

THEODOR ADORNO, ON THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN CRITICAL THEORY AND ART

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ABSTRACT

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During the twentieth century, Critical Theory was one of the most influential schools of thought in philosophy, political theory, theory of art, sociology, psychology and cultural studies. As a leading member of the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory, Adorno analyzed capitalism with an emphasis on culture and claimed that art has the potential for emancipation. The Frankfurt School thinkers generally argued that instrumental rationality became the dominant form of reason and ceased to be self-reflective and critical. The critique of culture industry was a critique of the dominant ideology which controls individual consciousness. Adorno and other Frankfurt school philosophers applied the Freudian terminology in their theories. Under the control of dominant ideology, art takes its place among other consumer goods. Underlining the emancipative potential of art in his philosophy, Adorno searches for an answer to the question of how things could be better.

Key words: Instrumental Rationality, Emancipation, Truth Content, Mimesis, Negative Dialectic.

ÖZ

ADORNO DA ELEŞTİREL TEORİ VE SANAT İLİŞKİSİ

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Eleştirel teori felsefe, politik teori, sanat teorisi sosyoloji, psikoloji ve kültür çalışmaları açısından Yirminci Yüzyılın en etkili teorilerinden birisidir. Adorno Frankfurt Okulu Eleştirel Teori içinde yer alan düşünürlerin önde gelenlerinden biri olarak, kapitalizmi kültür vurgusu üzerinden analiz etmiş ve sanatın özgürleştirici potansiyel taşıdığını savunmuştur. Frankfurt Okulu düşünürleri genel olarak araçsal rasyonalitenin baskın anlayış haline geldiğini ve özdüşünümsel ve eleştirel olmaktan uzaklaştığını iddia etmişlerdir. Kültür endüstri eleştirisi, bireyin bilincini kontrol eden egemen ideolojinin eleştirisidir. Bu nedenle Adorno ve Frankfurt Okulu düşünürleri teorilerinde, Freud'dan kavramları kullanmışlardır. Egemen ideolojinin kontrolü altında sanat da tüketim araçları arasında yerini almaktadır. Adorno sanatın özgürleştirici yanına vurgu yaparak, felsefesinde “Her şey daha iyi nasıl olabilir?” sorusuna yanıt aramaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Araçsal Rasyonalite, Özgürleştirme, Doğruluk İçeriği, Mimesis, Negatif Diyalektik.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Influenced by Immanuel Kant, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, and Karl Marx on one side and the Freudians, Georg Lukacs and Walter Benjamin on the other, Theodor Adorno developed his ideas at the intersection of philosophy, sociology and art. Critical Theory is one of the most influential theories of the twentieth century. As a leading member of the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory, Adorno analyzed capitalism with an emphasis on culture; in addition to that, he wrote about aesthetic theory on top of many essays on literature and music.

In this thesis, there will be an analysis of Adorno's critical theory and its relation with art. The questions of the meaning of emancipation in Adorno's philosophy, the barriers that exist in front of emancipation in late capitalist society, the possibility of art's autonomy from culture and its potential for emancipation will be discussed.

The introductory chapter presents an overview of Adorno's philosophy. The meaning of "Critical Theory" is discussed, and the historical background of Critical Theory is summarized. The historical background indicates the inherited characteristics of Adorno's philosophy where emancipation has a Marxist meaning that is different than what Adorno means. Next, some important philosophers and their influence on Adorno's thought are discussed; Freudian psychoanalysis was influential on Adorno's theories in addition to Adorno's take on Weber's and Lukacs' theories of instrumental rationality. The relations between these philosophers and Adorno show the roots of the critical concepts in Adorno's thought. The chapter "Dialectic of Enlightenment" presents the main problems of the enlightenment thought claimed by Adorno and Horkheimer.

“Culture Industry” explains the social outcome of those problems and discusses the liquidation of individuality and mass culture. “Negative Dialectic” is an overview of Adorno’s philosophical approach, and “Art and Emancipation” deals with the relation between society and art on the grounds of autonomy, truth content, mimesis and emancipation. In summary, first the historical background of Adorno’s philosophy and influential philosophers on his thought are discussed. Then, the problems raised in “Dialectic of Enlightenment” and their results in society and culture industry are elaborated. Finally, Adorno’s “Negative Dialectic” and the relation between art and society in his philosophy are studied.

Apart from his books, the following essays of Adorno are used for the discussions in this work: “On the Fetish Character of Music and the Regression of Listening,” “Freudian Theory and the Pattern of Fascist Propaganda,” “Commitment,” “On Lyric Poetry and Society,” “On the Social Situation of Music.” These essays provide the main concepts of Adorno’s philosophy from the point of view of Critical Theory and art. Many books on Adorno’s philosophy from secondary literature helped shape my understanding about his philosophy and his approach on the relation between art and society.

1.1 What is Critical Theory?

“Critical Theory” is an interdisciplinary project of the Frankfurt School, which was founded around 1920. Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm, Leo Lowenthal, and T. W. Adorno are the main figures of this school. In the critique of Critical Theory, one of the rejections concerns the use of scientific methods in social sciences in the same way as they are employed for natural sciences. They comment that “the facts which our senses present to us are socially preformed in two ways: through the historical character of the object perceived and through the historical character of the perceiving organ. Both are not simply natural; they are shaped by human activity, and

yet the individual perceives himself as receptive and passive in the act of perception.”¹ As a result, the use of scientific methods for political, social and cultural areas is not adequate.

Common research interests of this school are mass media, mass culture, theory of art and rationalization as reification. The Critical Theory philosophers argue that instrumental rationality is the dominant form of reason, and it has ceased to be self-reflective and critical. According to this perspective, the relation between cultural forms and capitalism is emphasized, and the new type of emerging individuality is investigated. In this new phase of capitalism, “Culture Industry” is the new “opium of the masses,” so finding new ways of resistance to this dominant system is the central aim of the Frankfurt School thinkers. Their method of criticism is an imminent criticism which tries to show where contemporary society fails to justify its own claims. In addition to its critical position, Critical Theory also looks for ways to change social inequality.

In Critical Theory, there is a reactionary attitude towards orthodox Marxism as well. According to the orthodox Marxist theory, underlying laws of historical development are known, and capitalism will eventually be terminated by a revolution: “Critical theory insists that thought must respond to the new problems and the new possibilities for liberation that arise from changing historical circumstances.”² In this situation, “The real social function of philosophy lies in its criticism of what is prevalent.”³ They provide a socio-cultural critique rather than a socio-economic critique.

Adorno develops a materialist modification of Hegel’s theory. This is shown in his claims about a reified social world:

¹ Horkheimer Max, “Traditional and Critical Theory” in *Critical Theory Selected Essays*, Continuum, New York, 2002, 200.

² Bronner Stephen Eric, *Critical Theory*, Oxford University Press, Inc., New York, 2011, p1.

³ Horkheimer Max, *Critical Theory Selected Essays*, Continuum, New York, 2002, p264.

Reified relations are reproduced in philosophical theories. The effects of reification are manifest in a variety of forms. The following are the main features of reified experience: reduction of the object to a manipulable thing; reduction of the subject to that of manipulator; comprehension of the current form of relations as natural.⁴

With regards to phenomenology, transcendental idealism and empiricism, the positivist tradition has examples of these types of philosophies where reified relations are reproduced. In Critical Theory, reification and alienation are analyzed in terms of how they influence the individual and turn him into a cog in the machine.

Thinkers of the Frankfurt School, like Horkheimer, Adorno and Marcuse, are in favor of experimental modernist art. Their argument is based on the claim that art is a kind of language code within society which must be deciphered by means of critical analysis.

1.2 Historical Background of Critical Theory

Full extent analysis of Critical Theory necessitates looking at its historical background. The period between the two World Wars, which contained a lot of political and social turbulence, influenced the founders of Critical Theory. Until the First World War, class conflict was significant in the major capitalist states, like the United Kingdom and Germany, but the Bolshevik revolution in 1917 shook the oldest political systems of Europe. On November 9, 1918, the German Republic was declared. During the following two years, a large network of workers raised their economical and social demands, and large scale protests and strikes were seen not only in Germany but also in Austria, Italy and Hungary. Despite the triumph of the Russian Revolution, these movements proved to be unsuccessful against the dominant bourgeoisie. By the end of 1920, the Russian Revolution started to be weakened and deviated from the path of Lenin. After Stalin took power, many European communist parties started to be controlled by the leadership of Moscow.

⁴ O'Connor Brian, *Adorno*, Routledge 2013 New York, p119.

David Held writes, “Marxists of the Second International had frequently presented socialism as a historical necessary outcome of the development of capitalism”.⁵ On the other hand, the German Social Democrat Party was an evolutionary party and grew in size in the pre-war years. Although “its rhetoric was Marxist but the program was increasingly reformist,”⁶ the Social Democrat Party took part in coalition governments between 1918 and 1921 and additionally in 1923, as well as between 1928 and 1930. They failed to improve democracy and the socialization of production in Germany. The working class divided into socialist, communist and nationalist socialist parties. The Great Depression in 1929, high inflation and crippling unemployment made the class struggle much more chaotic in Germany. Between 1924 and 1933, Fascism emerged in Italy and Spain. In January of 1933, Hitler’s Nazi Party took power and prohibited the Social Democrat Party and other liberal parties. On 22 August, 1939, the Hitler-Stalin Pact was signed.

The brief summary above shows the disappointment of the Marxist movement, which believed that socialism, is a historical necessary outcome of the development of capitalism. Political events were not in alignment with Marxist expectations. Adorno and Horkheimer’s co-authored book *The Dialectic of Enlightenment* was written in this atmosphere and published in 1944. The book starts with the following paragraph:

Enlightenment, understood in the widest sense as the advance of thought, has always aimed at liberating human beings from fear and installing them as masters. Yet the wholly enlightened earth is radiant with triumphant calamity.⁷

The “triumphant calamity” was basically fascist Germany, Stalinist Russia and the weapons of mass destruction used during the Second World War, which led the Frankfurt School to a pessimistic and critical approach to enlightenment. The advance of

⁵ Held David, *Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1980, p18.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Horkheimer Max and Adorno Theodor, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, translated by Edmund Jephcott, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2002, p1.

thought and the liberation of human beings, which were the aims of the Enlightenment period, could not be achieved. From the Marxist point of view, the following questions became important: How could the relationship between theory and practice now be conceived? Could theory preserve hope for the future? In changing historical circumstances how could the revolutionary ideal be justified? Critical Theory, with its Marxist roots, tried to answer these questions.

1.3 Fried, Weber, Marx, Lukacs

Beside the historical perspective, it is necessary to mention the leading philosophers who have had an influence on Critical theory.

1.3.1 Freud

Yvonne Sherratt explains, “Adorno appropriates Freud to analyze society: criticizes Freud and finally, uses Freud’s ideas to develop his own philosophy of history.”⁸ In order to understand the relation between the individual and society, critical theorists combined Marxist theory with the Freudian theory of human psychology: “They claimed that Freudian theory provided concepts and theorems which revealed a great deal about the socio-psychological formation of individual.”⁹

Freud develops the theory of the human psyche. He talks about the psychological development of human beings in his theory. According to Freud, the psyche is represented in five different ways:

First, the psychosexual theory of human development; second, the division of the psyche into the unconscious and conscious; third, the categories of ego and id; fourth,

⁸ Sherratt Yvonne, *Positive Dialectic*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002, p57.

⁹ Held David, *Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1980, p110.

the theory of human development couched in the language of primary narcissism and maturity; finally, in his later work, to an idea of the psyche as composed primarily of the life instincts (Eros) and the death instincts (Thanatos).¹⁰

According to the psychosexual theory of Freud, the first representation—human psychosexual development—consists of four stages: the oral, the anal, the phallic, and the genital. The Freudian concept of regression entails the returning back to one of these stages from maturity. The second one is the division of the psyche into the unconscious and conscious; the unconscious represents the non-rational side of this division where impulses occur. The third representation contains the ego and the id drives. Freud refers to the uncontrolled pleasure-seeking part of the individual as the id and the part which provides control over itself as the ego: “The ego refers to the part of the self that is responsible for self-preservation, capable of control and gaining a sense of reality. The id is the more primitive aspect that is uncontrolled and concerned with pleasure.”¹¹ The ego achieves “self preservation through the acquisition of knowledge.”¹² There is a relation between the second and the third representations. While the ego is related with the conscious, the id is related with the unconscious. Finally, “There are two sets of instincts which permeate both the ego and the id; these are Eros, the sexual, or life drive and Thanatos, the death drive”¹³

Through the acquisition of knowledge, the human gains control over nature. Sherratt claims, “This entails, for Adorno following Freud, that the subject satisfies itself upon the object through the ego-drive. Thus, for Adorno, the ego drive is predominant in enlightenment”¹⁴; its predominance creates the imbalance between the id and the ego.

¹⁰ Sherratt Yvonne, *Positive Dialectic*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002, p 51.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p76.

¹² Sherratt, Yvonne, *The Dialectic of Enlightenment A Contemporary Reading, History of Human Sciences*, Vol.12, no. 3, 1999, p38.

¹³ Sherratt Yvonne, *Positive Dialectic*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002, p55.

¹⁴ Sherratt, Yvonne, *The Dialectic of Enlightenment A Contemporary Reading, History of Human Sciences*, Vol.12, no. 3, 1999, p39.

By using the psychoanalytic theory, Adorno analyzes the specific pathologies of Western society. Freud's social theory is originated from a critique of bourgeois sexual repression. Adorno is interested with psychoanalysis from a social point of view. Many Freudian concepts, like regression, fetish and narcissism, are very frequently used in Adorno's text. Two of Adorno's essays which will be discussed in this work ("Freudian Theory and the Pattern of Fascist Propaganda," "On the Fetish Character of Music and the Regression of Listening") are related with Freudian concepts. "Freudian Theory and the Pattern of Fascist Propaganda" discusses how the degeneration of human functions results in the liquidation of the individual in contemporary societies, and "On the Fetish Character of Music and the Regression of Listening" deals with culture industry.

1.3.2 Weber, Marx, Lukacs

According to Weber, instrumental rationality became dominant against the "value rationality," which could be "determined by a conscious belief in the value for its own sake of some ethical, aesthetic, religious, or other form of behavior, independently of its prospects of success."¹⁵ Weber claims:

Instrumentally rational (zweckrational), that is, determined by expectations as to the behavior of objects in the environment and of other human beings; these expectations are used as "conditions" or "means" for the attainment of the actor's own rationally pursued and calculated ends;¹⁶

The rationalization and organization of life according to the efficiency of economic goals places the individual in an "iron cage." Lukacs uses Weber's theory about bureaucracy and administration, which he thinks are intensifying elements of reification.

Adorno's philosophy was influenced by Lukacs because of his focus on the problem of reification. Reification as a key concept provided a Marxist analysis of culture. After the

¹⁵ Weber Max, *Society and Economy*, University California Press, United States, 1978, p24.

¹⁶ Ibid.

historical events between the 1920s and 1930s, Marxist intellectuals faced an important question: “How could the relationship between theory and practice now be conceived? Could theory preserve hope for future? In changing historical circumstances how could the revolutionary ideal be justified?”¹⁷ Lukacs’ approach is a challenge against orthodox Marxism. In “History and Class Consciousness,” Lukacs’s “distinctive contribution lay in claiming that reification—literally, making into a thing (res, Ding)—was the impediment to emancipation.”¹⁸ Lukacs argues that in the capitalist economy, a “finished article ceases to be the object of the work-process,”¹⁹ and it is transformed into abstract entities where the qualitative character of human life (production) turns out to be quantitative realities. As a result, the social institutions, such as law, administration, journalism and person-to-person relations, are also influenced by the “commodity form or the logic of exchange.”²⁰ Roger Foster wrote, “In ‘Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat,’ Lukacs attempts to combine the Marxian critique of political economy with Weber’s sociology in such a way that the critique of capitalist society can be fused with a critique of rationalization.”²¹ Lukacs tries to show how reification is diffused into every part of life. Reification is not a subjective phenomenon, and social relations started to have a thing-like character. Both the product and the producer (worker) are reduced to a commodity.

Susan Morss explains, “Lukacs analyzed the tradition of bourgeois philosophy, demonstrating that the antinomies which continuously appeared within it, had the same

¹⁷ Held David, *Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980, p20.

¹⁸ O’Connor Brian, *Adorno’s Negative Dialectic*, The MIT Press, Massachusetts, 2014, p8.

¹⁹ Lukacs Georg, *Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat*, www.marxists.org/archive/lukacs/works/history/hcc05.htm , p5.

²⁰ Paudyal Bed P., Mimesis in Adorno’s Aesthetic Theory, *Journal of Philosophy: A Cross-Disciplinary Inquiry*, Winter 2009 Vol 4, No:8, p1.

²¹ Foster Roger, *Dialectic of Enlightenment as Genealogy Critique*, *SAGE Adorno Volume 3*, 2001, p10.

structure as the contradictions of bourgeois economic production.”²² The problem of subject-object separation in idealism can be seen as a prototype in the Marxist concept of reification. Commodities are abstracted from the social production process and their use value. This is similar to the subject-object distinction made within idealism. What is forgotten, according to Lukacs’s view, is the reification of the cognitive activity itself. Consciousness of the individual is thought to be isolated from society. When the use value of commodities is reduced to exchange value, thought loses its critical capacity, and thus rationality becomes a quantitative process; this separateness is the cause of irrationality. According to Susan Block Morss, it builds up a barrier between subject and object, and she underlines the problem as follows:

The significance of Lukacs's analysis was that instead of seeing bourgeois theory as a mere epiphenomenon, a thin veil for naked class interests, he argued and attempted to demonstrate that even the best bourgeois thinkers, in their most honest intellectual efforts were not able to resolve contradictions in their theories, because the later based on a reality which was itself contradictory. Once this thinkers accepted given social reality as the reality, they had to come upon a barrier of irrationality which could not be overcome (and which had led Kant to posit the thing-in-itself), because that barrier could not be removed from theory without being removed from society.²³

Adorno is of the same opinion with Lukacs regarding the crisis of rationality in modernity. While Lukacs sees this crisis connected with the problems of class, Adorno “redirects the concept of reification with the question of how it prevents the possibilities of subjective experience, understood as the objective possibilities of the subject.”²⁴

²² Morss, Susan Block, *The Origin of Negative Dialectics*, The Free Press, New York, 1977, p26.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ O’Connor Brian, *Negative Dialectics*, The MIT Press, Massachusetts , 2004, p12.

CHAPTER 2

DIALECTIC OF ENLIGHTENMENT

Considered as a historical period, the Enlightenment stretched from the mid-seventeenth century to the end of eighteenth century. This period is characterized by revolutionary changes in science, philosophy, society and politics. The French Revolution can be seen as a political upheaval, where the Enlightenment ideals of freedom and equality for all were founded upon principles of human reason. The success in the development of science and the explanation of nature in the language of mathematics produced an improvement in human life: “Kant defines ‘enlightenment’ as humankind's release from its self-incurred immaturity; immaturity is the inability to use one's own understanding without the guidance of another.”²⁵

As a flourishing period of human thought, the Enlightenment showed a progression in the natural sciences, political theory, ethics and aesthetics. Understanding nature in terms of mathematically-dynamic laws and the conception of how we know it have led to the rise of modern science. On the side of politics, the English, the American and the French revolutions put the seal on the era. The Enlightenment philosophers established new theories and models against the existing political and social order which was based on religion, traditions and myths. The French Revolution is a symbol for the realization of enlightenment ideals. Justice, freedom and equality in the form of law were the principles of this revolution. Before the Enlightenment, ethics was grounded on God and the afterlife. With the extension of industrialization and urbanization, happiness became something related with life rather than the union with God in the afterlife. The

²⁵ <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/enlightenment/>

experience of bloody religious wars created a secular world view. Instead of past Christian ascetics, the aesthetic side corresponds to the secularization of politics and ethics in order to view beauty and human sensibility as becoming more related with senses and the values of pleasure in this life. In short, the Enlightenment ideals mean maturity, justice, freedom, equality, security, peace and a secular world.

In capitalism, productive forces expanded, but this expansion did not bring more liberation as expected by orthodox Marxists. The expansion of domination and reification of the social became a barrier against emancipation. The Enlightenment principals and promises ended up with barbarism and ignorance. *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, written by Horkheimer and Adorno, is a critique of instrumental rationality rather than the critique of Enlightenment ideals, and in this book they ask the question of why the Enlightenment ended up with this failure.

Instrumental reason as a dominant form of enlightenment means looking at nature as something useful which could be controlled and dominated. David Held, in his book *Introduction to Critical Theory*, claims that Horkheimer and Adorno “hoped to prepare the way for positive, emancipator notion of enlightenment released from entanglement in blind domination.”²⁶ As a result of their Marxist origin, Horkheimer and Adorno thought that capitalism was a special version of this domination. Domination in this context means the control or the power which puts some limitations on the goals and purposes of the individual. Nature, society or the individual themselves would be the object of this domination. Through the development of capitalism, instrumental reason penetrated into many parts of everyday life with great success via technology and science.

²⁶ Held David, *Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980, p148.

According to Enlightenment thought, scientific knowledge is the instrument or tool which can be used to master nature, but in the end this aim of domination over nature turned into totalitarianism rather than liberation since the subject itself became the object of control and domination. From Greek culture to the Judeo-Christian tradition, renunciation or sacrifice were performed for the sake of control over nature. Both Ancient and Enlightenment thought aimed to dominate nature for survival and self-preservation as well as to remove fear; however, the religion or the myth ultimately became an obstacle for human liberation. The aim of enlightenment was the liberation from the obstacles created by religion, but with the domination of instrumental rationality, this ended with another version of domination, which was totalitarianism or fascism.

In the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Adorno and Horkheimer construct an analogy between the mythological story of Odysseus and Enlightenment thought, claiming that enlightenment spans from Ancient Greek to the contemporary epoch; rather than a historical phenomenon, they take into account the enlightenment as a philosophical concept. In fact, this shows that when they say “enlightenment thought,” they mean instrumental rationality. According to them, instrumental rationality appears as another type of myth which declares itself as the unique possibility of truth. This is stated by them as follows: “Myth is already enlightenment, and enlightenment reverts to mythology.”²⁷ This also explains the meaning of the book’s title. Accordingly, Adorno and Horkheimer argue that enlightenment contains the aim to get rid of myths in the lives of humans, but it still has a mythical nature.

Instrumental rationality is connected with the concepts of domination and control, providing a possibility to analyze from the subjective perspective via Freudian theory.

²⁷ Horkheimer Max and Adorno Theodor, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, translated by Edmund Jephcott, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002, pXVIII.

In his article “Adorno and Horkheimer’s Concept of Enlightenment,”²⁸ Sherratt performs a Freudian reading of *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, which answers an essential question: “Why did enlightenment turn into a myth?” According to Freud, the id and the ego are the drives of the self, which are directed to external objects. External objects provide an aim to be satisfied. The relation between the object and the id is different than the relation between the object and the ego. The id behaves spontaneously, uncontrollably and looks for satisfaction: “Through the id, the self experiences Objects as pleasurable and also, importantly, as ‘meaningful.’”²⁹ Love is an example of this kind of meaningfulness: “The meaning imbued upon a ‘love object’ is quite distinct from, for the instance, the kind of meaning contained in the knowledge of how the human organism functions.”³⁰ Love contains a kind of meaning derived from the id. On the other hand, how the human organism functions is related with the “instrumental meaning.” Sherratt claims that Adorno and Horkheimer saw that there was a predominance of the ego drive over the id drive, which can be seen in the aims of the enlightenment project, so the Freudian requirement of balance between the ego and the id failed. In instrumental rationality, the relation between the ego and the object is configured by self-preservation:

The central aim of enlightenment, the acquisition of knowledge, and the further aims of security and peace are closely connected to self-preservation. This is the province of the ego. Further, the enlightenment’s aim of maturity is also the province of the ego. Finally, many of enlightenment’s aims – particularly the acquisition of knowledge and security – require a highly-developed faculty of control, also acquired through the ego.³¹

²⁸ Sherratt Y., Adorno and Horkheimer’s Concept of Enlightenment, *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 8(3) 2000.

²⁹ Ibid., p532.

³⁰ Ibid., p533

³¹ Ibid.

Adorno and Horkheimer use the mythological story of Odysseus, which provides an understanding of enlightenment subjectivity, to show the imbalance between the id and the ego drives. In this respect, Odysseus is a prototype of this enlightened subject. In the story, Odysseus should control himself and his crew in order to keep them from being deceived by the songs of Sirens so that he can fulfill his goal of returning to his home, Ithaca. In this sense, Odysseus' approach to the world is instrumental; there is a voluntary relinquishment of pleasures in his behavior.

Complete happiness threatens his autonomy for it demands that he relinquish control over his desires; instead, he seeks to preserve himself for his wife Penelope and the bourgeois life based on property, family and male autonomy that awaits him at home in Ithaca.³²

The relinquishment of pleasures is a “depreciation” of the id-drive for the subject. The subject loses “not simply pleasure, but pleasure in relation to reality: reality is no longer the Object of the satisfaction of the id-drive.”³³ According to Freud, when the relation with reality is impoverished, satisfaction is obtained from illusions: “Humanity...[is] forced back to more primitive anthropological stages, since, with the technical facilitation of existence, the continuance of domination demands the fixation of instincts by greater repression.”³⁴ This is the regression which makes a return to infantile narcissism. In this stage, the self simply wishes and expects their drives to be satisfied. Therefore, it is an immaturity which is against the aims of enlightenment.

Enlightenment is successful and strong because of the increase of the control over nature. On the other hand, when pleasure comes from illusion, since it does not provide the meaning which the id drive needs, it causes a delusion, which is a further regression. This type of regression results in a disconnection from the object of satisfaction. The

³² Verdeja Ernesto, Adornos Mimesis and its Limitations for Critical Thought, *European Journal of Political Thought*, 2009 8, p497.

³³ Sherratt Y., Adorno and Horkheimer's Concept of Enlightenment, *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 8(3) 2000, p536.

³⁴ Horkheimer Max and Adorno Theodor, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, translated by Edmund Jephcott, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2002, p28.

relation between reality and satisfaction breaks away. Adorno and Horkheimer give examples from contemporary societies, such as the occultists, “who are ‘drawn towards childish monstrous scientific fantasies’ such as ‘astrological hocus-pocus, which adduces the impenetrable connections of alienated elements – nothing more alien than the stars – as knowledge about the subject... The astrological ‘hocus pocus’ posits itself as knowledge.”³⁵ However, the delusion does not stay in the external realm but also penetrates into the internal realm of enlightenment proper. According to Adorno and Horkheimer, technological systems, with further progress, will be produced by the ego drive to become the source of the object of pleasure for id drive.

Many examples of a shift away from escapist fantasy towards an appreciation of ‘instrumental systems’ themselves permeate the ‘culture industry’. For instance, Adorno and Horkheimer depict a shift from the enjoyment of escapism provided by the technology of ‘special effects’ in the cinema to an enjoyment of the technology of the special effects themselves.³⁶

Popular culture contains many examples where the instrumental workings of technology become a source of pleasure itself. Developments such as universal high-speed technology, improved cars, new telephones and technological effects in cinema become a new source of pleasure, so the id drive attempts to satisfy itself from the products of the ego. Can these products provide the meaning which the id looks for in pleasure? No, because “when we experience instrumental abstraction as substantively meaningful then we are experiencing within it something which it does not inherently possess. This is delusion.”³⁷ According to Freud, when the libido is taken from the external world and diverted to the products of the ego, a narcissistic attitude appears. Turning from reality to illusion, and afterwards to the ego, the self becomes preoccupied with itself. When the relation with reality is by means of the ego, reality turns into an object of control which leads to a domination; thus, Enlightenment becomes unaware of its own nature.

³⁵ Sherratt Y., Adorno and Horkheimer’s Concept of Enlightenment, *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 8(3) 2000: p538.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p539.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p540.

Narcissism is a regression from maturity. The establishment of the relation with reality under the domination of ego causes the loss of freedom from the individual's perspective. Sherratt explains this process:

In totalization the only relationship with reality is through ego. Thus the subject relates to reality only through forms of control. This excess of control leads to a relationship of domination. Domination can be considered the opposite of freedom...First, there is the freedom of the subject in terms of his drives, referring in this case to the id-drives. Total control disallows this kind of freedom...Domination also, however, prevents a second kind of freedom –freedom conceived of as the subject's 'free will'. The subject in dominating the external world (including other subjects) becomes itself an object of such domination not merely in terms of the faculty of pleasure but also in terms of its own independent will.³⁸

From the societal perspective, the total domination of the external world turns out to be the domination on the individual itself. The ego considers the external object based on the principle of survival only; consequently, objects become potential threat for survival. Reality becomes a source of fear; thus, security and peace, which are the other goals of enlightenment, also fail. Self-preservation is not only biological survival; additionally, it is "preservation of a sense of self or identity."³⁹ The "Other" is potentially a threat, and the "enlightened self" fears obsessively everything that is not self."⁴⁰ This fear is related with the difference that Adorno and Horkheimer see in Anti-Semitism. With the decline of maturity and freedom, the loss of peace due to the fear of the "Other" summarizes the failures of enlightenment thought. In this sense, enlightenment tries to abolish the mythical and religious way of understanding reality; when all the goals of enlightenment are supposed to exist, enlightenment becomes a myth itself. Sherratt's Freudian reading of *Dialectical of Enlightenment* underlines that the critique of Adorno and Horkheimer is not related with the aims of enlightenment:

Pessimistically, as revealed through our discussion of Subjectivity, Adorno and Horkheimer saw such regression as immanent. In setting out with the aims that it did (in the way that it did), enlightenment founded itself upon a kind of subjectivity which

³⁸ Ibid., p541.

³⁹ Ibid., p542

⁴⁰ Ibid.

was awed. This awed Subjectivity entailed the extreme likelihood of myth. Adorno and Horkheimer's critical-theoretical mode of formulating the concept 'enlightenment' was a response to this problem.⁴¹

Adorno and Horkheimer see a decline of critical perspective and social insight in instrumental rationality because of its collaboration with systems of domination. They claim, "The reduction of thought to a mathematical apparatus condemns the world to be its own measure."⁴² This can be seen in capitalist society, which is constructed on the premises of calculation, quantification, exchange, equivalence, formalization, harmony and unity. This is necessary for profit, control, measurability and predictability; thus, science is used as a tool for these objectives. Reductions into quantitative modes of thought disregard the essence of things, equalizing the concept with the object, the word and the thing. They argue that equalizing concepts with objects is a totalitarian approach: "The social implications of this mind-set concern attempts by social organization and administration to control individuals in ways that abstract from individuality and uniqueness through the importance of formal rules and regulations."⁴³

⁴¹ Ibid., p544.

⁴² Horkheimer Max and Adorno Theodor, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, translated by Edmund Jephcott, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002, p20.

⁴³ Kellner Douglas, *Critical Theory, Marxism and Modernity*, The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1989, p97.

CHAPTER 3

CULTURE INDUSTRY

This chapter's intention is to demonstrate the social outcomes of the problems discussed in the previous chapter. Three of Adorno's essays will be elaborated on from the point of view of Critical Theory: "Freudian Theory and the Pattern of Fascistic Propaganda," "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception" and "On the Fetish Character of Music and the Regression of Listening." This discussion outlines the relation between Critical Theory and art by revealing the outcome of the problems in social and cultural life which are represented in this chapter; it will be possible to understand the emphasis on emancipation given by Adorno.

3.1 Liquidation of individual

The critique of culture industry is a critique of the dominant ideology which controls the individual's consciousness. For this reason, Adorno and other Frankfurt school philosophers applied Freudian concepts in their theories. In this context, instrumental rationality is related with the control of individual's consciousness.

Instrumental rationality does not only configure the relation between the subject and the object; it also changes the human-to-human relation into a subject-object relation, which would come to be called the "liquidation of individuals." In his essay "Freudian Theory and the Pattern of Fascistic Propaganda," Adorno elaborates on how social and cultural developments in capitalism produce weak individual character structures.

According to Freud, the problem of mass psychology is closely related to the new type of psychological affliction so characteristic of the era which for socio-economic

reasons witnesses the decline of the individual and his subsequent weakness. While Freud did not concern himself with the social changes, it may be said that he developed within the monadological confines of the individual the traces of its profound crisis and willingness to yield unquestioningly to powerful outside, collective agencies.⁴⁴

By using Marxist and Freudian concepts, Adorno claims that individuality is formed by historical and psychological facts. In the bourgeois family, the individual surrenders themselves to parental authority in the form of the superego. Parental authority is necessary to have an ego because, without this authority, the individual may not recognize themselves inside the chaos of their own impulses. However, parental authority is not overly powerful in modern society. The weakness of parental authority creates a weakened ego and the individual “is threatened with liquidation at the hands of anonymous and overpowering forces.”⁴⁵ Adorno claims that Hitler was aware of the libidinal source of mass formation. The weakened ego allowed the manifestation of unconscious instincts, and fascist groups facilitated these instincts in such a way as for them to be abused. Fascist demagogues were authoritarian, and individuals were no more than mere members of a group. On top of this, the leader symbolized the omnipotent and threatening primal father: “The mechanism which transforms libido into the bond between leader and followers, and between the followers themselves, is that of identification.”⁴⁶ Identification makes the authoritarian leader a part of the individual due to the decreased role of the natural father in present-day society; the leader serves as a substitute for some unattained ego ideal. Modern society does not satisfy the ego demands of individuals and, therefore, creates narcissistic impulses which can be absorbed via the idealization of a leader-image. The leader-image satisfies two wishes of the follower: “To submit to authority and to be the authority himself.”⁴⁷ During the

⁴⁴ Ibid., p120.

⁴⁵ Zabel Gary, Adorno On Music: A reconsideration, *The Musical Times*, Vol.130, No. 1754 (Apr., 1989), p198

⁴⁶ Adorno, “Freudian Theory and the Pattern of Fascist Propaganda” in *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader* Edited by Arato Andrew, Gebhardt Eike, , Continuum, New York,1993, p124.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p127.

period of fascist authority, these wishes turn into a disastrous persecution of minorities. Fascist propaganda does not persuade the masses with the rational arguments; it is oriented towards unconscious, irrational sources of the individual. Adorno also adds that it is not possible to explain fascism through psychological issues. Behind fascism, powerful economic and political interests exist, and leaders exploit the psychology of masses for their domination.

In Modernity, the individual is considered an autonomous member of society, and they behave according to their own political and economic interests. On the other hand, there is a growing cultural domination due to the effects of economic and political conditions, and the individual is subjected to stronger administrative imperatives. Individuals have been reduced to social atoms where domination can easily take place:

In a thoroughly reified society, in which there are virtually no direct relationships between men, and in which each person has been reduced to a social atom, to a mere function of collectivity, the psychological processes, though they still persist in each individual, have ceased to appear as the determining forces of the social process.⁴⁸

Rulers do not say, “You must think as we do, or you will die”; they say, “If you do not think as we do, you do not have a place inside us. If you do not accept the rules, you will be subjected to economic and spiritual powerlessness.” The individual does not appear as the decision-maker concerning their life, their environment and the social and economic processes in which they live.

3.2 The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception

In the co-authored article “The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception,” which is in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Adorno and Horkheimer assert that everything is contaminated by sameness as a result cultural domination. This sameness extends from the monumental buildings of the city to the small apartments, exhibiting the unity

⁴⁸ Ibid., p136.

of macrocosm and microcosm: “The conspicuous unity of macrocosm and microcosm confronts human beings with a model of their culture: the false identity of universal and particular” (universal and particular concepts are the most important concepts of the “Negative Dialectic” of Adorno, which will be discussed in next chapter). Thus, the uniqueness of the particular gets lost inside the domination of the universal. The production is standardized and produces the same things all around the world. It is supposed to produce according to the demand of consumers, but the manipulation of consumption prevails everywhere. Adorno and Horkheimer say that “technical rationality today is the rationality of domination.”⁴⁹ As a part of production, culture industry provides the unification of the word, the image and music in their products: “The budgeted differences of value in the culture industry have nothing to do with actual differences, with the meaning of the product itself.”⁵⁰ There is nothing left to be classified by the consumer; the management of culture industry forms the consciousness. Even in leisure time, consumers must orient themselves according to the standard patterns of production: “In a film, the outcome can invariably be -predicted at the Start.”⁵¹ Consequently, culture industry controls the souls of consumers:

The consumers are the workers and salaried employees, the farmers and petty bourgeois. Capitalist production hems them in so tightly, in body and soul, that they unresistingly succumb to whatever is proffered to them. However, just as the ruled have always taken the morality dispensed to them by the rulers more seriously than the rulers themselves, the defrauded masses today cling to the myth of success still more ardently than the successful. They, too, have their aspirations. They insist unwaveringly on the ideology by which they are enslaved. The pernicious love of the common people for the harm done to them outstrips even the cunning of the authorities.⁵²

Culture industry controls the consumers via the entertainment business. Entertainment is the extension of work time to leisure time. It provides escape from work for a while just

⁴⁹ Horkheimer Max and Adorno Theodor, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, translated by Edmund Jephcott, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002, p95.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p97.

⁵¹ Ibid., p98.

⁵² Ibid., p106.

to return back to it again. The thought of the spectator is controlled and kept far from his own thoughts: “The idea of ‘exploiting’ the given technical possibilities, of fully utilizing the capacities for aesthetic mass consumption, is part of an economic system which refuses to utilize capacities when it is a question of abolishing hunger.”⁵³ Culture industry always postpones full satisfaction. Instead, it makes an exhibition by showing the breast beneath the sweater or the naked torso of the sporting hero. Meanwhile, the individual does not recognize that resistance is possible because the system never releases its control over the consumer. Ideology behaves hypocritically; while freedom is guaranteed from one side, everybody is bounded by work and other social institutions (e.g., churches, clubs, professional associations) on the other side. “A house of moral correction” plays out through the medium of tragic films. Masses are kept in order by the examples of tragic lives seen in these films: Society is made up of hopeless individuals that can easily be trapped by the rackets; everybody can be happy if they surrender their body and soul to the system. Individuals identify themselves according to magazine-cover stereotypes, where the love of such stereotypes provides the satisfaction by imitation of someone else instead of the effort of individuality. Art takes its place among other consumer goods, and the autonomy of artists is limited by the market demand. Kant’s definition of art as purposiveness without purpose is converted to purposelessness for purposes dictated by the market: “In adapting itself entirely to need, the work of art defrauds human beings in advance of the liberation from the principle of utility which it is supposed to bring about.”⁵⁴ The use value of artworks is replaced by exchange value, such that “enjoyment is giving way to being there and being in the know, connoisseurship by enhanced prestige”.⁵⁵ The use-value of the work of art becomes a fetish, and the fetishistic character of the work of art hides its commodity character. When a concert is listened to on the radio for free, there is an industry and

⁵³ Ibid., p111.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p128.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

institutions in the background which support this activity for their own benefits—there is a deception which should be recognized. Advertising is the elixir for the culture industry while the montage character of culture industry provides many different, easily-manipulated products by utilizing this advertising; culture industry and advertising become closely related. People start to use some words without knowing the meaning of them due to the compulsory effect of advertising.

3.3 On the Fetish Character of Music and the Regression of Listening

As mentioned in Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt's book *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader*, Adorno's essay "On the Fetish Character of Music and the Regression of Listening" "is still one of the most impressive examples of sociology of art"⁵⁶. It was written as a polemic against Walter Benjamin's essay "The Work of Art in the Age of its Mechanical Reproducibility." According to Espen Hammer⁵⁷, the rise of fascism, violence and war forced Adorno and Benjamin to focus on the question of whether art, as a political instrument, could be employed to avoid the fascist instrumentation of art. Their critiques pose the question of how it is possible to prevent and avoid the suffering as well as the unhappiness caused by Modernity. Benjamin thinks that art has lost its aura and authenticity due to the mechanical reproduction of artwork, so the authority of the artwork does not come from itself; rather, "It can function not as an object of veneration but as an instrument of communication, thus revealing hitherto unexplored potentials for political employment."⁵⁸ Adorno has suspicions about the political employment of art because he thinks that social realism loses its distance for effective critical engagement, and this employment is similar to the case of fascism, where art is used as propaganda. Instead, he is of the opinion that the domination of the culture

⁵⁶ Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt, *In The Essential Frankfurt School Reader*, New York: Continuum, 1993, p270.

⁵⁷ Hammer Espen, *Adorno and the Political*. Routledge, New York, 2006.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p125.

industry does not permit the production of an adequate aesthetic response. In turn, there is pessimism about Benjamin's expected release of the proletariat's consciousness by means of art. In the contemporary world, whether it is serious music or light music, familiarity with the musical piece is necessary to recognize it. Like a child who demands the same food enjoyed in the past, the contemporary listener demands what they heard before: liking and disliking have lost their meaning. To be or not to be familiar with pieces of art replaces the meaning of those artworks. Everybody tries to do what others do and consume what others consume. The connection between identity and commercial necessities leads to the manipulation of taste. Respectively, the uniformity of individual preferences is dominated by the culture industry everywhere. In other words, nothing remains specific to an individual; the individual ceases to exist, leaving just powers that dominate.

Adorno borrowed many concepts from Freud to explain "the conflicts between the socio economic and psychological realms."⁵⁹ Adorno derives the terms "regression" and "fetish" from Freudian terminology. According to Freud, regression is a return back to an earlier stage of development when someone is faced with difficulty. Similarly Adorno defines regression as follows:

It is contemporary listening which has regressed, arrested at the infantile stage. Not only do the listening subjects lose, along with the freedom of choice and responsibility, the capacity for conscious perception of music, which was from time immemorial confined to a narrow group, but they stubbornly reject the possibility of such perception.⁶⁰

The contemporary human being has lost its perception of listening; moreover, it is even in a situation to reject the possibility of such perception. Regressive listening makes the

⁵⁹ Cook Deborah, *The Sundered Totality: Adorno's Freudo-Marxism*, *Journal for Social Behaviour*, Vol. 25. 2 (1995) : p191.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p286.

“escape from the whole infantile milieu impossible,”⁶¹ and the individual moves to a passive conformism.

Analysis of a work of art means to describe how people can interpret it, so critique and sociology cannot be separated from each other. This type of analysis contains the social origin, form, content and function of the work of art. According to Horkheimer and Adorno, a theory of culture should include “reference to the process of production, reproduction, distribution, exchange and consumption.”⁶² Arato and Gebhardt explain, “Regressive listening is tied to production by the machinery of distribution and particularly by advertising.”⁶³ In this role, advertising has a compulsory character. The masses take a commodity recommended to them as if it were the object of their own need; to overcome the feeling of impotence, the masses identify themselves with an inescapable product: “The fetish character of music produces its own camouflage through the identification of the listener with the fetish.”⁶⁴ The fetish can range from a star conductor to a musical instrument (i.e., Stradivarius violins). A fetish object is a substitute of the real in such a way that liking a concert becomes equal to the money paid for the ticket, so the relation with the music itself disappears. Social relations, i.e., relations between art and the individual, accommodate themselves to commercial necessities. The individual no longer exists in those relations; its place is substituted by some illusions produced by Modernity. The perception of social relations becomes like an economic relation between money and commodities, or, as Marx calls it, “commodity fetishism”⁶⁵:

⁶¹ Ibid., p287.

⁶² Held David, *Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1980, p78.

⁶³ Arato Andrew and Gebhardt Eike, *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader*, Continuum, New York, 1993, p287.

⁶⁴ Ibid. ,p288.

⁶⁵ Marx Karl, *Capital A Critique of Political Economy*, Translated by Ben Fowkes, V1, Penguin, Great Britain, 1976, p165.

Commodity fetishism names the enigma in Capitalist society, where the value of the commodity as the product of social labor appears as the value of the commodity itself just as the relation between human beings essential to the production and exchange of commodities appears as the relation between commodities themselves. In other words, commodities become fetishes because they seem to acquire a life of their own.⁶⁶

Adorno's attacks on jazz are based on the claims that jazz has the same features of reification, fetishism and regression as other popular genres of music. He writes, "It is subordinate to the laws and also to the arbitrary nature of the market, as well as the distribution of its competition or even its followers."⁶⁷ The improvisational character of jazz, which "attempts to break out of the fetishized commodity world,"⁶⁸ is deeply engaged with the musical commodity system since it does not want it to change.

⁶⁶ Paudyal Bed P., Mimesis in Adorno's Aesthetic Theory, *Journal of Philosophy: A Cross-Disciplinary Inquiry*, Winter 2009 Vol 4, No:8, p1.

⁶⁷ Adorno, On the Social Situation of Music, *Essays on Music*, Tran. Richard Leppert, University of California Press, 2002, p473.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p478.

CHAPTER 4

NEGATIVE DIALECTIC

Negative Dialectics is considered to be the most philosophical work of Adorno. At the beginning of this book, he states, “By contrast the largely abstract text wishes to vouch for its authenticity no less than for the explanation of the author’s concrete mode of procedure.”⁶⁹ *Negative Dialectics* specifies the common characteristics of his philosophy concerning the understanding of the relationship between art and Critical Theory. Subject, Object, mediation, non-identity and freedom are considered to be the most relevant concepts in this context.

4.1 Subject and Object

In his lecture on “The Actuality of Philosophy,” Adorno claims that “whoever chooses philosophy as a profession today must first reject the illusion that earlier philosophical enterprises began with: that the power of thought is sufficient to grasp the totality of the real”⁷⁰ When Adorno speaks about concepts, he means universals and the claim of some philosophers that the universal cannot cover the particular. By Object, Adorno means that the particular and the universal are a subject or concept. Identitarian thought, which is to assume identity between thought and being, is subjectivist. Adorno argues the preponderance of objects in the relation between object and subject. He says, “An object can be conceived only by a subject but always remains something other than the subject,

⁶⁹ Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, Translated by E.B.Ashton, Routledge, England, 1973, pXIX.

⁷⁰ Adorno, *The Actuality of Philosophy*, Telos, March 20, 1977 vol. 1977 no. 31 p120.

where as a subject by its very nature is from the outset an object as well.”⁷¹ According to Adorno, the subject is “a moment of the spatial-temporal ‘external’ world,” having no precedence over the world, e.g., “The universal domination of mankind by the exchange value—a domination which a priori keeps the subjects from being subjects and degrades subjectivity itself to a mere object—makes an untruth of the general principle that claims to establish the subject’s predominance.”⁷² Put another way, the subject converts itself into an object through the exchange value, which is contradictory to the fundamental theses of idealism. The priority of the object means that the object determines what the subject will declare.

According to Hegel, reality can be constructed via a process aiming for absolute knowledge; however, there are many revisions during this process. In the end, all the knowledge built up contains all the previously passed-over steps. This is a dialectical movement which Hegel calls experience. When our concept does not comply with the object in experience, it can be called negativity, i.e., it “compels us to seek a more satisfactory judgment.”⁷³ Adorno does not accept that negativity will disappear. From Adorno’s stance, the important thing in Hegel’s idea is the moment of negativity in the dialectical movement of thought. The concept of non-identical is the dividing line between Hegelian idealism and Adornian materialism.

4.2 Non-Identity, Mediation

In the introduction to *Negative Dialectics*, Adorno argues that there is always a gap between the concept and the corresponding object. He asserts that this is a contradiction because it does not provide “the traditional norm of adequacy... It indicates the untruth

⁷¹ Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, Translated by E.B.Ashton, Routledge, England, 1973, p183.

⁷² Ibid., p178.

⁷³ Ibid., p33.

of identity, the fact that the concept does not exhaust the thing conceived.”⁷⁴ At this point, it is necessary to note that there is an exaggeration in Adorno’s expectancy of truth. If there is a gap between the concept and the corresponding object, this justifies neither the truth nor the untruth of the identity. In Adorno’s philosophy, every concept contains non-conceptualities, whereas reaching the non-conceptual is one of philosophy’s features. The work of art as an object cannot be wholly known: “Thus the goal of a philosophical interpretation of works of art cannot be their identification with the concept, their absorption in the concept; yet it is through such interpretation that the truth of the work unfolds.”⁷⁵

Adorno provides his definition of mediation while simultaneously emphasizing the preponderance of the object in *Negative Dialectics*: “Mediation of the object means that it must not be statically, dogmatically hypostatized but can be known only as it entwines with subjectivity; mediation of the subject means that without the moment of objectivity it would be literally nil.”⁷⁶ Adorno claims that when we classify some particulars under a concept, they are made identical qua particulars; he finds this ideological. Identity is a classification according to some dominant purposes. In the case of his negative dialectics, concepts do not cover the object without remainder. This remainder is the untruth of the identity which posits an important question: How will this remainder be described? His answer is that “it is in language alone that like knows like.”⁷⁷

Particulars and universals are in opposition in Adorno’s dialectic. The relation between a particular and a universal (concept) is captured by his term mediation. The particular is any individual, and the universal is a concept or a type. According to him, identity

⁷⁴ Ibid., p5.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p14.

⁷⁶ Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, Translated by E.B.Ashton, Routledge, England, 1973, p186.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p56.

thinking “says what something comes under, what it exemplifies or represents and what, accordingly, it is not itself. The more relentlessly our identitarian thinking besets its object, the farther will it take us from the identity of the object.”⁷⁸ On the other hand, non-identity is, in fact, a “secret telos of identification.”⁷⁹ The consideration of identity thinking as a goal is the mistake of traditional philosophy. Non-identity is related with the gap between the concept and the corresponding particular: “The non-identical element in an identifying judgment is clearly intelligible insofar as every single object subsumed under a class has definitions not contained in the definition of the class.”⁸⁰ This non-identity looks at “whether the concept does justice to what it covers, and whether the particular fulfills its concept”⁸¹

Adorno does not argue that identification is inessential, nor that his philosophy has direct access to non-identity; what he claims is that the non-identical can be accessible via criticism of false identification. Through this criticism, non-identical aspects of the object “receive an indirect conceptual articulation.”⁸² Instrumental rationality keeps a distance between the subject and the object, and for this reasons this approach fails to accomplish “richer forms of interaction and appreciation, in the process reducing everything outside of the subject to mere nature, to be used and exploited.”⁸³ On the other hand, mimetic rationality “seeks to find the ways in which the subject’s experience of the world is not merely instrumental but requires the subsumption of object into subject and vice versa.”⁸⁴ Ernesto Verdeja claims that mimesis “refers to the

⁷⁸ Ibid., p149.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p149.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p150.

⁸¹ Ibid., p146.

⁸² <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/adorno/#5>

⁸³ Verdeja Ernesto, Adornos Mimesis and its Limitations for Critical Thought, *European Journal of Political Thought*, 2009 8: p501.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p500.

reconciliation of the world and consciousness, of objectivity and subjectivity.”⁸⁵ This kind of rationality aims to reconcile the subject “with (external) nature, with the subject’s inner nature, and finally with fellow humans.”⁸⁶ Nonetheless, the reconciliation does not have a final point since “both objectivity and subjectivity are themselves historically situated and therefore change over time.”⁸⁷ Consequently, “Any predetermined attempt at fixing a final point of reconciliation would provide a false mimetic moment, a false enlightenment.”⁸⁸

According to Verdeja, Adorno sees Kant’s transcendental categories as fixing the conditions of knowledge. Furthermore, Hegel historicizes rationality, which is considered to be an improvement in comparison to the Kantian approach. The Hegelian dialectic “historicizes rationality by showing how reason itself emerges (or is grasped) differently during different historical epochs,”⁸⁹ and therefore Verdeja claims that Adorno considers identity as a reconciliation of identity and non-identity in a higher form (Verdeja states that “Whether this is an accurate criticism of Hegel is a different issue entirely”⁹⁰). In this way, Hegel builds teleology by assuming a convergence of identity with non-identity, but Adorno does not accept that this convergence has been achieved in a positive fashion because it suppresses and ignores difference and diversity, as in the case of exchange principle, which demands the equivalence of “exchange value” with “use value.” Whereas Hegel’s speculative account amounts to an identification between identity and nonidentity, Adorno’s amounts to a non-identity between these two, which is “why Adorno calls for a ‘negative dialectic’ and why he

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p501.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p510.

rejects the affirmative character of Hegel's dialectic.”⁹¹ Verdeja writes, “Adorno claims that what is needed is the preservation of non-identity, of the moment of resistance to all identitarian (and thus totalitarian) resolutions which means the end of reflective thought and thus reason.”⁹² Adorno defines the non-identity as the “thing’s own identity against its identifications”⁹³ Non-identity is important from Adorno’s perspective because he believes that it is emancipative. The negative dialectic provides the recognition of what would or should be done and, instead of keeping the reified condition, directs us to a mimetic rationality. Mimetic rationality means “reconciliation between humans and nature, including the nature within human beings, and among human beings themselves.”⁹⁴ Held explains, “As art expressed social contradictions and antinomies in a mediated form, so, on Adorno’s account, philosophy embodied similar structures. And a certain forms of art could preserve a critical perspective, so could particular philosophies.”⁹⁵ *Negative Dialectics* is an attempt to develop such a philosophy for the critical, social consciousness.

4.3 Freedom

O’Connor writes, “Adorno claims that the identity of the individual is determined and socially validated through the role that individual takes on.”⁹⁶ In this sense, there must be a relation between freedom and non-identity. In *Negative Dialectics*, Adorno combines freedom with an “untrammelled impulse” and claims that “without an

⁹¹ <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/adorno/#5>

⁹² Verdeja Ernesto, *Adornos Mimesis and its Limitations for Critical Thought*, European Journal of Political Thought, 2009 8, p501

⁹³ Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, Translated by E.B.Ashton, Routledge, England, 1973, p161.

⁹⁴ <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/adorno/#5>

⁹⁵ Held David, *Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980, p200.

⁹⁶ O’Connor Brian, *Adorno*, Routledge 2013 New York, p117.

anamnesis of the untrammelled impulse that precedes the ego ... it would be impossible to derive the idea of freedom.”⁹⁷ An example of this would be when consciousness recognizes its restricted side in “compulsion neuroses.” The irresistible impulses that show themselves in compulsion neuroses are similar to impulses which Adorno wants to describe: “Freedom is a moment, rather, in a twofold sense: it is entwined, not to be isolated; and for the time being it is never more than an instant of spontaneity, a historical node, the road to which is blocked under present conditions.”⁹⁸ In other words, the individual in a capitalist society is free as much as the economic system permits him to be autonomous. The identity of the individual is shaped by society, and the individual confirms this identity via their role. According to Adorno, the question of freedom is something social, meaning that the important point is whether society permits a “meaningful sense of personal responsibility and self-determination”⁹⁹ If society limits our freedom, why do we not recognize this situation? He responds to this question with the Freudian concept of “repression”. Repression allows the individual to adapt to the environment in opposition to their inner impulses. Our civilization is grounded in repression, which was already explained in “Dialectics of Enlightenment” through the story of Odysseus. Odysseus bounded himself to the mast of his ship to resist the alluring songs of the Sirens. O’Connor argues, “Adorno develops a suggestive new account of freedom by addressing the nature of those drives the ego represses. There is, he argues, a freedom impulse, associated with what Freud had called the ‘id’.”¹⁰⁰ To put it another way, he claims that “freedom cannot be derived from reason”.¹⁰¹ Intellectuals like Benjamin and Alban Berg are the examples of free individuals, as far as Adorno is concerned, since they refuse to be identified by society.

⁹⁷ Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, Translated by E.B.Ashton, Routledge, England, 1973, p221.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p219.

⁹⁹ O’Connor Brian, *Adorno*, Routledge 2013 New York, p119.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p121.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p123.

The emancipative potential of art is related with freedom. Freedom means the autonomy of art in Adorno's philosophy. The formulaic "id" explanation of freedom can be seen as an attempt to embed his philosophy into a materialistic framework. Adorno does not mention the concept of impulse solely in the "Freedom" chapter of *Negative Dialectics*; it is also mentioned in Adorno's *Aesthetic Theory*, which will be discussed in next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

ART AND EMANCIPATION

5.1 Relation between Art and Society

There is no intention here of discussing the aesthetic theory of Adorno in details. Instead, the relationship between art and society in Critical Theory is the main focus. While describing the position of art in society, Adorno says:

Picasso's *Guernica* that, strictly incompatible with prescribed realism, precisely by means of inhumane construction, achieves a level of expression that sharpens it to social protest beyond all contemplative misunderstanding. The socially critical zones of artworks are those where it hurts; where in their expression, historically determined, the untruth of the social situation comes to light.”¹⁰²

Hence, Adorno emphasizes the critical stance of art in society and, rather than any universal explanation, deals generally with particular examples of art and society which correspond to his negative dialectical approach. While realism has an identitarian approach, Adorno emphasizes the untruth of the social situation—the non-identitarian approach.

Adorno provides an original approach to moving beyond the view in *Negative Dialectics*. This originality comes from the modification of the Hegelian dialectic: by shifting the emphasis to negativity, art, with its critical stance, provides the negativity in the dialectical movement of thought. Art becomes positioned substantially within this approach.

¹⁰² Adorno, *Aesthetic*, Continuum, New York, 1997, p237.

According to Adorno, culture cannot be criticized in terms of itself because there is always an affiliation between culture and society. Consequently, the critique of culture industry cannot be thought of independently of the dominant ideology. He claims that immanent culture critique is in error from the beginning:

Immanent criticism of culture, it may be argued, overlooks what is decisive: the role of ideology in social conflicts. To suppose, if only methodologically, anything like an independent logic of culture is to collaborate in the hypostasis of culture, the ideological proton pseudos.¹⁰³

This entails that art as a part of culture is always derived from social reality. Although some works of art resist the domination of the existing ideology, some of them do not. Adorno writes:

Culture, in the true sense, did not simply accommodate itself to human beings; but it always simultaneously raised a protest against the petrified relations under which they lived, thereby honouring them. In so far as culture becomes wholly assimilated to and integrated in those petrified relations, human beings are once more debased.¹⁰⁴

Adorno asserts in his essay “On the Social Situation of Music”—which gives the most important themes of his later work on the relation of art and society—that the film and music industries are in the hands of a capitalistic propaganda machine, and “the total absorption of both musical production and consumption by the capitalist process, the alienation of music from man has become complete.”¹⁰⁵ Explaining the relation between music and society, he writes, “Music is able to do nothing but portray within its own structure the social antinomies...it fulfills its social function more precisely when it presents social problems through its own material and according to its own formal laws—problems which music contains itself in the innermost cells of its technique.”¹⁰⁶ As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Picasso’s *Guernica*, which symbolizes the destructive effect of war, presents the social problem in its own material and language.

¹⁰³ Adorno, *Prisms* First MIT Press edition, USA, 1997, p28.

¹⁰⁴ Adorno, *The Culture Industry*, Routledge Classics 2001, p100.

¹⁰⁵ Adorno, *On the Social Situation of Music, Essays on Music*, Tran. Richard Leppert, University of California Press, 2002, p391.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p393.

In the age of capitalism, modern music is highly advanced and has “highly rational and transparent principles of construction.”¹⁰⁷

Adorno argues that the social function of art should not put forth any political position, nor should it have any didactic effect. Its autonomy creates its critical function, and this function does not come from its content but its form. The form does not mean the style or technique, but “rather, form refers to the whole ‘internal organization of art’ – to the capacity of art to restructure conventional patterns of meaning.”¹⁰⁸ To put it another way, those forms which prevent identity from thinking create the critical function. For Adorno, the new techniques of cultural production in the contemporary world result in political control over society. Art reveals something to us about the world and about our relation with it, so it is a type of knowledge. Truth of this knowledge takes place when the work of art expresses the dissonant character of modern life. Culture industry, as a part of capitalism, works for profit just like other industries. This brings a standardization in cultural products. For example, the end of a film can easily be guessed from the beginning, or the first notes of a song are sufficient to tell us the rest. However, autonomous and critical art rejects market requirements.

The concept of art “balks at being defined, for it is a historically changing constellation of moments. Nor can the nature of art be ascertained by going back to the origin of art in order to find some fundamental and primary layer that supports everything else.”¹⁰⁹ For this reason, the meaning of art is something that needs to be defined again and again because it has no static definition, e.g., the invention of perspective in painting or polyphony in music; technical progress in the process of artistic creativity indicates the increase of rationality in parallel with the Enlightenment. Additionally, art is both a

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p394.

¹⁰⁸ Held David, *Introduction to Critical Theory Horkheimer to Habermas*, University of California Press 1980, p83.

¹⁰⁹ Paddison Max, *Adorno, Modernism and Mass Culture*. London: Kahn & Averill, 2004, p57.

critique and a negation of existing dominant social norms. Adorno says that art “and so-called classical art no less than its more anarchical expressions, always was, and is, a force of protest of the humane against the pressure of domineering institutions, religious and otherwise, no less than it reflects their objective substance.”¹¹⁰ Adorno considers autonomy of art as a necessary component to realize the goal of emancipation. Besides social character and autonomy, the import and the function of a work of art specify the social significance of art. The function of a work of art is a cognitive one which makes a contribution to social consciousness; it opens the established reality and negates the reified consciousness. Art has the capacity go beyond the relation that exists between a concept and its corresponding object. According to Max Paddison, Adorno thinks that a work of art contains a tension between the mimetic impulse and rationality as construction, giving it language and its “riddle-character”: “That art works say something and in the same breath hide it puts their riddle-character under the aspect of language. There is something clown-like about it,”¹¹¹ as in the case of Schönberg, who is one of Adorno's favorite composers; Schönberg expresses the dissonances of the contemporary world through his own unconscious impulses and also converted his atonal compositions into a new order based on a twelve-tone musical system. Classical European music from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries uses tones and harmonies which correspond to one another, but atonal compositions lack a tonal center and, therefore, do not use tones, harmonies nor their hierarchies. Twelve-tone music, which is preceded by freely atonal music, is based on the technique that all twelve notes of the chromatic scale are used as often as one another in a piece of music in order to build a rationality over the freedom of an atonal composition: “Adorno regards its atonality as expressing a truthful refusal to accept deceptively easy reconciliations of social dissonance.”¹¹² According to Adorno, this paradoxical quality of artworks needs

¹¹⁰ Adorno Theodor, *Theses on Art and Religion Today*, p.678 in Jay Martin, *The Dialectical Imagination*, London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, 1973, p179.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p59.

¹¹² Brown Lee B., *Adorno's Critique of Popular Culture: The Case of Jazz Music*, *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Vol 26, No:1.1992, p19.

to be interpreted by philosophy. Society enters into the work of art by way of the dominant instrumental rationality, historical materials and the mimetic impulse which imitates the voice of the outside world. In addition to that, art is in opposition to society. The truth content of a work of art is the correspondence of the work of art to an outside object, which has subjective and objective moments. For example, some of Beethoven's music is a harmonization of subjective and objective elements; the objective part expresses the promise of the French revolution, while the subjective part expresses the note or phrase as a separate, but very meaningful, entity inside the entirety of the sonata or symphony's structural form: "The truth content of the work of art as object can only be revealed through philosophical interpretation: that is, via the pre-existent knowledge and experience that the Subject brings to bear upon it"¹¹³

In her essay "Adorno and the Poetics of Genre,"¹¹⁴ Eva Geulen claims that Adorno's essay "On Lyric Poetry and Society"—containing many of the fundamental concepts involved in Adorno's theory of aesthetics—opens up the dialectic of the individual and society in three stages. First, Adorno demonstrates that poetry reveals something about society precisely where it does not say anything about society: "What the poem excludes resounds negatively in the poem."¹¹⁵ Next, she claims that lyric poetry speaks about something which in turn has effects on others who share the same language. Finally, Adorno is "raising the question of how language can become such a shared medium, capable of address, in the first place."¹¹⁶ Adorno writes, "A collective undercurrent provides the foundation for all individual lyric poetry."¹¹⁷ The undercurrent, which uses

¹¹³ Paddison Max, *Adorno, Modernism and Mass Culture*. London: Kahn & Averill, 2004, p60.

¹¹⁴ Geulen Eva, *Adorno and the Poetics of Genre, Adorno and Literature*, edited by David Cunningham and Nigel Mapp, New York: Continuum, 2006, p61.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ Adorno Theodor W., *Notes to literature*, edited by Rolf Tiedemann, Columbia University, New York, 1992, p45.

a common language as a medium, alters the subject, causing the subject to transform into something “more than a mere subject.”¹¹⁸ He claims that a poem becomes a matter of art when something universal is captured, and, for this reason, “The lyric work hopes to attain universality through unrestrained individuation.”¹¹⁹ Specifically, there must not be any domination over the work of art to attain universality. This universality has a social character and “only one who hears the voice of humankind in the poem’s solitude can understand what the poem is saying”¹²⁰. Understanding a work of art requires both “knowledge of the interior of the works of art and knowledge of the society outside.”¹²¹ The ideological approach to works of art disturbs its truth content; hence, Adorno writes, “The greatness of works of art, however, consists solely in the fact that they give voice to what ideology hides.”¹²² We feel that lyric poetry is something very individual, not related with society, and it should thus be separated from the daily pressure of self-preservation. Adorno claims that it in fact is separated:

A protest against a social situation that every individual experiences as hostile, alien, cold, oppressive, and this situation is imprinted in reverse on the poetic work : the more heavily the situation weighs upon it, the more firmly the work resists it by refusing to submit to anything heteronomous and constituting itself solely in accordance with its own laws. The work's distance from mere existence becomes the measure of what is false and bad in the latter. In its protest the poem expresses the dream of a world in which things would be different.¹²³

According to Adorno, lyrical works show individual expression concerning social antagonism: “A collective undercurrent provides the foundation for all individual lyric

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p38.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid., p39.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

poetry.”¹²⁴ The undercurrent uses language as a medium where the subject can transcend itself.

5.2 Autonomy and Truth Content of Art

Adorno’s analysis can be read as a “dichotomous contrast between authentic art and the culture industry, these torn halves that do not add up to an integral whole.”¹²⁵ On top of this, autonomy is a central concept in Adorno’s aesthetic. In the beginning of “Aesthetic Theory,” Adorno stresses the importance of the autonomy of art:

For absolute freedom in art, always limited to a particular, comes into contradiction with the perennial un freedom of the whole. In it the place of art became uncertain. The autonomy it achieved, after having freed itself from cultic function and its images, was nourished by the idea of humanity. As society became ever less a human one, this autonomy was shattered.¹²⁶

As the passage expresses, Adorno believes autonomy of art can be realized after having been freed from its religious, social and political roles. In the essay “Commitment,”¹²⁷ Adorno iterates the relation between artistic freedom and political commitment. He claims that “Kafka's prose and Beckett's plays . . . have an effect by comparison with which officially committed works look like pantomime. . . . The inescapability of their works compels the change of attitude which committed works merely demand.”¹²⁸ In this picture, politically committed art is reduced to the political effect, and autonomy of art is, therefore, indispensable for the truth content of the artwork.

¹²⁴ Ibid., p45.

¹²⁵ György Markus, Adorno and Mass Culture: Autonomous Art Against the Culture Industry, *Thesis Eleven* 2006 86, p80.

¹²⁶ Adorno, *Aesthetic*, Continuum, New York, 1997, p1.

¹²⁷ Adorno, *Commitment*, Aesthetics and Politics, Verso, London, 1980, p177.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p191.

Peter U. Hohendahl's book *The Fleeting Promise of Art*¹²⁹ underlines the relation between Kant and Adorno so as to claim that "when Kant discusses the process of understanding, he stresses, as Adorno insists, the subjectivity side, the consciousness of the subject; in other words, he underscores the moment of freedom and autonomy rather than the impact of the object on the consciousness."¹³⁰ Although Adorno, in accordance with Kant, stresses the consciousness of the subject, he further claims that aesthetics cannot be grounded merely by subjectivity; a dialectic relation between object and subject should be taken into account as well. This leaves Adorno to argue that the judgment of taste is considered to be a subjective approach to art for this very reason, and he gives emphasis to the autonomy of art. The artist (subject) functions as a tool for the production of an artwork: "If the tool has been called the extension of an arm, the artist could be called the extension of a tool, a tool for the transition from potentiality to actuality"¹³¹ Within this process, the artist depends on the aesthetic material rather than their own personal ideas. Autonomous art constructs its content from society, but it is spawned out of the process of reification to which it belongs. Adorno describes this dual character via the concept of Leibniz's theory of monads: "That artworks as windowless monads 'represent' what they themselves are not can scarcely be understood except in that their own dynamic ... not only is of the same essence as the dialectic external to them but resembles it without imitating it."¹³² Autonomy is a historical development that emerges from "the achievement of human beings gaining a critical perspective on the given socio-historical norms that governed them."¹³³ Adorno does not agree with reducing autonomy to bourgeois freedom. In capitalist society, freedom means to perform the roles which were determined prior to the instantiation of the subject. When

¹²⁹ Hohendahl, Peter U., *The Fleeting Promise of Art*, Cornell University Press United State, 2013.

¹³⁰ Ibid., p39.

¹³¹ Adorno, *Aesthetic*, Continuum, New York, 1997, p166.

¹³² Ibid., p5.

¹³³ O'Connor Brian, *Adorno*, Routledge 2013 New York, p174.

there was an increase in the destruction of autonomy, “Art became, as Adorno puts it, ‘the social antithesis of society’”¹³⁴

Adorno’s understanding of truth-content is differentiated from that of traditional aesthetics. Traditional, idealistic aesthetics, which limit themselves to beauty, form and expressiveness, do not involve truth in the framework of aesthetics. On the other hand, Adorno combines truth with a critical attitude. The truth of an artwork comes from this critical approach to society: “Truth content of art is its immanent ideals and aspiration, and hence it’s meaning and social significance.”¹³⁵ In Adorno’s own words, “Artworks are enigmatic in terms not of their composition but of their truth content.”¹³⁶ When this enigma is solved, the truth content of the work of art appears, i.e., the truth content sets the enigmatic character of an artwork. Adorno assigns philosophy the responsibility of solving the enigma of artwork, adding that no work of art “can be reduced to rationalistic determinations.”¹³⁷ Rather, every work of art must wait for interpretation; otherwise, there will be no difference between art and non-art. Hence, critique is a part of interpretation: “Nothing is grasped whose truth or untruth is not grasped, and this is the concern of critique.”¹³⁸ In the interpretation of art’s content, there will always be something irreducible, a remainder.

“Truth content” is a key concept in Adorno’s aesthetic theory. To understand this concept, it is necessary to forget the standard categories of truth (correspondence, coherence, or pragmatic success) and instead “consider the artistic truth to be dialectical,

¹³⁴ Ibid., p175.

¹³⁵ Finlayson James Gordon, *The Work of Art and the Promise of Happiness in Adorno*, http://www.worldpicturejournal.com/WP_3/Finlayson.html

¹³⁶ Adorno, *Aesthetic*, Continuum, New York, 1997, p127.

¹³⁷ Adorno, *Aesthetic*, Continuum, New York, 1997, p128.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p128.

disclosive, and non-propositional.”¹³⁹ According to Adorno, artwork is an outcome of the dialectic of form and content which reveals an import (*Gehalt*). In order to make any judgment about the artwork, it is necessary to comprehend its internal dynamics and the socio-historical relations from which it emerged. In this way, truth content is not something outside of the artwork:

But neither is it a merely human construct. It is historical but not arbitrary; nonpropositional, yet calling for propositional claims to be made about it; utopian in its reach, yet firmly tied to specific societal conditions. Truth content is the way in which an artwork simultaneously challenges the way things are and suggests how things could be better, but leaves things practically unchanged: “Art has truth as the semblance of the illusionless”¹⁴⁰

Illusionless means that the work of art cannot be considered as a magical entity. The question “How could things be better?” underlines the emancipative character of art in Adorno’s aesthetics. The artwork’s truth content carries its suggestion of a better world, wherein pieces of art are not for decoration or entertainment—they have a cognitive content.

Adorno defines “the authentic works of art as a ‘judgmentless judgment’”¹⁴¹. This creates the need for a philosophical interpretation of the truth content. This does not mean philosophy should transfer some implicit content to an explicit one: “Philosophy is not to solve the riddle of art’s truth content but to extrapolate what is insoluble in works of art.”¹⁴² The truth content designates what is possible but not yet realized, such that “art is nevertheless the truth of society insofar as in its most authentic products the irrationality of the rational world order is expressed.”¹⁴³ Art makes a critique of society, which contains irrationality in the guise of rational order. Adorno claims:

¹³⁹ Zuidervaart Lambert, *Social Philosophy After Adorno*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p194.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p194.

¹⁴¹ Jarvis Simon, *Adorno: A Critical Introduction*, Routledge, New York, 1998, p104.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ Adorno, *Aesthetic*, Continuum, New York, 1997, p289.

Art is rationality that criticizes rationality without withdrawing from it; art is not something prerational or irrational, which would peremptorily condemn it as untruth in the face of the entanglement of all human activity in the social totality. Rational and irrational theories of art are therefore equally faulty.¹⁴⁴

However, this brings a critical question to light: if art is rational, why can it not “be captured by a rational theory of art?”¹⁴⁵ This is because “the artwork is in fact a dialectical critique (just as philosophy is). As a consequence, while the artwork is rational, it is not merely rational, as it dialectically employs rationality in such a way that it gives rise to a break in concepts and access to the extra-conceptual non-identical.”¹⁴⁶

Lambert Zuidervaart argues that Adorno “describes the truth content of artworks as neither factual nor propositional yet perceptible and structural,”¹⁴⁷ and that the “truth content of each artwork is unique to it and cannot be cleanly extracted from it.”¹⁴⁸ After this, he summarizes some characterizations of Adorno’s theory of truth content and art:

1. Truth in art has historical, societal, and political dimensions. Truth content is not a metaphysical idea or essence, for it is bound to specific historical stages, societal formations, and political contexts.
2. Truth in art is not merely a human construct, even though it would not be available in art were it not for the production and reception of particular works in specific media.
3. Truth in art emerges from the interaction between artists’ intentions and artistic materials. It is the materialization of the most advanced consciousness of contradictions within the horizon of possible reconciliation.
4. Truth in art requires both the successful mediation of content and form and the suspension of form on behalf of that which exceeds this mediation.
5. Truth in art is non-propositional, yet it invites and needs critical interpretation.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p55.

¹⁴⁵ Hulatt Owen James, *Texturalism and Performance –Adorno's Theory of Truth*, PhD University of York Department of Philosophy, August 2011, p131.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p131.

¹⁴⁷ Zuidervaart Lambert, *Artistic Truth Aesthetics, Discourse, and Imaginative Disclosure*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004, p123.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

6. Truth in art is never available in a directly non-illusory way: “Art has truth as the semblance of the illusionless.”¹⁴⁹

It is not possible to say that every work of art has truth content, but one can say that every work of art has an import to be judged within the confines of truth and falsity.

In *Adorno, Modernism and Mass Culture*, Max Paddisson states that the fact that “Adorno’s dialectic approach to aesthetic is value-laden is not in dispute.”¹⁵⁰ The value, quality and authenticity of a work of art are directly related to its truth content. Although art is somewhat rooted in its tradition, it emerges from the critique of the predominant social and historical norms intact within in its domain.

Society as a collectivity, penetrates the work through, for example, historically and socially mediated musical material, through the process of rationalization which it both takes from the instrumental rationality of society and at the same time opposes, and through the mimetic impulse which imitates the dynamic movement of the outside world but which also expresses resistance to it.¹⁵¹

Truth content is a part of the object; it is not only an interpretation of the thinking subject. For interpretation, knowledge and experience are required of the subject. Interpretation is a philosophical task comprised of sociological analysis and the inner dialectic of the artwork. The inner dialectic reveals the relation between the parts and the whole. Sociological analysis shows “the social content of the work and how this reflects the dialectic of society.”¹⁵² Paddison analyzes the critical aesthetic of Adorno from three aspects:

(1) technical analysis seeks to reveal the structural consistency of the musical work in relation to its dominating musical “idea”; (2) sociological critique seeks to uncover the ideology of the musical work in relation to its social context; and (3) philosophical-historical interpretation seeks to identify the authenticity of the musical work in terms

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Paddison Max, *Adorno, Modernism and Mass Culture*. London: Kahn & Averill, 2004, p56.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p59.

¹⁵² Ibid., p60.

of the solution of particular formal problems in relation to the demands of the socially and historically determined musical material.¹⁵³

He claims that these analyses present Adorno's understanding of truth.

“The term “truth content,” as a concept, has a relation with Hegelian logic, which claims that truth is not only connected to the identity of the concept and the object; non-identity is also an inescapable part of truth because of the dialectical nature of truth. Hegelian logic claims that something simultaneously exists alongside its opposite; this occurrence is not acceptable in the system of traditional logic. The truth content of a work of art is related to rationality and mimesis, wherein mimesis is in relation to the senses of the subject.

5.3 Mimesis

In his book *The Dialectical Imagination*, Martin Jay states that there is a discontinuity of thought in Critical Theory. The Frankfurt School criticizes orthodox Marxism, but it does not reject “its ambitious project: the ultimate unity of critical theory and revolutionary practice. By the 1940's, however, the Frankfurt School began to have serious doubts about the feasibility of these syntheses.”¹⁵⁴ Jay claims that the Frankfurt School's emphasis shifts away from “class struggle to the conflict between man and nature.”¹⁵⁵ Capitalist domination is seen “in a larger context as the specific, historical form of domination characteristic of the bourgeois era of Western history.”¹⁵⁶ Their focus changes from class conflict to the conflict between man and nature. Reconciliation with the nature is the solution for this conflict, but they fail to explicitly mention what

¹⁵³ Ibid., p70.

¹⁵⁴ Jay, Martin , *Dialectical Imagination*, Heinemann Educational Books Ltd London , p253.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p279

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p256.

this means: “The process of emancipation was understood in part as the development of self-consciousness and the resurrection of the lost past.”¹⁵⁷ In light of this, the Hegelian roots of Critical theory can be considered in the sense that “the process of history was the journey of the spirit becoming conscious of its alienated objectifications.”¹⁵⁸ On the other hand, they do not claim that the world is the creation of consciousness. For the reconciliation of man and nature, they introduce the concept of mimesis. Imitation is a kind of learning used during childhood, but after socialization this learning is replaced by rational, goal-directed behavior. They claim, “On their way toward modern science human beings have discarded meaning. The concept is replaced by the formula, the cause by rules and probability.”¹⁵⁹

In *Aesthetic Theory*, Adorno claims, “Art is a refuge for mimetic comportment,”¹⁶⁰ meaning that art is a refuge in society, which is imposing “faulty irrationality”. This faulty irrationality is delivered as rational, i.e., its symptoms are seen in the culture industry. Adorno tries to explain this relation between mimesis and rationality in which art is always mentioned together with magic which is irrational. The magic of art is a well know cliché, but he claims that art has a dialectical relation between rationality and mimesis. He says, “The sentimentality and debility of almost the whole tradition of aesthetic thought is that it has suppressed the dialectic of rationality and mimesis immanent to art.”¹⁶¹ He combines mimesis with rationality even though he claims that mimesis is not conceptual: “The cliché about the magic of art has something true about it. The survival of mimesis, the non-conceptual affinity of the subjectively produced with its un posited other, defines art as a form of knowledge and to that extent as

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p268.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Horkheimer Max and Adorno Theodor, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, translated by Edmund Jephcott, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002, p3.

¹⁶⁰ Adorno, *Aesthetic*, Continuum, New York, 1997, p53.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p54.

‘rational.’”¹⁶² Lambert Zuidervaart explains, “Mimetic expression, which recalls Nietzsche’s ‘Dionysian’ and Freud’s ‘libido’ and ‘id,’ implies an ontogenetic hypothesis about mimesis as a mode of human conduct.”¹⁶³ In fact, Adorno confirms this comment: “Artistic expression comports itself mimetically, just as the expression of living creatures is that of pain.”¹⁶⁴ Art is a rationality which criticizes rationality. It seems that Adorno tries to get rid of the irrational connotations of mimesis. From his point of view, mimesis is a natural human response, and its non-conceptual character provides the magic of art. The existence of these two aspects—mimesis and rationality—in the artwork creates “the aporia of art,” and, as Adorno argues, “The aporia cannot be eliminated. The depth of the process, which every artwork is, is excavated by the unreconcilability of these elements; it must be imported into the idea of art as an image of reconciliation.”¹⁶⁵ Therefore, how the tension between mimesis and rationality is treated in the artwork determines its quality.

The emancipative potential of art has a close relation with the concept of mimesis. Ernesto Verdeja claims that Adorno understands mimesis as the “assimilation of the self to the other.”¹⁶⁶ Moreover, mimesis is the “source of both magic and art”. Art and science “overcome the superstition of magic, only art can retain the mimetic dimension of representation.”¹⁶⁷ According to Horkheimer and Adorno, human beings always had a fear of nature, and this was handled by mimesis: “Mimesis makes itself resemble its surroundings... the outward becomes the model to which the inward clings, so that the

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Zuidervaart, Lambert, *Adorno's Aesthetic Theory*, MIT Press, 1991, p111.

¹⁶⁴ Adorno, *Aesthetic*, Continuum, New York, 1997, p54.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Verdeja Ernesto, *Adornos Mimesis and its Limitations for Critical Thought*, European Journal of Political Thought, 2009 8, p494.

¹⁶⁷ Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy Georgy Lukacs. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/lukacs/>

alien becomes the intimately known.”¹⁶⁸ Mimesis links human beings to Mother Nature in a process where human beings repeat the cycle of life and nature via dance, magic, and music. In this relation, there were two choices: either humans would be the master of nature, or they would let nature be master of them. The prior option is chosen, just as in the case of Odysseus who did not let himself become entranced by the alluring songs of the Sirens. Adorno and Horkheimer believe that there should be another approach to nature: “By modestly confessing itself to be power and thus being taken back into nature, mind rids itself of the very claim to mastery which had enslaved it to nature”¹⁶⁹ This is not a romanticizing of mysticism; alternatively, enlightenment is able to complete itself if it “dares to abolish the false absolute, the principle of blind power.”¹⁷⁰

Horkheimer and Adorno’s criticism of society and instrumental rationality owes tribute to many concepts from the Marxist tradition, but they also go beyond “a particular method of production as the cause of suppression and human affliction, but criticism of a collective way of thinking and acting, of a mentality, of a system of suppression that threatens not only a class but the whole of human society, including exploited nature.”¹⁷¹ According to Jacob Klapwijk, Horkheimer believes that “art, language, and philosophy betray the oppression of nature. They give vent to the repressed mimetic impulse. Especially the universal medium of language leaves a bright trail of longing down through history, a trail of yearning (*‘Sehnsucht’*) that wells up out of suppressed nature and enslaved humanity”¹⁷² Dance, drums, and magical rituals were imitations of the rhythm of nature: “Humans abandoned themselves to nature. They threw themselves at

¹⁶⁸ Horkheimer Max and Adorno Theodor, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, translated by Edmund Jephcott, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002, p154.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., p31.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., p33.

¹⁷¹ Klapwijk Jacob, “Dialectic of Enlightenment Critical Theory and the Messianic Light” Translated from the Dutch by C. L. Yallop and P. M. Yallop USA 2010, p16.

¹⁷² Ibid., p11.

nature, and under nature's control they were nameless, impersonal, and collective."¹⁷³ Mimesis is a method to release one's self from the fear caused by Mother Nature; it also provided the link between humans and nature. As a consequence, it is a type of learning, and in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Horkheimer and Adorno build a relation between mimesis and learning:

If mimesis makes itself resemble its surroundings, false projection makes its surroundings resemble itself. If, for the former, the outward becomes the model to which the inward clings, so that the alien becomes the intimately known, the latter displaces the volatile inward into the outer world, branding the intimate friend as foe.¹⁷⁴

According to Jay, mimesis "involves a more sympathetic, compassionate, and non-coercive relationship of affinity between non-identical particulars, which do not then become reified into two poles of a subject/object dualism."¹⁷⁵ Bed Paudyal further claims, "A more intimate and alive relation between the subject and object, which is reduced to the means-and-ends logic by instrumental rationality, is maintained in artworks as a domain where societal reification is resisted."¹⁷⁶ Mimesis, which arises from primitive sympathy, could be named as the activity of semblance, through which the subject realizes both the "subject-object identity" as well as its non-identity by way of a distance from identity itself: "Mimesis is the reflexive intelligence of sensuous intra-action, the subject's sensing of its own sensing through the formation of its semblance."¹⁷⁷ Robert Witkin claims that mimesis becomes important for modern art from the perspective of alienation due to the subject-object separation. In modern art, the

¹⁷³ Ibid., p3.

¹⁷⁴ Horkheimer Max and Adorno Theodor, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, translated by Edmund Jephcott, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002, p154.

¹⁷⁵ Martin Jay, "Mimesis and Mimetology," in *The Semblance of Subjectivity: Essays in Adorno's Aesthetic Theory*. Eds. Tom Huhn and Lambert Zuidervaart. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1997), p13.

¹⁷⁶ Paudyal Bed P., Mimesis in Adorno's Aesthetic Theory, *Journal of Philosophy: A Cross-Disciplinary Inquiry*, Winter 2009 Vol 4, No:8, p4.

¹⁷⁷ Witkin Robert W., *Adorno on Popular Culture*, Routledge, London 2003, p154.

dialectical link between the inner and outer world loses its connection: “We cannot truthfully look on Cézane’s portrait of his Gardener and claim that we are seeing in his outer form an expression and reflection of his inner feelings – something that Alberti had proclaimed as an ideal of art in his famous fifteenth-century treatise.”¹⁷⁸ Nonetheless, Adorno insisted on preserving that link via negative dialectics, which can be seen in his appraisal of Kafka: “Kafka, in whose work monopoly capitalism appears only distantly, codifies in the dregs of the administered world what becomes of people under the total social spell more faithfully and powerfully than do any novels about corrupt industrial trusts.”¹⁷⁹ He additionally writes that Kafka’s “language is the instrument of that configuration of positivism and myth that has only now become obvious socially. Reified consciousness, which presupposes and confirms the inevitability and immutableness of what exists, is—as the heritage of the ancient spell—the new form of the myth of the ever-same. Kafka’s epic style is, in its archaism, mimesis of reification.”¹⁸⁰ Instead of proposing a utopian outlook, Kafka, with productive negativity, searches for the “healing force”¹⁸¹ of knowledge: “In the ‘mimesis’ of social processes ‘a universal which has been repressed by sound common sense’ becomes apparent.”¹⁸²

Paudyal argues that mimesis is taken away from every-day experience in capitalist society, and it lives inside some works of art. The relation between the subject and the object is reduced to a domination of the subject over the object. When thinking of identity, there is always a gap between our concepts and reality where reality cannot be addressed by our concepts: “Adorno’s idea of, what he calls the non-identical addresses

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Adorno, *Aesthetic*, Continuum, New York, 1997, p230.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Adorno *Prisms* First MIT Press editon, USA, 1997, p251.

¹⁸² O’Connor Brian, *Adorno*, Routledge 2013 New York, p160.

the spaces that systems simply cannot consider. The non-identical does not lie beyond us. It is not a mysterious, transcendent otherness. Adorno's claim is that it is outside the reach of the generalizations with which our systems of enquiry – among them, philosophy, sociology, psychology, empirical science – operate.”¹⁸³ Moreover, Adorno argues that “mimesis as openness to the non-identical”¹⁸⁴ allows the particular to speak in pieces of artwork, which proves to be a significantly different and more intimate relation compared to the “means-and-ends” logic enforced in instrumental rationality.

Brian O'connor claims that mimesis is one of the principal concepts in Adorno's *Aesthetic Theory*, wherein art is mimetic both in content and aesthetic performance: “It serves as a reference point in Adorno's theory for non-reified human behavior”¹⁸⁵ This mimetic content provides a taste of the “undamaged life.” Through this experience, there is a happiness of creativity which is totally suppressed by the reifying rationality: “Mimesis, then, is a dimension of human behavior whose origins precede the development of the aesthetic realm, while somehow surviving only as a ‘vestige’ in an aesthetic form.”¹⁸⁶

In *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, the concept of mimesis is used as a way of understanding the outer world: “The magician imitates demons; to frighten or placate them he makes intimidating or appeasing gestures”¹⁸⁷ Mimetic actions build a close relation between the subject and the object to facilitate the expulsion of fear. The subject identifies with its surrounding nature and empathizes with the other; as Habermas says, “The surrender of

¹⁸³ Paudyal, P. Bed, Mimesis in Adorno's Aesthetic Theory, *Journal of Philosophy, A Cross-Disciplinary Inquiry*, Winter 2009, Vol. 4, No 8, p4.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ O'Connor Brian, *Adorno*, Routledge, New York, 2013, p150.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., p150.

¹⁸⁷ Horkheimer Max and Adorno Theodor, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, translated by Edmund Jephcott, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002, p6.

the one to the example of the other does not mean a loss of self but a gain and an enrichment.”¹⁸⁸ According to Adorno, to be able to produce something valuable in art, artworks “must assimilate themselves to the comportment of domination in order to produce something qualitatively distinct from the world of domination.”¹⁸⁹

Witkin discusses the distinction between the copy of reality and mimesis in his book *Adorno on Popular Culture*. The copy is something designed by the subject with its wholly-alienated formation. He says, “The phenomenal surface of the reality is the very antithesis of what Adorno meant by mimesis and he made this antithesis a key feature of his critique of both film and television.”¹⁹⁰ The film industry works on the creation of emotional effects for mass consumption. Pseudo-reality replaces authentic life in the real world: “Millions have been drawn to the box office, attracted by ‘stars’ who have been manufactured with even rows of teeth, lawless complexions, formless features, and with the pupils of their eyes enlarged by belladonna.”¹⁹¹

J.M. Bernstein’s book *The Fate of Art* raises the question of whether mimesis as an archaic form of cognition is as innocent as Adorno implies:

The mimetic relation, whose demise is the direct object of enlightened rationalization, should be reversed. It is here assumed that mimesis represents an independent, archaic form of cognition that survives only in art. Where this thesis goes wrong is in giving to mimesis a substantiality and independence it does not possess. Again, the question addressed by the concept of mimesis is that of the role of the particular in cognition; and one of the mistakes Adorno is attempting to denote through the employment of the idea of mimesis is that cognition, conceived of as subsumption, is innocent.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁸ O’Connor Brian, *Adorno*, Routledge, New York, 2013, p152.

¹⁸⁹ Adorno, *Aesthetic*, Continuum, New York, 1997, p289.

¹⁹⁰ Witkin Robert W., *Adorno on Popular Culture*, Routledge, London 2003, p136.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p137.

¹⁹² Bernstein J.M, *The Fate of Art*, The Pennsylvania State University, Pennsylvania, 1992, p204.

If the idea of mimesis is conceived of as an archaic form of submission, it again becomes a type of domination. Bernstein argues that Adorno stresses the intuitive character of art by combining the mimetic moment with expression: “Expression, as the equivalent of dissonance, is another name for intuition...Suffering is the truth of intuition as the unsubsumable other of the concept.”¹⁹³

¹⁹³ Ibid., p206.

CHAPTER 6

EMANCIPATION

What should be understood from emancipation? Basically, Adorno intends the obtainment of autonomy beyond the domination of the prevailing norms of capitalist society via a critical perspective and the final achievement of freedom and happiness.

The “promise of happiness” is mentioned several times by Adorno in *Theory of Aesthetic*, taken from Sthendal’s dictum “la beaute n'est que la promesse du bonheur.” Adorno remarks that art is the promise of happiness.

Art is not only the plenipotentiary of a better praxis than that which has to date predominated, but is equally the critique of praxis as the rule of brutal self-preservation at the heart of the status quo and in its service. It gives the lie to production for production's sake and opts for a form of praxis beyond the spell of labor. Art's promesse du bonheur means not only that hitherto praxis has blocked happiness but that happiness is beyond praxis. The measure of the chasm separating praxis from happiness is taken by the force of negativity in the artwork.¹⁹⁴

One can see here that there is a social and critical role of art in Adorno. The promise of happiness serves for “criticizing existing society, and as an ideal for constructing a better one.”¹⁹⁵ Thus, it is necessary to explain the meaning of happiness in Adorno’s philosophy. Adorno does not posit a definition of happiness because he thinks that specifying the concept of happiness would narrow the unlimited potential of its meaning. This has some difficulties: on the one hand, he makes a diagnosis of social conditions, which may provide a possible definition of happiness and the good life; on the other

¹⁹⁴ Adorno, *Aesthetic*, Continuum, New York, 1997, p12.

¹⁹⁵ Finlayson James Gordon, *The Work of Art and the Promise of Happiness in Adorno*, http://www.worldpicturejournal.com/WP_3/Finlayson.html

hand, he writes, “Es gibt keinen rechten Leben im falschen” (“The false life cannot be rightly lived”). This means there is no possible way to define the meaning of happiness in a false life: “Austere negativism is consistent with Adorno’s thought in Negative Dialectics that philosophy’s true interest lies in what is non-conceptual and non-identical to thinking.”¹⁹⁶ As a consequence, the “promesse du bonheur” cannot be interpreted in such a way that “the happiness occasioned by art promises a better world.”¹⁹⁷ James G. Finlayson, in his essay “The Work of Art and the Promise of Happiness in Adorno,” claims that “it has to be read as an objective genitive, which says that art promises happiness to those who engage properly with it, yet does not itself embody or impart happiness. This I believe is the most natural way to interpret it anyway.”¹⁹⁸

How will this promise of happiness be realized? Although Adorno believes that classical artworks try to establish a harmony between the parts and the whole, he rejects the idea that “what is transcendent and utopian in art is their successful realization of this ideal.”¹⁹⁹ Harmony between the parts and the whole is not a norm directed towards success:

The moment in the work of art by which it transcends reality cannot, indeed, be severed from style; that moment, however, does not consist in achieved harmony, in the questionable unity of form and content, inner and outer, individual and society, but in those traits in which the discrepancy emerges, in the necessary failure of the passionate striving for identity.²⁰⁰

A harmony between form and content does not provide the success of the artwork. Rather, the failure of this ideal provides the success, which in turn questions the conditions of a different and better society; this failure is the promise of art. In the

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Horkheimer Max and Adorno Theodor, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, translated by Edmund Jephcott, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002, p103.

history of music, the ideals of art have changed. By the beginning of nineteenth century, the search for harmony in music was replaced by subjective expression. James G. Finlayson claims that:

A work such as Beethoven's *Third Symphony* naively embodies an aesthetic harmony and organic totality, which offers a picture of the right life. This is a promise of happiness in the sense that what it pictures is not actual, but only beautiful appearance or illusion, a semblance...In his late works, Adorno claims, Beethoven himself intuitively begins to move away from this ideal. In the *Missa Solemnis* he "rejects the illusory appearance of subjective and objective, a concept practically at one with the classicist idea." In his late string quartets he unconsciously discovered the "compulsion toward disintegration" as he pushed the idea of integration to an extreme²⁰¹

Adorno thinks that the music of Igor Stravinsky is an example of a failed work of art. Stravinsky tries to incorporate the archaic into his compositions: "The mistake is to identify – what Adorno interprets as – the experience of loss or distance, with which archaic works present us, as inherent features of the work."²⁰² Stravinsky uses "styles and forms from eighteenth century music as evading the conditions of modern life."²⁰³ Successful, i.e., failed, works of art reject the inclusion of traditional, familiar musical patterns. They grant people the ability to recognize their unhappiness

If the assimilation and domination of Modernity is so powerful, is it still possible to find an emancipative potential in art? Adorno believes the answer is affirmative and that the emancipative potential lies in critical art. Kellner claims that:

The most radically avant-garde works could provide genuine aesthetic experience. Against the false harmonies of kitsch and affirmative art, Adorno defended the 'de-aestheticization' (*Entkünstung*) of art, its throwing off of false veils of harmony and beauty in favor of ugliness, dissonance, fragmentation and negation, which he

²⁰¹ Finlayson James Gordon, *The Work of Art and the Promise of Happiness in Adorno*, http://www.worldpicturejournal.com/WP_3/Finlayson.html

²⁰² O'Connor Brian, *Adorno*, Routledge, New York, 2013, p183.

²⁰³ Brown Lee B., Adorno's Critique of Popular Culture: The Case of Jazz Music, *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Vol 26, No:1.1992, p19.

believed provided a more truthful vision of contemporary society and a more emancipatory stance for socially critical art.²⁰⁴

According to Adorno, the contemporary world, dominated by culture industry, crucially necessitates the position of authentic art. In response to domination, art should resist the forces of the contemporary world by keeping its authenticity. This would be possible via shock or emancipatory effects with the use of avant-garde techniques. As it may have been noticed, Adorno's favorite artists are all dissonant artists: "Kafka and Beckett in literature, Schönberg and Berg in music, Giacometti in sculpture and Celan in Poetry."²⁰⁵ Critical theory treats authentic art and mass culture separately. Mass culture promotes the type of character that accepts the world as it is, but authentic art has the potential for emancipation because it is the source of critical knowledge. Heteronymous art deceives people with psychological satisfaction. In Adorno's view, authentic art is necessary to encounter existing reality, and this would provide a critical consciousness in addition to making us realize the necessity of the individual and social transformation since culture industry works against the development of class consciousness and reproduces the capitalist hegemony.

According to Kellner, Adorno's attacks on ideology are similar to crude Marxian critiques, and he does not see the vehicles for the expression of pain, rage, joy, and rebellion in popular culture which could lead to progressive effects. He argues that Adorno saw the socially critical potential of popular culture in some of his essays and realized that individuals still have the ability to resist the total domination of the culture industry. He finds Adorno's aesthetic approach too ascetic and narrow. He criticizes Adorno and other Critical Theorists because they restrict the emancipative role to "high art" only and regard all forms of popular art with contempt, yet he also praises Adorno at some points:

²⁰⁴ Kellner Douglas, *Critical Theory, Marxism and Modernity*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1989, p129.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

Yet his uncompromising radicalism provides a healthy antidote to all affirmative and idealist aesthetics, and his obstinate obsession with art provides a wealth of insights into the mediations between art and society which might become productive for materialist social theory and cultural criticism of the future.²⁰⁶

For Adorno, the autonomy of art has a special significance since it has the potential to provide emancipation. Popular art is not in the category of autonomous art in this respect, so it has no emancipative potential. On the other hand, Lambert Zuidervaart's essay "The Social Significance of Autonomous Art: Adorno and Bürger" makes the claim that Adorno does not give a satisfactory account of the social significance of autonomous art because the artwork's social significance cannot be restricted to autonomous art. Zuidervaart argues that heteronymous art, which is dependent on other social institutions in capitalist society, "might make truth possible in some works and make it impossible in others."²⁰⁷ There is no guarantee of creating truth in autonomous art, yet it is also not impossible for it to be produced in heteronymous art. He writes that Adorno's *Aesthetic Theory* does not abandon the normative character of traditional aesthetics. Instead Adorno abandons the pretense that such norms are eternal and immutable.²⁰⁸

In fact, both Zuidervaart and Kellner say very similar things about Adorno's approach to the emancipative potential of art. They criticize the restriction of emancipative potential only to "high art" disregard popular forms of art entirely. Oppositional films, television and other cultural arenas like social media, like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram nowadays which is very popular have the potential to create a political struggle. In the contemporary world, social media has had such a powerful reception that they are blamed as the source of many popular uprisings in different countries. This may create the new possibilities for the emancipation against the domination created by the culture

²⁰⁶ Ibid., p145.

²⁰⁷ Zuidervaart Lambert, "The Social Significance of Autonomous Art: Adorno and Bürger". *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol. 48, no. 1 (1990): p71.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., p73.

industry. As Adorno says, “Artistic expression comports itself mimetically, just as the expression of living creatures is that of pain.”²⁰⁹ Thus, artistic expression is much more real than any of culture industry’s deceiving product. Even though Adorno’s expectation of the emancipative potential of art is restricted to an elitist environment, the expansion of his theories to the domain of popular art allows us to remain hopeful in the contemporary world.

²⁰⁹ Adorno, *Aesthetic*, Continuum, New York, 1997, p54.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Critical Theory critiques the use of scientific methods in the social sciences. The individual perceives the social and cultural fields according to the historical conditions that are shaped by human activity. The individual, in terms of the act of perception, is not passive. That means, in the act of perception, the individual takes part as another factor in the process. New types of individuality and cultural forms emerge in the new phases of capitalism, where “Culture Industry” is the new “opium of the masses,” and Critical Theory makes a socio-cultural critique of this phenomena.

Critical Theory emerged as a result of the social and political turbulence of the period between 1920 and 1930. Disappointment in the Marxist movement and the configuration of fascist regimes in Germany and Italy gave momentum to the pessimistic and critical approach of the Frankfurt School thinkers. On the other hand, Critical Theory inherited the hope for a better world and the concept of emancipation from its Marxist roots. In the chaotic inter-war period, the influence of Weber, Lukacs, Freud and Marx on Adorno is worth mentioning.

Dialectic of Enlightenment, written by Horkheimer and Adorno, is the exposition of the main problems of modern life and the type of dominant rationality present in it. Although the title of the book contains the word “Enlightenment,” it cannot be argued that it is a critique of Enlightenment thought and ideals; it is rather a critique of instrumental rationality. Adorno tries to answer an essential question of modern life: Why did the Enlightenment principles and promises result in barbarism and ignorance? In the critique of instrumental rationality, Adorno does not impose any method beyond

rationality. As it is discussed in the chapters “Negative Dialectic” and “Art and Emancipation,” Adorno describes the non-conceptual via the conceptual; he assigns philosophy the responsibility of interpreting works of art. *Dialectic of Enlightenment* demonstrates the pathologies of Western society in order to declare the necessity of emancipation.

Adorno combines Freudian theory with a Hegelian-Marxist philosophy. In “Freudian Theory and the Pattern of Fascist Propaganda,” discussed in the chapter on “Liquidation of Individuality,” Adorno keenly observes situations that reflect the modern era from a Freudian perspective. “On the Fetish Character of Music and the Regression of Listening” contains many Freudian concepts, such as regression and fetish; additionally, the id’s appearance in freedom and mimesis are other examples displaying Freudian theory’s influence on Adorno’s thought. No matter how strong the attempt to dominate and control nature is, it fundamentally resurfaces as the control over the individual itself. Thus, Adorno disrupts the balance between the ego and the id drives within a Freudian framework. It results in a decline of maturity and freedom, which puts itself against the ideals of Enlightenment.

Culture industry is an outcome of instrumental rationality and capitalism. Instrumental rationality establishes a control over the consciousness of the individuals and configures the relation between the subject and the object; on the other hand, it produces weak individual characters. Culture industry, whose main characteristic is the control over the individual’s consciousness, is the subjective component of the relation between art and Critical Theory. As a result, individual preferences—liking or disliking—lose their inherent meaning. To be familiar or not with the work of art replaces the meaning of a work of art. Popular art, e.g., popular music or films, is a standardization of the medium and takes its place among the other consumer goods. Consequently, popular art is not autonomous art, and it has no emancipative potential. In this respect, the works of Adorno’s favorite artists (Kafka, Beckett, Schönberg, Berg, Giacometti Celan) are not contained in the domain of popular art. This elitist preference restricts the emancipative

role of art within a specific sub-domain; this is one of the prominent criticisms on Adorno's thought.

Adorno's book *Negative Dialectics* is mainly a philosophical explanation of his understanding of Critical Theory. In that book, Adorno attempts to develop a philosophy for critical social consciousness through which he critiques traditional idealistic philosophy and constructs his materialistic argumentation. In this way, the subject is "a moment of the spatial-temporal 'external' world," having no precedence over the world. He gives the the object priority over the subject and underlines the importance of negativity in the Hegelian dialectic of thought. According to negative dialectics, concepts do not cover the object without a remainder, which entails that non-identity can be accessible via a criticism of false identification. Non-identity is the emancipative side of *Negative Dialectics*. The preponderance of the object in its relation with the subject emphasizes the materialist description of art. Instead of retaining the reified condition, non-identity provides the recognition of what would or should be done. Instrumental rationality maintains a distance between the subject and the object, and for this reason it cannot accomplish a satisfactory form of interaction between them. It considers nature as something to be used and exploited, so rather than submitting to the schema of instrumental rationality Adorno utilizes mimetic rationality.

Furthermore, the emancipative potential of art is related with freedom. There are two dimensions of freedom. First, one is related with their impulsive acts, similar to the Freudian id. This type of freedom can be seen in "Odysseus' encounter with the Sirens. Odysseus forfeits the freedom of full sensual abandonment to the music in order to steer his ship safely home."²¹⁰ Describing freedom as an impulsive act favors the mimetic rationality, where mimetic rationality means the "reconciliation between humans and nature, including the nature within human beings, and among human beings

²¹⁰ Sherratt Y., *Positive Dialectic*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002, p89.

themselves”²¹¹ The second dimension of freedom is related with the instrumental rationality, wherein Odysseus “forces the rowers to engage in a particular instrumental activity and thereby dominates their free (instrumental) will.”²¹² The rowers confirm their given identity. This type of free will is similar to the identification of an individual shaped by society, and also when the individual confirms this identity via their role in society. Emancipative art is related with both dimensions of freedom: the impulsive character of emancipative art links human beings to “Mother Nature,” and the autonomy of the artwork creates the negation of the instrumental understanding of freedom. Adorno juxtaposes mimetic rationality against instrumental rationality. Mimetic rationality proposes a new approach for not only the emancipation of humans but also for nature.

According to Adorno, culture cannot be understood in its own terms; there is always an interrelation with society. Art is a critique and a negation of existing dominant social norms. The autonomy of art can be realized after the subject has been freed from its religious, social and political roles. Art should be external to reification in order to establish its autonomy. whereas the truth content comes from the critical approach of the artwork, indicating what is possible but not yet realized. For this reason, instead of encouraging harmony in music, Adorno, with the use of avant-garde techniques, emphasizes shock or emancipative effects to resist domination.

The focus of the Frankfurt School coincides with the conflicts between humans and nature much more than class conflicts, and reconciliation with nature was the solution to this conflict. Mimesis is a natural human response—like Freud's “libido” and “id”—and its non-conceptual attribute provides the magic of art. It is a way of being released from the fear which nature has caused. In addition, mimesis indicates the non-identical by

²¹¹ <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/adorno/#5>

²¹² Ibid.

means of a negative dialectic. In criticizing the social framework, Adorno argues that art as a promise of happiness functions as an ideal for constructing a better society.

Adorno's critique of instrumental rationality and the existing capitalist world order describes reification, alienation within society and the perception of art's regression. Among all of this, he gives a special role to art because of its emancipative quality. The concept of emancipation has a different meaning in Adorno than it does in its Marxist content. Historically, emancipation as an orthodox Marxist concept means abolishing the existing capitalist system in order to free people. Adorno, on the other hand, describes emancipation as the gaining of an autonomy beyond the domination of capitalist society's prevailing norms through a critical perspective, finally achieving freedom and happiness. This perspective is very limited because Adorno expects the truth content to be revealed by philosophical interpretation; nonetheless, restricting truth content of an artwork to philosophical interpretation is elitist. Therefore, if one considers the question of how it is possible to prevent and avoid suffering and unhappiness caused by modernity, the emancipative power of art seems very weak. On top of this, Adorno believes that the truth content of art is related with historical stages, social formations and political contexts, so what would be the value of the works of Mozart or Chopin, or any Baroque musician for that matter, if they do not contain any truth content related to our time? This is an open question.

Adorno's main concern is to think about how it is possible to resist against and negate the dominating conditions without a totalitarian myth. In his endeavors, he gives reference to modernist art and a negative dialectic. Oppositional films, television and art, among other cultural arenas, have the potential to create a political struggle. The use of social media, internet and popular art as a medium is the typical characteristic of social resistance in our contemporary world; these could be a promise for a future society beyond the one we live in.

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY

Eleştirel teori felsefe, politik teori, sanat teorisi sosyoloji, psikoloji ve kültür çalışmaları açısından Yirminci Yüzyılın en etkili teorilerinden birisidir. Adorno Frankfurt Okulu Eleştirel Teori içinde yer alan düşünürlerin önde gelenlerinde bir olarak, kapitalizmi kültür vurgusu üzerinden analiz etmiş ve sanatın özgürleştirici potansiyel taşıdığını savunmuştur. Frankfurt Okulu düşünürleri genel olarak araçsal rasyonalitenin baskın anlayış haline geldiğini ve özdüşünümsel ve eleştirel olmaktan uzaklaştığını iddia etmişlerdir. Kültür endüstrisi, kapitalizmin yeni ulaştığı aşamada, kitlelerin ahyonu haline gelmiştir. Kültür endüstri eleştirisi, bireyin bilincini kontrol eden egemen ideolojinin eleştirisidir. Bu nedenle Adorno ve Frankfurt Okulu düşünürleri teorilerinde, Freud'dan kavramları kullanmışlardır. Egemen ideolojinin kontrolü altında sanat da tüketim araçları arasında yerini almaktadır. Özerklik sanatın en önemli karakteristiklerinden biridir. Bu nedenle sanat dünya düzeninde yer alan egemen formları reddetme kapasitesi taşımakta, kurulu gerçekliği göz önüne sermekte ve yabancılaşan bilinci olumsuzlamaktadır. Adorno felsefesinde "Her şey daha iyi nasıl olabilir?" sorusuna yanıt aramakta ve sanatın özgürleştirici yanına vurgu yapmaktadır.

Eleştirel Teori, Frankfurt Okulunun tarafından 1920 lerde geliştirilmiştir. Max Horkheimer , Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm, Leo Lowenthal ve T. W. Adorno gibi filozoflar bu okulun önde gelen üyeleridirler. Başlıca eleştirdikleri konu, fen bilimlerinde uygulanan yöntemlerin sosyal bilimlerde uygulanamayacağıdır. Sosyal bilimlerde, incelenecek nesnenin ve inceleyenin tarihselliği sonucu, özne algıda edilgen bir tutum içinde olamaz. Yani araştırmacının kendi dünya görüşü ve tarihsel durumdan bağımsız bir değerlendirme yapması mümkün değildir.

Frankfurt okulunun temel araştırma alanları kitle iletişim araçları, kitle kültürü, sanat teorisi yabancılaşma olarak rasyonalizasyondur. Araçsal rasyonalitenin oluşturduğu hegemonyanın kendine yönelik eleştirel bakışını yitirdiğini ve onunla iç içe olan kapitalizmin yeni bir birey tipinin oluşmasına neden olduğunu savunmuşlardır. Bu çerçevede “Kültür Endüstrisi” kitlenin yeni afyonu haline gelmiştir. Eleştirel Teori bu anlamda oluşan bu hegemonyaya karşı nasıl bir direnme gösterilebileceğini araştırır. Sadece direnme ile kalmaz eşitsizliğin hangi yolla giderilebileceğinin yollarını arar. Eleştirel yaklaşım ekonomik olmaktan çok sosyo-kültürel bir çerçevededir. Yabancılaşma ve şeyleşmenin bireyi makineleşmiş sistemin nasıl bir dışlisi haline getirdiğini inceler. Sanat toplumda var olan kodlanmış ve şifresinin çözülmesi gereken bir dil olarak Eleştirel Teorinin gözlem alanı içinde ele alınır.

Tarihsel geri planın Eleştirel Teorinin biçimlenmesinde önemli etkileri vardır. 1917 Bolşevik Devrimi, Alman Cumhuriyetinin ilanı ve sonrasında Hitler’in başa gelmesine kadar ortaya çıkan siyasal gelişmeler Frankfurt okulu düşünürlerini etkilemiştir. Marksist kökenden gelen bu düşünürler Stalin sonrası Rusya ve Hitler rejiminin yarattığı karamsarlıkla aydınlanma düşüncesini sorgulama ihtiyacı duymuşlardır.

Freud, Marx, Weber ve Lukacs

Freud, Marx, Weber ve Lukacs ı Eleştirel Teoriyi etkileyen en önemli düşünürlerdir. Freud ile Marks’ın teorilerini birleştirerek, bireyin sosyo-psikolojik gelişimine dair Freud’un getirdiği kavramların önemli açılımlar sağladığını savunmuşlardır. Adorno psiko-analitik kavramlar çerçevesinde batı toplumlarında yer alan patolojileri incelemiştir. Ona göre Ego dürtüsünü ön plana alan Aydınlanma Düşüncesi Ego ile Id arasında dengesizlik yaratmaktadır. Marx, Weber ve Lukacs’ı Adorno’nun düşüncesine etkileri açısından beraberce düşünmek gerekir. Lukacs, Marksist ekonomi-politik ile Weber’in sosyolojisini kullanarak, kapitalist toplum eleştirisiyle rasyonalizasyon eleştirisini birleştirmiştir. Lukacs şeyleşmenin proletaryanın kurtuluşu önünde bir engel olduğunu savunmuştur. Kapitalist üretim sonucu sadece bir ürün oluşmamakta proletaryanın kendisi de bir ürüne dönüşmektedir. Burada yabancılaşma her şeyin

yönetilebilir konuma dönüştürülmesi, öznenin yönetici konumu ve bunun en doğal olan ilişki olarak algılanması demektir. İdealizmin içinde yer alan nesne özne ikiliği, yabancılaşma da gördüğümüz ikiliğin benzerini üretmektedir. Bireyin bilinci toplumdaki bağımsız gibi düşünülmektedir. Kullanım değeri değişim değerine dönüştürüldüğünde düşünce eleştirel kapasitesini yitirmekte ve aslında irrasyonel bir yaklaşım üretmektedir. Adorno ve Lukacs rasyonalitenin getirdiği sorunlar konusunda benzer düşünmekle beraber, Lukacs yabancılaşma sorununu sınıf çerçevesinde düşünürken Adorno bireyin deneyimlerini engelleyici bir durum olarak ele almaktadır.

Aydınlanmanın Diyalektiği

Aydınlanma tarihsel olarak on yedinci yüzyılın ortalarından on sekizinci yüzyılın sonlarına kadar geçen bir süreci kapsamaktadır. Fransız Devrimi ile sembolize edilen bu süreç, bilim felsefe, toplum ve siyaset açısından devrimci değişimleri içerir. Dinin, geleneklerin ve mitlerin üzerinde duran toplumsal ve politik düzene karşı aydınlanma düşünürleri yeni toplumsal teori ve modeller geliştirmişlerdir. Eleştirel Teori kapitalist ideolojinin eleştirisini yapar. Adorno ve Horkheimer'ın beraberce yazdığı *Aydınlanmanın Diyalektiği* kitabı, araçsal rasyonalitenin kapitalizm ile iç içe girmiş yapısından kaynaklanan barbarlık ve cehaletin eleştirisidir. Araçsal rasyonalite aydınlanma düşüncesinin egemen formu olarak doğaya kontrol edilebilirlik ve fayda açısından bakar. Araçsal rasyonalitenin oluşturduğu hegemonya bireyin hedeflerine ve amaçlarını sınırlayan bir hegemonyadır. Aydınlanma, dinin yarattığı engellerden kurtulmayı amaçlarken, araçsal rasyonalitenin hegemonyasında, totalitarizm ve faşizm ile sonuçlanan bir başka hegemonya yaratmıştır. *Aydınlanmanın Diyalektiği*, bireyin bilinci üzerindeki hegemonya ve kontrol kavramlarıyla olan ilişkisinden dolayı Freud'un psikolojide yer alan teorileri ekseninde bir okumaya elverişlidir. Freud'a göre id ve ego dış objelere yönelmiş dürtülerdir. Id kontrol edilmeyen ve içten gelen ani dürtülerdir. Dış objeler id için haz ve anlamlılık açısından değerlendirilir. Id açısından aşk araçsal rasyonalitenin ötesinde bir anlam içerir. Birine aşık olduğumuzda, ona duyduğumuz aşk organizmanın işlevleri çerçevesinde anlatılamaz. Organizmanın işlevleri çerçevesinde yapılan açıklama, araçsal rasyonalitenin çerçevesinde yapılabilecek bir açıklamadır. Y

Sherrat, Adorno ve Horkheimer ın, aydınlanmanın hedeflerinin ego dürtüsünü id e göre ön plana aldığını gördüklerini idda etmektedir. Bu durum Freud un id ile ego arasında yer alması gerektiğini söylediği dengenin bozulmasına neden olmaktadır. Araçsal rasyonalite içinde ego nesne ilişkisi sadece kendini koruma çerçevesinde şekillenmektedir. Odysseus çağdaş insanın prototipi olarak, Sirenlerin çağrısına uymayıp onların vereceği hazlara gem vurarak ailesinin yanına dönmeyi hedeflemektedir. Hazlardan feragat, id dürtüsünün değersizleştirilmesidir Freud açısından. Bununla sadece hazlardan feragat edilmemekte, gerçeklikle olan ilişkide, gerçeklik id'in tatmin sağladığı bir nesne olmamaktadır artık. Freud'a göre gerçeklikle ilişki zayıfladığında tatmin hayallerden alınmaya başlar. Hegemonyanın devamı güdülerin daha güçlü bir baskı ile kontrol edilmesine neden olacaktır. Bu ise çocukluk çağı özseverliğine geri dönüşe yol açacaktır. Özseverlik, olgun olmama ikellik olarak, sadece dürtülerin tatminini bekler. Tatmin sadece görüntüden hayallerden görüntüden yanılısamadan geldiğinde bu daha ileri bir gerilemeye yol açacaktır. Her ne kadar araçsal rasyonalite doğa üzerinde kontrolü artırsa da, bir yandan da astrolojik açıklamalar, öte dünya ile iletişim, telekinezi, komplo teorileri gibi, açıklama biçimlerinin yaygınlaştığı bir dünya ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bu tür bir gerileme özellikle kültür endüstrisinde gördüğümüz özel efektlerden kurulu filmlerde olduğu gibi, bir tür kaçış sergileyen, tatminin teknolojinin kendisinden elde edildiği bir ortam yaratmaktadır. Tatminin gerçeklikten yanılısamaya, egonun ürettiği ürünlere yönelmesi, özseverlik nedeniyle bireyin kendisiyle ilgili kaygılı olmasına neden olmaktadır. Egonun kontrolünde gerçeklik ile kurulan ilişki birey açısından özgürlüğün kaybıyla sonuçlanmaktadır. Dış dünyanın kontrolü, bireyin kendisinin kontrolüne dönüşmektedir. Ego için, dışarıdaki nesnelere yaşamını sürdürmek için bir potansiyel tehdit unsurudur. Gerçeklik bir korku kaynağı olmaktadır. Bir bakıma aydınlanmanın hedefleri olan güvenlik barış ve özgürlüğün altı oyulmaktadır. Aydınlanma bir tür mite dönüşmektedir. Nesnelere düşüncenin sayısal modlarına dönüştürme kavramla nesneyi eşitlemeye dönüşüyor. Bunun sonucu bireyin kendisi, benzersizliği, kurallar ve düzenlemelerin bir nesnesi haline gelmektedir.

Araçsal rasyonalite insanlar arası ilişkileri de özne nesne ilişkisine döndürür ve bunu bireyin tasfiyesi olarak adlandırabiliriz. Ego, burjuva ailesinde süper ego olarak

adlandırılan ana baba otoritesi yoluyla kendini belirler. Ancak kapitalizmle birlikte babanın veya ailenin zayıflayan ekonomik gücü ile birlikte ailenin otoritesi de zayıflamaktadır. Zayıflayan süper ego sonucu, alt beynin ya da içgüdülerin kontrolünün baskın olduğu bir durum ortaya çıkmaktadır. Adorno'ya göre Hitler kitlenin biçimlenmesinde libido kaynaklı nedenlerin olduğunun farkındaydı. Bireyin kendini otoriter lider ile özdeşleştirme doğal babanın rolünün zayıflamasından kaynaklanmaktadır. Egonun taleplerinin sağlanamaması sonucu özsever dürtüler otoriter lider yoluyla sindirilebilmektedir. Modern toplumda bireyin toplumun özerk üyesi olarak kendi ekonomik ve politik çıkarlarına göre davrandığı varsayılır. Buna karşın ekonomik ve politik koşullar gereği, gittikçe artan kültürel hakimiyet sonucu birey, kural koyucuların belirlediği dolaylı zorunluluklarla karşı karşıyadır.

Horkheimer ve Adorno'ya göre kültür endüstrisinin egemen olduğu günümüzde her şey aynılık tarafından kirletilmiştir. Tikelin biricikliği tümelin egemenliği içinde kaybolmuştur. Üretimde standartlaşma dünyanın her tarafında benzer şeyleri üretmektedir. Tüketicinin taleplerinden ziyade güdümlenen tüketimin egemen olduğu bir üretim söz konusudur. Kültür endüstrisi eğlence sektörü yoluyla tüketiciyi kontrol etmektedir. İşten bir süre ara vermeyi ve sonra tekrar işe dönmeyi sağlamakta, izleyicinin düşünceleri kendi düşüncelerinden uzak tutulmaktadır. Sanat eserinin kullanım değeri değişim değerine dönüşmekte ancak bu gizlenmeye çalışılmaktadır. Fetiş nesne haline gelerek meta olma özelliği ortadan kalkmış gibi gösterilmektedir. Reklam endüstrisi ile iç içe geçen kültür endüstrisi insanların anlamını bilmeden aynı kelimeleri kullanmasına yönelik zorunluluk yaratmaktadır.

Mekanik üretim sonucu sanat aurası zayıflamıştır. Ticari kaygılardan uzak zannedilen klasik Müzik bile kapitalizmin kontrolünden kurtulamamaktadır. Sanatın faşizm tarafından kullanımı, politik bir enstrüman olarak kullanılabilir mi sorusunu doğurmuştur. Adorno'ya göre sanatın politik kullanımı onun eleştirel uzaklığını kaybetmesine yol açmaktadır. Bu tıpkı faşizmde olduğu gibi bir tür propagandaya dönüşmektedir. Günümüzde ciddi müzik için de popüler müzik için de o müziğin tanındık

tınlar içermesi gereği, proletaryanın bilincinin bu koşullandırmalardan uzaklaşmasını zorlaştırmaktadır. Bireyler, küçük bir çocuk nasıl aynı yemeği yemek isterse aynı şeyi dinlemek istemektedir. Bir eserden hoşlanıp hoşlanmama, tanıdık mı değil mi şekline dönüşmüştür. Herkes başkaları ne tüketiyorsa onu tüketmeye çalışmaktadır. Bireylerin benzer şeyleri tüketmesi beğenin kontrol edilebilmesi ile ilişkilidir. Kültür endüstrisi benzer tercihlerin oluşması için bir hegemonya kurmaktadır. Adorno'nun caza ilişkin eleştirisi popüler müziğe yönelik eleştirilerinin benzeridir. Caz'ın doğaçlama yoluyla fetiş bir meta olmaktan çıkma iddiasının geçerli olmadığını, onu da piyasanın kurallarına boyun eğdiğini, bunu değiştirmeye çalışmadığını söylemektedir. Bir konseri sevmek ona ödenen bilet parasıyla orantılı olmakta, müziğin kendisiyle ilişki kaybolmaktadır.

Negatif Diyalektik

Negatif Diyalektik Adorno'nun en yoğun felsefi içerik taşıyan çalışmasıdır. Tüm felsefi yaklaşımına ait açıklamaları içerir. Buradaki temel iddialarından birisi tümelin tikeli tümüyle kapsayamayacağıdır. Burada nesnelere tikeli, kavram ve özne ise tümeli anlatmaktadır. Özdeşlik yoluyla düşünme yani düşünce ile oluşu eşleştirmek, öznelci düşünmedir. Nesne özne yoluyla tasarlanır ancak, her zaman bu tasarımın dışında kalan bir yanı vardır ve öznenin kendisi ta başından nesnedir. İnsanın değişim değeri üzerinden kurduğu hegemonya aslında kavramın/öznenin önceliğini yanlışlamaktadır. "Değişim değeri" kavramını ele alırsak, bu kavramın kullanım değerine göre baskın hale gelişi paraya dönüştürülmüş olması, yani bir nesne üzerinden olması idealizmin öznenin önceliği fikrinin tam tersini göstermektedir. Nesnenin öncelikli olması öznenin ne söyleyeceğinin belirleyen olmasını demektir. Hegel'e göre gerçeklik mutlak bilgiyi hedefleyen bir süreç yoluyla inşa edilir. Hegel bunu deneyim olarak adlandırır. Eğer deneyim sürecinde kavram ile nesne arasında uyuşmayan kısım varsa, bu kısım negatif yan olarak adlandırılır ve daha tatmin edici bir kavramlaştırmaya yönelmek gerekir. Adorno kavram ile nesne arasında özdeşliğin tamamen sağlanamayacağını savunur. Onun için önemli olan diyalektik süreçte tamda o kapsanamayan negatif kalan kısımdır. Felsefenin görevi o arta kalan, kavramlaştırılmayanı yakalamaktır. Sanat eseri tümüyle bilinebilir değildir. Felsefi yorumlama kavramla sanat eserinin özdeşleştirme demek

değildir ama bu kavramlaştırmalar sonucu sanat eseri doğruluğunu açar. Kavramsal özdeşleştirme kimi egemen amaçlar doğrultusunda yapılır, oysa negatif diyalektikte kavramsallaştırma sonucunda arta kalan bir kısım vardır ve bu özdeşleştirmenin doğru olmayan yanındır. Bu yan yine dil üzerinden açıklanacaktır. Tikel ile tümel arasındaki ilişki uzlaştırma yoluyla yakalanır. Adorno özdeşleşmeye yanlış özdeşleşmenin eleştirisi üzerinden varılır demektedir. Araçsal rasyonalite nesne ile özne arasında bir uzaklık yaratmakta, öznenin dışında kalan her şeyi kullanılacak ve sömürülecek bir doğa durumuna indirgemekte, daha zengin içerik sunan bir ilişki yaratmamaktadır. Bu durum ancak özne ile nesnenin birbiri ile uzlaştığı iç içe geçtiği mimetik rasyonalite çerçevesinde kazanılabilir. Bu uzlaşma, sabit bir nokta son durak değildir çünkü nesne de özne de zamanla değişmektedir. Adorno'ya göre Kant aşkın kategoriler yoluyla bilginin koşullarının sabitlenmektedir. Hegel ise özdeş olanla olmayanın daha üst bir formda uzlaştıklarını söyleyerek bu süreçte bir ereklilik olduğunu savunmaktadır. Adorno ise özdeş olmayanın, özdeşleştiren düşünmeye karşı direnci korunmasını sağlayan, bu anlamda kurtarıcı özgürleştirici olduğunu savunur. Negatif diyalektik var olan yabancılaşmayı korumak yerine ne yapmak gerektiğini fark eder ve mimetik rasyonaliteye yöneltir. Mimetik rasyonalite, insan-insan, insan-doğa arasında bir uzlaşma demektir. Sanatın kimi formları ve felsefe eleştirel perspektife sahiptir. Negatif Diyalektik de eleştirel toplumsal bilinç için böyle bir felsefeyi geliştirmeye çalışmaktadır.

Özgürlük

Adorno bireyin kimliğinin toplum içinde aldığı ve toplum tarafından kabullenen rol çerçevesinde belirlendiğini söyler. Bu anlamda özgürlük ve kimlik arasında bir ilişki bulunmaktadır. Adorno özgürlüğü “engellenmemiş dürtü” ile birleştirmektedir. Ona göre engellenmemiş dürtü olmadan özgürlük türetilemez. Bilinç kompulsif nevrozda özgür olmayan yanının farkına varmaktadır. Özgürlüğü belirleyen iki farklı merkez görünmektedir biri dürtüler diğeri toplum. Eğer toplum özgürlüğün sınırlarını belirliyorsa neden bunun farkında olmuyoruz? Toplum içten gelen dürtülerimizin üzerinde baskı kurarak çevreye uyumumuzu sağlamaktadır. Sanat açısından özgürlük,

sanatsal bağımsızlık demektir. Sanat özgürlüğün hem dürtü yanından hem de toplumsal yanından beslenmektedir.

Sanat Toplum İlişkisi

Adorno sanatın toplum açısından eleştirel yanını önemsemektedir. Realizm özdeşlik kurmaya çalışırken, özdeş olmayan yaklaşım toplumdaki doğru olmayanı ön plana çıkarmaktadır. Bu nedenle Adorno tümel bir açıklama yerine sanat ve toplumdaki aldığı tikel örnekler üzerinden açıklama yapmaktadır. Adorno'ya göre kültür kendisi üzerinden eleştirilemez, daima toplumla ilişkilidir bu anlamda egemen ideolojiden bağımsız değildir. Adorno'ya göre müzik toplumsal çelişkilerin bir portresini oluşturur. Özellikle sanatın kendi biçim ve tekniğinde bu çelişkilerin yansıdığı görünür. Örneğin Picasso'nun savaşın yıkıcı etkisini gösteren Guernica'sı toplumsal problemi kendi materyali ve dili çerçevesinde yansıtır. Modern müzik kapitalizm çağında oldukça rasyonel ve şeffaf prensipler üzerinden kurulmuştur. Sanatın eleştirel tavrı onun içeriğinden değil formundan gelmelidir. Form, sadece stil değil, sanatın tüm iç organizasyonu, alışlagelmiş anlam kalıplarını yeniden üretme kapasitesi demektir. Sanat dünya ve onunla iletişimimiz ile ilgili bilgi üretmektedir. Bu bilginin doğruluğu modern dünyanın içinde yer alan uyumsuzluğu yansıttığında belli olmaktadır. Otonom ve eleştirel sanat piyasa gereksinimlerini reddettiği yerde durmaktadır. Sanatın doğası, sanatın doğduğu yere geri dönülerek belirlenemez. Statik bir tanımı yoktur ve tekrar tekrar tanımlanma ihtiyacı duyar. Aydınlanma ile birlikte müzikte polifoninin, resimde perspektifin rasyonalitenin ilerlemesine paralel olarak arttığını görüyoruz. Toplumsal karakteri taşınması dışında, özerkliği ve anlam yükü onun toplumsal önemini belirler. Sanatın işlevi toplumsal bilince katkısı onun bilişsel bir işlevdir. Yabancılaşan bilinci olumsuzlar ve gerçekliğin açılmasını sağlar. Sanat mimetik dürtü ile rasyonalite arasındaki gerilimi taşır. Schönberg'in müziğinde görüldüğü gibi bir yanda günümüz dünyasındaki uyumsuzluğun doğurduğu bilinçsiz dürtülerden kaynaklanan atonaliteyi içerir diğer yanda bu müzik kurallı on iki ton müziğine dönüşür. Sanat eserinin doğruluk değeri sanat eserinin, dışarıdaki nesneye karşılık gelip gelmediği ile ilgilidir. Beethoven'ın müziğinin nesnel yanı Fransız devriminin vaatlerini ifade ederken öznel yanı sonata ve

senfoni formu içinde nota ve müzik cümlesini ayrı ama bütünün parçası olan bir birim olarak ortaya koyar. Sanat eserinin doğruluk değeri bilgi ve deneyim taşıyan öznenin felsefi yorumuyla açığa kavuşturulur. Adorno “Toplum ve Lirik Şiir Üzerine” adlı makalesinde şiirin hiç toplumdan söz etmezken toplumu anlattığını iddia eder. Toplumsal duruma yönelik düşmanlık, yabancılık, soğukluk duyan bireyin bu durumu şiirde kendisini gösterir. Bireye yönelen baskı arttıkça, şiir buna isyan eder ve kendi koyduğu kurallara göre kendini biçimlendirir. Protestosunda her şeyin farklı olduğu bir dünyanın hayalini ifade eder.

Özerklik ve Sanatın Doğruluk İçeriği

Adorno’ya göre sanatın özerkliği dinsel politik ve sosyal rollerden arınmasıyla elde edilebilir. “Commitment” adlı makalesinde özgürlük ve politik bağlılık ilişkisini ele alır. Bu çerçevede Kafka’nın romanlarında ve Beckett’in oyunlarındaki etki ile politik hedefli çalışmalar karşılaştırıldığında, politik hedefli çalışmaların bir tür pantomim gibi görüldüğünü ve aslında bu politik hedefi zayıflattığını söyler. Sanatın doğruluk içeriği taşıyabilmesi için özerk olması gerekmektedir. Adorno’ya göre Kant sanatın özne yanını, öznenin bilincini vurgularken nesnenin bilinç üzerine etkisinden çok, özgürlük ve özerklik yanının altını çizer. Estetik sadece öznellik üzerinden temellendirilemez. Nesne ve öznenin diyalektik ilişkisi dikkate alınmalıdır. Bu nedenle sadece beğeni üzerinden bir değerlendirme özne bir yaklaşım olacaktır. Sanatçı sanat ürününün ortaya çıkarılmasında bir tür araç görevi görür. Bir imkanın gerçekliğe dönüşmesini sağlayan bir aracın uzantısıdır. Özerk sanat içeriğini toplumdaki dışarıdan alır ancak içinde bulunduğu yabancılaşmanın dışındadır. Bu ikili karakteri Adorno Leibniz’in monad kavramıyla açıklar. Sanat eserleri penceresiz monadlar, kendileri neyse onu gösterirler, kendi dinamikleri dışında anlaşılabilirler, dışlarındaki dünyanın taklit etmeden benzeridirler. Özerklik bireye biçilen toplumsal normlara karşı geliştirilen eleştirel bakış açısıdır.

Sanatın doğruluk değeri onun topluma eleştirel bakışından gelir ve onun gizemli yanını oluşturur. Bu gizemi çözmek felsefenin görevidir ve sanatın doğruluk değerini ortaya çıkarır. Her sanat eseri bir yorum bekler aksi takdirde sanat olanla olmayan arasında bir

fark kalmayacaktır. Doğruluk değeri sanat eserinin biçim ve içeriğinin diyalektiğinin bir sonucudur ve bir anlam üretir. Herhangi bir değerlendirmede bulunabilmek için eserin iç dinamiğini ve ortaya çıktığı tarihsel toplumsal ilişkileri bilmek gerekir. Sanat eserinin doğruluk değeri onun dışında olan bir şeydir ve onun büyülü olmayan yanını ifade eder. Daha iyi nasıl olmalı sorusuna karşılık gelen önerisi onun özgürleştirici, kurtarıcı yanını işaret eder

Mimesis

Eleştirel Teori Marksist kökenden gelmekle beraber sınıf çelişkilerinden çok insan doğa arasındaki çelişki üzenine yoğunlaşır. Doğayla uzlaşmadan tam ne kastettikleri belli değildir. Özgürleşme, kurtuluş anlamında “emancipation” bireysel bilincin geliştirilmesi ve kayıp geçmişin diriltilmesi olarak anlaşılır. Hegel bakış açısıyla tarihin akışı, tinin serüveni olarak, onun kendi üzerinde oluşan yabancılaşmanın bilincine varmasıdır. Doğa ile insanın uyumlu halle gelmesi için “mimesis/öykünme” kavramını geliştirdiler. Öykünme çocukluktan itibaren kullanılan öğrenme yöntemidir ve sosyalleşme ile birlikte rasyonel, hedef eksenli davranışa yerini bırakır. Modern bilimle birlikte bu tür hedef eksenli, kavramın formül, nedenin kurallar ve olasılık olduğu, anlamın geri plana itildiği bir yola girildi. Adorno toplumun yönlendirdiği yanlış irrasyoneliteye karşılık, sanatın, öykünmecî rasyonalitenin sığınağı olduğunu savunur. Yanlış irrasyonelite, kendini kültür endüstrisinde olduğu gibi rasyonel olarak gösterir. Rasyonel ve öykünme arasında diyalektik bir ilişki vardır. Öykünmecî ifade insani bir davranış olarak Nietzsche nin Dionisian yada Freud’un libido veya id kavramlarını çağrıştıran ontogenetik bir hipotezi ima etmektedir. Öykünmecî sanatsal ifade kendini Adorno’ya göre canlılardaki ağrı benzeri şekilde ortaya koyar. Öykünme doğal insani bir tepkidir. Kavramsal bir yapısının olmaması sanatın büyüsunü yaratır. Öykünme bu anlamda bir bilgi taşıdığı için rasyonaliteyi içerir. Öykünme rasyonaliteyi eleştiren bir rasyonalitedir. Kavramsal olmaması sanatın büyülü yanını oluşturur. Öykünme ve rasyonalite sanatın iki ayrı yönü olarak bir uzlaşmazlık yaratmaktadır. Bu anlamda sanata bu iki özelliğın barıştığı yer olarak bakılmalıdır. Bu iki özelliğın nasıl kullanıldığı sanat eserinin değerini belirleyecektir. Sanatın özgürleştirici kurtarıcı yanı öykünme ile ilişkilidir.

Öykünme insanı doğa anaya bağlar. İnsan doğaya benzeyerek içindeki ile dışarıyı bağlar ve yabancı olan içten bilinir. İnsan, dans, büyü, müzik yoluyla yaşamın döngüsünü tekrarlar. Doğaya dönüşle kendisini doğaya köle eden, doğanın efendisi olduğuna yönelik anlayıştan kurtulabilir. Adorno ve Horkheimer'e göre sanat, dil ve felsefe öykünmeciyi dürtüye nefes alma imkânı verir. Öykünme doğanın yarattığı korkundan sıyrılmak için bir yol yaratır. Doğayla insan arasında ilişki kurulmasını sağlar. Martin Jay'e göre öykünme, özne ve nesne arasında daha içten ve canlı ilişki kurarak, yabancılaşmaya karşı direnç oluşturan bir ortam yaratır. İlkel sempatiden kaynaklanan "Mimesis" benzeşlik olarak adlandırılabilir. Mimesis karşılıklı duyuşal etkileşimim yarattığı yansıtıcı akıldır. Öznenin benzeşim yoluyla kendi duyularını fark etmesidir. Kimi modern sanat örneklerinde iç dünya ile dış dünya arasındaki bağ yabancılaşmanın yarattığı özne nesne ayılığından dolayı kopmuştur. Adorno ya göre bu bağ negatif diyalektik yoluyla kurulabilir. Kafka, eserlerinde tekelci kapitalizmin uzaktan görünüşünde, yönetsel dünyanın yarattığı pisliklerin kodlarını endüstriyel tekelcilerle ilgili başka romanlardan çok daha güçlü bir şekilde verir. Kafka'nın epik stili yabancılaşmanın mimesisidir. Bir ütopya yaratmak yerine, üretken negativiteyi kullanarak, bilginin sağaltan gücünü arar. Sağduyu ile sürekli bastırılan tümel, toplumsal sürecin mimesisi yoluyla açığa çıkarılır. Mimesis genellemelerin dışında kalana, özdeş olmayana yapılan açılım olarak, sanat eserinin, tikelin sesi olmasını sağlar. Mimetik deneyimde yabancılaştıran rasyonalitenin bastırıldığı yaratma mutluluğu vardır. Nesne ile özne arasında sıkı bir ilişki kurularak korkunun yenilmesini sağlar. Adorno nun eleştirdiği film ve televizyon endüstrisi gerçek yaşayan dünyanın yerine yalancı bir dünya koymaktadır. Milyonlar star artistlerin çekimiyle bilet gişelerinin önünde uzun kuyruklar oluşturmaktadırlar. Berstein'e göre Adorno ifade ile öykünmeyi (mimesis) birleştirerek sanatın sezgisel karakterinin altını çizmektedir. İfade uyumsuzun eşleniği olarak sezginin diğer adıdır; acı, kavramın kapsayamadığı diğer olarak sezginin doğruluğudur.

Kurtuluş yada Özgürleşme

Adorno açısında kurtuluş (emancipation) kapitalist dünyanın dayattığı geçerli normların ötesinde eleştirel bir perspektifle özerklik kazanmak, özgürlük ve mutluluğu başarmak

demektir. Adorno sanatın bir mutluluk vaadi olduğunu söyler. Adorno'ya göre sanat mutluluk yaratmaz, sanat uygun şekilde ona bağlanana mutluluk vaat eder. Bu mutluluk vaadi klasik sanatta olduğu gibi parça ile bütünü uyumunu arayan yaklaşımda değil, tam tersi bu uyum arayışını bırakan, daha iyi bir dünya nasıl olur sorusuna cevap arayan yaklaşımda ortaya çıkar. Adorno'ya göre Bethooven son dönem eserlerinde parça ile bütün arasında ki uyum arayışından uzaklaşmıştır. Geç yaylı çalgı dörtlüleri bu tür bir parçalanmaya yönelik baskının bilinçsizle keşfedildiği eserleridir. Adorno, Stravinsky'in eserlerini başarısız bulmaktadır. Onun kullandığı onsekizinci yüzyıla ait müzikal form ve stiller modern yaşamdan uzaktır. Başarılı sanat eserleri geleneksel, tanıdık dinleme kalıplarını taşımamalı, insanların mutsuzluklarının farkına varmalarını sağlamalıdır. Adorno sanatın estetikleştirilmemesini (de-aestheticization), harmoni ve güzellik yerine, günümüz dünyasını daha doğru ortaya koyan ve toplumun özgülleşmesini sağlayacak, çirkinlik, uyumsuzluk, parçalama ve olumsuzlama içeren eleştirel sanatı savunur. Sanat özerklik yoluyla kültür endüstrisinin yarattığı egemenliğe karşı direnç gösterebilir. Bu şok sarsıcı yöntemler içeren avangart tekniklerle sağlanabilir. Adorno nun ön plana çıkardığı, Kafka Becket Shönberg Berg Giacometti, Celan bu tür uyumsuz örnekler üreten sanatçılardır. Otantik sanat eleştirel bilginin kaynağı olarak özgürleştirici potansiyel taşır. Oysa popüler sanat psikolojik tatmin yoluyla kitleleri aldatır. Otantik sanat var olan gerçeklikle yüzleşmek için ve eleştirel bir bilinçle bireysel değişimi sağlamak için gereklidir, çünkü kültür endüstrisi sınıf bilincinin oluşmasını engellemekte kapitalist hegemonyayı tekrar üretmektedir. Adorno'nun ideolojiye saldırıları kaba Marksist saldırılara benzeştirilmekte ve popüler kültürün acı, nefret, isyan içeren yanlarını görmemekle eleştirilmektedir. Bununla beraber sanat ve toplum arasındaki ilişkiye yönelik içgörülerinin zenginliği açısından geleceğin materyalist toplumsal teori ve kültür eleştirisine katkıda bulunacağı söylenebilir. Diğer bir eleştiri de, Adorno'nun özerk sanatın önemine yönelik yeterince açıklama getirmediğine dairdir. Sanat eserinin toplumsal önemi sadece özerk sanat çerçevesinde düşünülemez, popüler sanat da kimi ürünlerinde doğruluğu yakalayacağı gibi kimi ürünlerinde yakalayabilir bu eleştirilere göre. Adorno geleneksel estetiğin

normatif karakterini korumakla beraber bu normların ebedi ve deęişmez olmadığını savunur.

Sonuç

Kapitalizmin bu aşamasında kültür endüstrisi kitlenin yeni afyonu olarak işlev görmekte ve eleştirel teori bu durumun sosyo-kültürel eleştirisini yapmaktadır. 1920 ve 1930 arasındaki dönemde yaşanan sosyal ve politik türbülans bu teorinin ortaya çıkmasına neden olmuştur. Adorno nun Horkheimer ile birlikte yazdıkları *Aydınlanmanın Diyalektiği* aydınlanma düşüncesinin ve ideallerinin değil araçsal rasyonalitenin eleştirisidir. Adorno Hegelian Marksizm ile Freud'un insan psikolojisine yönelik teorisini birleştirmiştir. İnsan doğayı kontrol etmeye çalıştığı ölçüde bu durum kendisinin de kontrol edilmesine neden olmakta ve Freud'un bakışıyla id ile ego dengesi bozmaktadır. Kültür endüstrisi araçsal rasyonalitenin bir sonucu olarak bireyin bilincini kontrol etmekte ve özne nesne ilişkisini biçimlendirmektedir. Adorno araçsal rasyonalite yerine mimetik (öykünmeci) rasyonaliteyi ön plana çıkarır. Sanatın kurtarıcı karakteri özgürlükle ilişkilidir. Özgürlüğün iki boyutu bulunmaktadır. Birincisi Freud'un ortaya koyduğu id kavramına benzeyen dürtüsel davranıştır. Özgürlüğü dürtüsel bir davranış olarak tanımlamak mimetik rasyonaliteyi destekler. Mimetik rasyonalite insanla doğa insanla insan insanla kendi iç doğası arasında bir uzlaşmadır. Birey toplumun ona dayattığı kimliği kabullenerek kullandığı özgür irade ise araçsal rasyonalite ile ilgilidir, bu özgürlüğün ikinci boyutunu oluşturur. Kurtarıcı sanat özgürlüğün her iki boyutuyla ilişkilidir. Sanatın dürtüsel karakteri onu doğa anaya bağlar, sanat eserinin özerkliği ise özgürlüğün araçsal algılanışının olumsuzlanmasını sağlar. Adorno araçsal rasyonalite yerine mimetik rasyonalitenin önemini vurgular. Mimetik rasyonalite sadece insanın kurtuluşu özgürleşmesi değil doğanın da kurtuluşuna ait bir önermeyi taşımaktadır. Adorno'ya göre kültür kendisi üzerinden anlaşılabilir, her zaman toplumla karşılıklı bir ilişki içerir ve var olan egemen normları eleştirir. Bir mutluluk vaadi olarak sanat, toplumu eleştirirken daha iyi bir dünyanın idealini taşır. Adorno sanatın içinde yer alan doğruluk içeriğinin felsefe tarafından açıklanmasını bekler. Bu açıdan sanatın kurtarıcı ve özgürleştirici özelliği çok dar bir çevre içine hapsedilmektedir. Ayrıca sanat eserinin

doğruluk içeriğinin sadece belli bir dönem için geçerli olması geçmişe ait sanat ürünlerinin bu gün için değeri nedir sorusunu açıkta bırakmaktadır. Günümüzde muhalif filmler, televizyon, sosyal medya, internet, popüler sanatlar toplumsal muhalefet için yeni mücadele alanları açmaktadır. Tüm bu olanaklar geleceğin toplumuna ait bir vaadi taşımaktadır.

B. TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Enformatik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>

YAZARIN

Soyadı : Özmacun

Adı : T. Erkan

Bölümü : Felsefe

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : THEODOR ADORNO, ON THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN THEORY AND ART

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

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