
140. ibid, pp. 188 - 189.
141. OL, p. 107.
142. See ÄT, p. 428.
143. ibid, p. 193.
144. ibid, p. 419.
145. ibid, pp. 519 - 520.
146. ibid, p. 167.
147. See ND, pp. 396 - 397.
148. G.S.11, p. 50.
149. See ÄT, p. 359.
150. See Prismen, p. 188.
151. ÄT, p. 192.
152. See Aristotle, Poetics, (London, 1934, pages 9 and 51); and also Fyfe, Aristotle's Art of Poetry, (Oxford, 1940, pp. 1 - 3, and p.xxi).
153. See ÄT, p. 110.
154. ibid, p. 114.

155. See *ibid*, p. 103; Sauerland (*op cit*, p. 89) makes the claim that Adorno places characteristics of art into nature, whereas Bau-meister & Kulenkampff (*op cit*) stress the opposition of natural beauty to society.
156. ÄT, p. 104.
157. See Figal (*op cit*, p. 89) for the connection of this image to the artwork's appearance.
158. ÄT, pp. 86 - 87.
159. See *ibid*, p. 86 and page 325.
160. *ibid*, p. 115; see further OL, p. 82.
161. ÄT, p. 155.
162. *ibid*, p. 120.
163. See *ibid*, p. 159.
164. See ÄT, pages 293, and 430; and G.S.11, p. 344.
165. G.S.11, page 78; see further ÄT, p. 383 and p. 502.
166. W. Martin Lüdke, 'Der Kronzeuge: Einige Anmerkungen zum Verhältnis T.W. Adornos zu S. Beckett, (in Text und Kritik: Adorno, Munich, 1977, p. 141).
167. ÄT, p. 430; see further Noten 2, p. 56.
168. Figal (*op cit*, p. 60) takes this to signify that mimesis depicts the new as a new realization of the pleasure principle.
169. ÄT, p. 428.
170. See *ibid*, p. 93.
171. Paetzold (*op cit*) devoted great detail to this category of 'experience'.
172. Demetz (*op cit*, p. 1194) speaks of "ontological realism"; Grenz (*op cit*) bases his analysis on this opposition of experience to reification; Dieter Kliche takes the same approach as he sees art as an allegory against reification ('Lukács und Adorno', Weimarer Beiträge, 23, 1977).
173. See Noten 2, p. 168.
174. G.S.11, p. 437.
175. See ÄT, p. 296.
176. See ND, p. 242.
177. See Jimenez (*op cit*, p. 153).
178. See ÄT, p. 67.
179. See *ibid*, p. 193.
180. Noten 2, p. 175.
181. See ND, p. 26.
182. An exception in his essay 'Resumé über die Kulturindustrie', OL, pp. 60 - 70.
183. See G.S.8, p. 534.
184. OL, p. 67.
185. GK, p. 60.
186. See ÄT, p. 477.

187. See Eingriffe, p. 73.
188. See ibid, p. 70.
189. Prismen, p. 161.
190. See G.S.10.2, pages 647 and 651.
191. Prismen, p. 149.
192. See ibid, pages 148 and 156.
193. See OL, pages 63 and 64 and Prismen, p. 150.
194. ibid, p. 160.
195. OL, p. 61.
196. ÄT, p. 32.
197. Prismen, p. 159.
198. ÄT, p. 65.
199. OL, p. 16.
200. See G.S.11, p. 446.
201. Noten 2, p. 198.
202. ÄT, p. 81.
203. ibid, p. 353.
204. OL, p. 172.
205. See Prismen, p. 211.
206. ÄT, p. 292.
207. G.S.11, p. 429.
208. ÄT, p. 53; see further G.S.11, p. 332.
209. Prismen, p. 213.
210. See ÄT, p. 377.
211. ibid, p. 53.
212. Kenyon Review, 7, 1945, p. 681.
213. G.S.8, p. 139.
214. Prismen, p. 153.
215. GK, p. 52.
216. ÄT, p. 374.
217. Hans Hartmut Kappner, 'Adornos Reflexionen über den Zerfall des bürgerlichen Individuums' (in Text und Kritik, Adorno, op cit); and Gerhard Knapp, T.W. Adorno, (Berlin 1980, p. 63) both concentrate on this point.
218. OL, p. 56.
219. ibid, p. 69.
220. G.S.10.2, p. 655; see further ibid, p. 653.
221. Michel (op cit, p. 72) sees critical theory transformed into aesthetic theory.
222. Rüdiger Bubner, 'Kann Theorie ästhetisch werden?', Lindner/Lüdke, op cit, p. 129 suggests because art presents truth, there is no theory beyond art itself, and therefore no theory of art for Adorno.

223. Puder, 'Adornos Philosophie', op cit, addresses this problem.
224. This should not be read to mean that Adorno rejected science per se, other than the form contained in art, or its accomplishments, for he did not understand himself as some modern Luddite.
225. See Berman's remarks (op cit, p. 161).
226. Noten 4, 1967, in G.S.11, pp 495 - 514 'Zum Klassizismus von Goethes 'Iphigenia'.'
227. Lüdke in Frankfurter Rundschau, 19.3.1983.
228. Jürgen Habermas, Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns, (Vol. 1, Frankfurt/M., 1982, pp. 489 - 534).

#### Chapter 10

1. Jürgen Habermas, 'Psychic Thermidor', (in Berkeley Journal of Sociology, XXV, 1980, pp. 3 - 4); and Thomas McCarthy, Obituary (in International Society for the Sociology of Knowledge, Special Issue on Herbert Marcuse, 1979)..
2. See, for example, 'Perspektiven des Sozialismus', p. 23; VR, p. 374; SM, p. 53, p. 240; EC, pages, 7, 74, 95, 145; and 'A Critique of Repressive Tolerance', p. 120.
3. Jay, op cit, p. 166.
4. Schoolman, op cit, p. 139.
5. Schoolman, op cit. Marcuse's work bears a relation in this respect to the Studies in Prejudice.
6. VR, p. 369. I quote from the German edition to highlight lexical similarities to DdA and because of the Postscript.
7. 'Industrie und Kapitalismus im Werke Max Webers', p. 121.
8. See ODM, Introduction, and p. 104; 'Der Begriff der Negation', in general, TG, p. 74 (I quote from the German edition in order to facilitate comparison with DdA); and Gespräche, p. 28.
9. ODM, p. 137.
10. ibid, p. 152.
11. See TG, pp. 7 - 10.
12. See Heide Berndt and Reimut Reiche, 'Die geschichtliche Dimension des Realitätsprinzips', in Antworten, p. 108 who claim that this is not possible.
13. TG, p. 42.
14. See Heinz Jansohn, op cit, p. 105.
15. See TG, p. 129.
16. ibid, p. 50.
17. ibid, p. 52. That he dates contemporary society in a manner similar to Adorno and Horkheimer can be seen from his reference to Baudelaire's work as symbolising capitalist, modern sexual repression, see TG, p. 54.
18. See op cit, Chapter 4 and Ben Agger, 'Marcuse's Freudian Marxism', (Dialectical Anthropology, 6, 1982, p. 322).
19. TG, p. 207.
20. ibid, p. 215.



21. See *ibid*, p. 231.
22. *ibid*, p. 229.
23. ODM, p. 88.
24. See TG, p. 24.
25. *ibid*, p. 143.
26. *ibid*, p. 175, the former term, Kantian in origin, was also used by Adorno (see Minima Moralia, pp. 302 - 303).
27. See *ibid*, p. 183.
28. *ibid*, p. 220.
29. Myriam Malinovich's view of Freud, 'On Herbert Marcuse and the Concept of Psychological Freedom', (Social Research, 49, No. 1, 1982) is thus somewhat limited.
30. 'Angst des Prometheus', p. 21.
31. See Revolution oder Reform, p. 20.
32. TG, p. 61.
33. 'Angst des Prometheus', p. 21.
34. TG, p. 124; "Dasein ist dem Wesen nach das Streben nach Lust."
35. This explains the absence in Marcuse's work of a discussion of it although Jean Laplanche 'Notes sur Marcuse et la Psychoanalyse', (Le Nef, 46, 1969, p. 130) and Sidney Lipshires 'Marcuse and Freud', (The Psychoanalytic Review, Vol. 60, No. 3, Fall 1973, p. 460) both use the absence as an argument against Marcuse.
36. See EL, p. 11 and also Konterrevolution und Revolte.
37. Gespräche, p. 23.
38. 'Protosocialisme et Capitalisme', p. 1723.
39. 'Friede als Utopie', p. 706.
40. See 'Progress and the Freudian Theory of Instincts', p. 37.
41. See *ibid*, p. 36.
42. 'Ethics and Revolution', p. 138. Quite a contemporary idea, if one looks at the discussions in the peace movement.
43. See TG, p. 96 ff.
44. Thus, it is unlike Fromm's work, which became ever more sociological in nature.
45. 'Protosocialisme et Capitalisme', pages 1726 and 1727.
46. 'Befreiung von der Überflußgesellschaft', p. 192.
47. TG, p. 183.
48. *ibid*, p. 145.
49. Michael Billig, private communication with me.
50. TG, p. 106.
51. 'Bemerkungen zur gesellschaftlichen Bedeutung der Automation', (in Alwin Walter, (ed.) Forschungsrat des Landes Hessen, Bad Homburg, 1958, pp. 58 - 72); Automation, (Frankfurter Beiträge zur Soziologie, Frankfurt/M., 1956); 'Automation in USA', (in Sociologica, Frankfurt/M., 1955, pp. 77 - 156).

52. Automation, p. 231 and pp. 230 - 231.
53. 'Automation in USA', p. 144, see also 152 - 153.
54. *ibid*, p. 151.
55. Automation, p. 235.
56. See 'Automation in USA', p. 154.
57. *ibid*, p. 155.
58. SM, p. 18. I quote from the German edition, again to facilitate comparison with DdA and also because of the Preface.
59. 'Angst des Prometheus', p. 20.
60. See TG, p. 10.
61. See ODM, pp. 172 - 175, and ED, p. 153 ff.
62. It is in these terms that Marcuse always discusses Marx, e.g. EL, p. 20: Grundrisse, p. 506 ff, and in SM, p. 219. In 'The Individual in the Great Society', Marcuse refers to Das Kapital, III, p. 355 on the rational organisation of the sphere of production, and in 'The Realm of Freedom and the Realm of Necessity' he cites the Grundrisse and the close of (Das Kapital) on the individual versus the socialized means of production.
63. See TG, Introduction.
64. Hans Heinz Holz, Utopie und Anarchismus, (Cologne, 1968); Gerd-Klaus Kaltenbrunner, 'Der Denker Herbert Marcuse', (in Kritik und Interpretation der kritischen Theorie (collection), Giessen, 1975, p. 155); Gertraud Korf, Ausbruch aus dem Gehäuse der Hörigkeit, Kritik und Kulturtheorien Webers und Marcuses, (Frankfurt/M., 1971, p. 24); Franz Marek, 'Perspektiven der Industriegesellschaft', (in Kritik und Interpretation, p. 247) all refer to a lack of an analysis of the base in Marcuse's writings.
65. See TG, particularly p. 138 ff.
66. KR, p. 44.
67. See Detlev Claussen, 'Im Universum der totalen Verdinglichung', (in his Spuren der Befreiung, Neuwied/Berlin, 1981, p. 162) and Johann Schüle, 'Jenseits des Leistungsprinzips' (in Claussen, *op cit*, p. 131).
68. See ODM, pages 14 and 17.
69. *ibid*, p. 18.
70. EL, p. 53.
71. SM, p. 178.
72. See ODM, p. 14.
73. EL, p. 80.
74. 'Theorie und Praxis', p. 23.
75. 'Das Individuum in ...', p. 163.
76. 'Befreiung ...', p. 188.
77. 'Repressive Toleranz', p. 127.

78. See 'The Obsolescence of the Freudian Concept of Man', p. 54 and VR, p. 372.
79. ODM, p. 70.
80. See *ibid*, p. 74 and VR, p. 179.
81. ODM, p. 57 ff.
82. See 'Aggressiveness ...', p. 13.
83. 'Befreiung ...', p. 191.
84. 'The Obsolescence of the Freudian Concept of Man', p. 53.
85. See 'Theorie und Praxis', p. 26.
86. TG, p. 103.
87. 'Protosocialisme ...', p. 1726.
88. e.g. Alistair MacIntyre, Marcuse, (London, 1970).
89. Revolution oder Reform?, p. 30.
90. Heinz Jansohn, *op cit*, pp. 128 - 129, elaborates on this point admirably.
91. Claus Offe, 'Technik und Eindimensionalität', (in Antworten, pp. 76 - 77) and Wolfgang Lipp, 'Apparat und Gewalt bei Herbert Marcuse', (Soziale Welt, 20, No. 3, 1969, p. 286) for a flawed description of this.
92. VR, p. 249.
93. e.g. KR, p. 58.
94. ODM, p. 28.
95. 'End of Utopia', p. 66.
96. *ibid*, p. 78.
97. See 'Organisationsfrage ...', p. 60.
98. See EL, p. 82.
99. 'Nachwort zum 18. Brumaire von Karl Marx', p. 149.
100. ODM, p. 17.
101. 'Freedom and the Historical Imperative', p. 212.
102. KR, p. 25; see also 'Begriff der Negation', p. 189 and Pier Aldo Rovatti 'Critical Theory and Phenomenology', (Telos, 15, Spg 1973).
103. VR, p. 147.
104. Paul Mattick claims, (Kritik an Herbert Marcuse, Frankfurt/M., 1969, p. 17 and p. 18), erroneously, that Marcuse does not ground technics in the mode of production.
105. Friede als Utopie, p. 705.
106. See Stefan Breuer, Die Krise der Revolutionstheorie, (Frankfurt/M., 1977).
107. See EL, p. 3.
108. See Johann Arnason, Von Marx zu Marcuse, (Frankfurt/M., 1971, pp. 230 - 231) and Paul Robinson, The Freudian Left, (New York, 1969, p.239).

109. 'Industrie und Kapitalismus...', p. 127.
110. See 'Ethics and Revolution', p. 146; see also ODM, p. 115.
111. ODM, p. 130.
112. See 'Ist die Idee der Revolution eine Mystifikation?', p. 3.
113. See Postone & Brick, op cit, for a discussion of the manner in which it could not specify the nature of technology.
114. See Wolfgang Fritz Haug, 'Das Ganze und das ganz Andere' (in Antworten, pp. 59 - 65), and Claus Offe, (op cit, pp. 74 - 75).
115. 'Angst ...', p. 20.
116. KR, p. 73, see EL, p. 88, p. 89 and KR, p. 46.
117. ibid, p. 74.
118. Arnason, op cit, p. 231 is therefore wrong.
119. ODM, p. 186.
120. ibid, p. 187.
121. 'Begriff der Negation', p. 188.
122. ODM, p. 61.
123. See 'Aggressivity ...', p. 28.
124. TG, p. 86.
125. See EC, p. 215 and PHI, p. 203.
126. See ODM, p. 68.
127. TG, p. 183 (see footnote 46).
128. See 'Art in the one-dimensional Society',
129. See ODM, p. 183.
130. ibid, p. 193.
131. 'Die Gesellschaft als Kunstwerk', p. 864 and SN, p. 126.
132. 'Das Individuum', p. 170.
133. See TG, p. 20.
134. See ibid, p. 142 ff. and EL, p. 37.
135. KR, p. 85.
136. TG, p. 143, see p. 146.
137. Winfried Schroeder, 'Anthropologisierung der Ästhetik', (Weimarer Beiträge, 19, 1973, p. 65) say that therefore the imagination is spontaneous, and ahistorical.
138. See Gespräche, p. 40.
139. See EL, p. 30.
140. See op cit, p. 42.
141. 'Befreiung...', p. 194, see 'Das Individuum...', p. 172 ff.
142. See Bernhard Glaeser, 'Arbeit und Freiheit bei Herbert Marcuse', (Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung XXIV, 1970).

143. See Paetzold, op cit, p. 121.
144. EL, p. 25.
145. 'Gesellschaft als Kunstwerk', p. 865.
146. See ODM, p. 187, see footnote 120.
147. EL, pages 26 and 32.
148. TG, p. 175.
149. See PK, pages 25 and 26.
150. ODM, p. 186.
151. See Hans Peter Thurn, 'Theorie der Kunst bei Herbert Marcuse', (Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie, 26, No. 2, 1974).
152. 'Freedom and the Historical Imperative', p. 217.
153. See 'Protosocialisme ...', p. 1728.
154. 'Freedom and ...', p. 213.
155. EC, pp. 155 - 156, see also Remarks on a Redefinition of Culture, p. 199.
156. See EL, pages 20, 21.
157. See Paetzold, op cit, p. 170, where he suggests that Marcuse reduces the aesthetic to political praxis.
158. See PK, p. 9, Nathan Rotenstreich, 'The Utopia of the Aesthetic Ethos', (Journal of Value Inquiry, 5, No. 1, 1970, p. 47) adjudges this to create a 'totalistic' notion of freedom in art.
159. See VR, p. 229. Marcuse's concern with the function of art is indebted to Schiller's notion of social and sensuous emancipation.
160. Gespräche, p. 43.
161. See KR, p. 124.
162. *ibid*, p. 133.
163. *ibid*, p. 138.
164. e.g. Revolution oder Reform?, p. 6.
165. Lothar Baier, 'Das Unbehagen in der affirmativen Kultur', (in Claussen, op cit, p. 189), states that Marcuse creates no "systematic aesthetics".
166. Gespräche, p. 135.
167. TG, p. 144.
168. 'Repressive Toleranz', p. 101.
169. KR, p. 110.
170. PK, p. 19.
171. See 'Remarks on a Redefinition of Culture', p. 204.
172. SM, p. 236.
173. See 'The Obsolescence...', p. 58 ff., and ODM, pp. 61 - 62.
174. See ODM, p. 194.
175. KR, p. 121, and see 'Art in the one-dimensional ...', p. 53.

176. See *ibid*, p. 99.
177. See *ibid*, p. 95.
178. PK, p. 35, ditto, p. 61. Dieter Ulle's criticism of this point, 'Kulturrevolution und Kunst', (Weimarer Beiträge, 19, 1973, p. 102) is banal.
179. See 'Die Stellung des Denkens Heute', p. 48.
180. Gespräche, p. 44.
181. See 'The Individual ...', p. 170.
182. See *ibid*, p. 171.
183. See 'Die Gesellschaft ...', p. 864.
184. C. Fred Alford, review of The Aesthetic Dimension, Telos, 48, 1981, p. 179).
185. 'Art in the one-dimensional ...', p. 63.
186. See KR, p. 81.
187. See Gespräche, p. 46.
188. 'Art in the one-dimensional ...', p. 62, and see Alfred Schmidt, *op cit*, p. 39.
189. See Jürgen Habermas. in Gespräche, p. 43.
190. KR, p. 155.
191. e.g. PK, p. 20 "Der Widerspruch zum Bestehenden ist dem Kunstwerk immanent", and see PK, p. 61. Leo Kofler (Haut den Lukács, Lollar, 1977, p. 40) and Schoolman, *op cit*, p. 62 and p. 74 both concentrate on this point.
192. See C. Fred Alford, *op cit*, p. 184.
193. PK, p. 29, see also p. 36.
194. SM, p. 126 and also W.N.A. Klever 'De Kultuurfilosofie van Herbert Marcuse', (in Tijdschrift voor Filosofie, 32, No. 1, 1970, p. 76) argues cogently that EC itself can be regarded as a thesis on affirmative culture, in that in it the difference between 'culture' and 'civilisation' is dropped.
195. Hartmut Engelhardt, 'Ästhetik als Politik', (Neue Rundschau, 84, 1973, p. 730), correctly perceives that Marcuse does not understand modern art as a critique of classical art, and thus changes the very concept of art itself in its normal understanding.
196. See Kofler, *op cit*, p. 25.
197. See PK, p. 58.
198. The sole instance is KR, p. 128.
199. SM, p. 130.
200. See *ibid*, p. 132.
201. See EL, p. 30.
202. Xenia Rajewsky, 'Die Zweite Natur' (in Claussen, *op cit*, p. 256).
203. e.g. KR, p. 145.

204. See PK, p. 6 (i.e. the dedication).
205. See ibid, p. 17.
206. See Alexander Delfini, 'Review of Counterrevolution and Revolte', (Telos, 13, Fall 1972).
207. See e.g. EL, p. 27.
208. See PK, pages 65, 69 and 71.
209. See ibid, pp. 11 - 17, and EL, pages 40, 43 and 44.
210. See KR, p. 122, PK, pages 18 and 32, 'A Critique ...', p. 100.
211. e.g. EL, p. 16 ff., or 'Angst des Prometheus', p. 20.
212. TG, p. 34.

#### Chapter 11

1. An examination of such articles as appeared in the 1970s on the sociology of literature, in such journals as Diskussion Deutsch, Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift, Soziale Welt, German Quarterly, Der Deutschunterricht, Neusprachliche Mitteilungen, and British Journal of Sociology, revealed only one reference to Löwenthal's work.
2. Telos, 45, Fall 1980.
3. Frankfurter Rundschau, May 17, 1982, Feuilleton.
4. 'Terror's Atomization of Man', pages 4 and 5.
5. op cit, pp. 6 - 7.
6. loc cit and p. 8.
7. Explicit references to DdA are to be found in Mitmachen wollte ich nie, Frankfurt/M., 1980, pages 80, 83 and 96 ff.; in 'Historical Perspectives of Popular Culture', p. 330; Literatur und Gesellschaft, Neuwied/Berlin, 1964, p. 43 and p. 221; and 'Terror's Atomization...', pages 4, 5 and 7.
8. See Speech in 'Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature, p.14.
9. op cit, pp. 16 - 17, my italics.
10. Lüdke aptly labels this "to explicate the social concept of the object" ('The Faded Blue Flower of Romanticism. Löwenthal on Early German Romanticism', Telos, 45, 1980) p. 142.
11. See Yearbook, p. 14.
12. e.g. Literatur und Gesellschaft, p. 27 ff.
13. 'Historical Perspectives...', p. 326.
14. op cit, p. 327 ff.
15. See e.g. Literatur, Chapter 5.
16. Bild des Menschen in der Literatur, Neuwied/Berlin, 1966, p. 13.
17. op cit, p. 14.
18. Literatur, p. 248.
19. See Dubiel, in Mitmachen, p. 171 for an explanation of the difference.
20. Mitmachen, p. 171.

21. 'Das Problem der Populärkultur', p. 23.
22. Literatur, p. 14.
23. 'Debatte über kulturelle Standards in England des 19. Jahrhunderts', p. 172.
24. Mitmachen, p. 171.
25. Yearbook..., p. 17.
26. Bild..., p. 237.
27. Literatur, p. 18, see Schriften 2, Frankfurt/M., 1981, p. 13.
28. Mitmachen, p. 175.
29. Schriften 2, p. 8
30. See Dubiel, in Mitmachen, pp. 163 - 164.
31. Literatur, p. 20.
32. op cit, p. 159.
33. Bild, p. 31, my emphasis.
34. op cit, p. 73.
35. op cit, p. 145.
36. Erzählkunst und Gesellschaft, Neuwied/Berlin, 1971, p. 111.
37. Yearbook, pp. 17 - 18.
38. Erzählkunst, p. 104.
39. op cit, p. 108.
40. op cit, p. 135.
41. 'Debatte...', p. 197.
42. Bild, page 176 and 182.
43. op cit, p. 210, see further p. 218.
44. op cit, p. 214.
45. op cit, p. 152.
46. op cit, p. 216.
47. op cit, p. 224.
48. See Robert Sayre, op cit, p. 157.
49. Mitmachen, p. 175.
50. Bild, p. 23 and Schriften 2, p. 18.
51. Schriften 2, p. 7.
52. op cit, p. 11.
53. Literatur, p. 43.
54. See W. Martin Lüdke in Frankfurter Rundschau, where he speaks of the ideological quality of form in Löwenthal's eyes.
55. Erzählkunst, p. 167.
56. Schriften 2, p. 8.
57. op cit, p. 10, see further Erzählkunst, p. 172.



58. Mitmachen, p. 176.
59. Lüdke, Telos, p. 144 overlooks this point.
60. Mitmachen, p. 181.
61. David Gross, op cit, p. 134 is thus clearly wrong.
62. See Yearbook..., p. 14.
63. Literatur, p. 12.
64. See 'Das Problem...', p. 24 and Sayre, op cit, p. 152.
65. See Yearbook, p. 16 and Schriften 1, p. 355.
66. Yearbook, p. 16 and 'Debatte...', p. 172.
67. 'Das Problem...', p. 26.
68. op cit, p. 29.
69. Literatur, p. 20 ff.
70. See, for example, op cit, p. 60 ff.
71. 'A Historical Preface to the Popular Culture Debate', p. 30.
72. op cit, p. 31.
73. See, op cit, p. 33 and Gross, op cit, p. 126.
74. op cit, p. 178.
75. 'A Historical ...', p. 32.
76. Mitmachen, p. 278.
77. 'Das Problem...', p. 30, see Agitation und Ohnmacht, pp.70 - 71.
78. Mitmachen, p. 190 for the difference between 'mass' and 'popular' culture, and the 'culture industry', see Adorno in OL, p. 60.
79. Notizen zur Literatursoziologie, p. 92.
80. 'Historical Perspectives', p. 332.
81. 'A Historical', p. 33.
82. 'Historical Perspectives', p. 331.
83. Literatur, p. 26.
84. Dubiel claims the opposite, Mitmachen, p. 174.
85. Notizen, p. 90 and p. 101 respectively.
86. Literatur, pp. 168 - 169.
87. Sayre, op cit, p. 156.
88. See Schriften 1, pp. 360 - 361.
89. Literatur, pp. 271 - 272.
90. 'Historical Perspectives', p. 326.
91. Dubiel, op cit, p. 181 ff. takes this to be the difference between Löwenthal and Adorno (see Literatur, p. 26 ff.)
92. See Gross, op cit, p. 138.
93. for example Literatur, p. 143, Bild, p. 218, and see Literatur, p. 190.
94. e.g. 'A Historical', p. 31.
95. See Yearbook, p. 16 ff.
96. Sayre, op cit, p. 155.

Chapter 12

1. Kaltenbrunner, op cit, p. 155 ff.
2. Holz, op cit, pages 24 and 26.
3. Andrew, op cit, p. 250 ff.
4. Böckelmann 'Die Möglichkeit ist die Unmöglichkeit', (in Schoeller, op cit, p. 18 ff.).
5. Konrad Boehmer 'Adorno, Musik und Gesellschaft' (in Schoeller, op cit, p. 123).
6. op cit, p. 126.
7. John Fry Marcuse; Dilemma and Liberation, (Stockholm, 1974, p. 155).
8. Landmann, op cit, p. xxii and p.xx.
9. Beier, op cit, p. 99.
10. Held, op cit, p. 373.
11. Connerton, op cit, p. 131 ff.
12. op cit, pp. 127 - 128.
13. Skuhra, op cit, p. 54.
14. op cit, p. 68.
15. See Theunissen, op cit; Fredel, op cit and Peter Reichel, 'Verabsolutierte Negation. Zu Adornos Theorie von den Triebkräften der gesellschaftlichen Entwicklungen', Berlin 1972; and for tacit acceptance of this argument, Buck-Morss, op cit, p. 139 and Lindner, op cit, p. 27.
16. Gerd Kaiser, op cit, p. 289.
17. Jopke, op cit, p. 55.
18. See Puder, 'Adornos Philosophie'.
19. Lindner/Lüdke, op cit, p. 19.
20. Über Th.W. Adorno, p. 84.
21. Dubiel, Wissenschaftsorganisation, p. 124.
22. Postone and Brick, 'Critical Pessimism and the Limits of Traditional Marxism' (Theory and Society, 11, 1982).
23. The 1983 Adorno Conference at the J.-W.-Goethe University in Frankfurt was the last place at which critical opinion aired this condemnation of Adorno's aesthetics, with the exception of Albrecht Wellmer's lecture.
24. In a sense the French Deconstructionists' description of the non-subjective, non-telic nature of logocentric thought moves in a similar direction, while permitting a less precise notion of 'unfree' communication. Habermas, however, tends to ignore aesthetics.
25. Both Trotsky and Benjamin outline these possible conclusions. Benjamin's famous version of it in his 'Kunstwerk' essay is therefore not as illogical as it may seem, and thus worthy of consideration.

26. See Gerhard Pasternak, Theoriebildung in der Literaturwissenschaft, (Munich, 1975, p. 19 ff.).
27. I use the term in the same way as the label 'adequate'.
28. In Lindner/Lüdke, op cit, pp. 261 - 309.
29. See Lukács' essay 'Reportage oder Gestaltung?' in the Linkskurve.
30. Werke, (Vol. 4, p. 616), from the essay 'Kunst und objektive Wahrheit', 1954.
31. ibid, p. 629.
32. Gesammelte Werke, Vol. 10, p. 774.
33. Wider den mißverstandenen Realismus, (Reinbek/Hamburg, 1958, p. 34 and p. 45 ff.).
34. Werke, (Vol. 4, p. 618, see also p. 621 ff.).
35. Robert Scholes, Semiotics and Interpretation, Yale, 1982, p. 20.
36. Shaw in his Dictionary of Literary Terms, New York, 1972, gives the following definition of 'montage'. "A combination of elements that forms a unified whole, a single image (see collage). Montage is used in literature as a device to establish a theme or create an atmosphere through a series of rapidly presented impressions or observations /.../ The device of montage frequently used by writers of impressionism, appears in the interior monologue of novels and plays and in motion-pictures and television productions." This definition is somewhat outdated if the concept of montage is to be held to embrace much of modern neo-realist writing. Burkhardt Lindner and Hans Schlichting (in Alternative, 122/23, Oct.-Dec. 1978) provide a detailed discussion of the concept of montage, (pp. 209 - 224), reaching the conclusion that one must move along a line drawn between it and Adorno's view of autonomous artistic material (p. 224).
37. In his Walter Benjamin, (London, 1981, p. 141), footnote, Terry Eagleton mentions the similarity between Deconstructionism and Adorno but pinpoints it only in Adorno's rejection of 'the intentionality' of signification' and his 'insistence on the power of heterogenous fragments.' Clearly, the convergence between the two bodies of thought needs to be studied more thoroughly, for what it might reveal on the nature of both philosophies.
38. Erich Auerbach, in his (Mimesis, Bern, 1959, p. 507) saw novels as having been shown their limits by the advent of the moving picture. He thus failed completely to anticipate the extent to which the novel would itself undergo transformations to enable it to simulate some of the devices used by cinematography, e.g. montage.
39. See, for example, Peter Chotjewitz, Saumlos, (Königstein, 1980); Gerd Fuchs, Stunde Null, (Königstein, 1980); Heinar Kipphardt, Bruder Eichmann, (Reinbek/Hamburg, 1983).
40. This points to a certain connectedness of Brecht and Adorno's thought; despite their mutual animosity, and is a topic that certainly warrants further investigation for what it might reveal of Brecht's and Adorno's Marxism.

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