Waiting in Vain?
Metaphysics, Modernity and Music
in the Work of
T. W. Adorno, Martin Heidegger and Luigi Nono

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Abstract

This work enters into debates about about the meaning and significance of messianism, in the Anglophone context of 'continental philosophy'. It does so by investigating the work of two traditionally opposed German philosophers, T. W. Adorno and Martin Heidegger. These figures stand behind the alternative traditions of recent philosophical messianism: historical materialist and neo-Heideggerian, or post-Hegelian and anti-Hegelian. Where the former tradition classically proposes the possibility of progress in, or towards history, without clearly questioning the metaphysical grounds of this possibility, the latter tradition questions the ontological nature of grounding itself, but often at the price of forfeiting a concept of historical change. The turn to messianism within historical materialism, inspired by Walter Benjamin, involves an attempt to give an account of these grounds. While sympathising with the motivation behind this turn, I suggest that it risks upholding a metaphysics that is equally as problematic as the one it opposes. I seek to interpret Adorno's late conception of an expression of 'waiting in vain' as a critique of historical materialist messianism. Since Adorno's idea is fragmentary, and still relies upon traditional metaphysics, it is read in relation to Heidegger's ontological account of waiting, according to his overall understanding of metaphysical modernity as a will to domination. The question of waiting connects the thought of Adorno and Heidegger – this has been understated in the secondary literature. I suggest that the connection is all the more convincing when their respective ideas of waiting are understood in relation to their philosophies of music and of 'the musical'. This theme is examined within a broader context of music and philosophy. It is pursued in order to respond to the overall problematic. A 'musical' concept of waiting can address some of the metaphysical problems encountered in a philosophy 'after' messianism, because it can propose an alternative notion of promise. The example of this expression is the music of Luigi Nono. A critical examination of his works is taken to elucidate the spatiotemporal character of an expression of waiting in vain, in a manner that both enriches and problematises the solely philosophical readings.

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W. P.

Introduction

Philosophy After Messianism?

During the last twenty years or so, there has been a resurgence of philosophical interest in the question of messianism. This literature, received in the Anglophone context under the banner of 'continental philosophy', has tended to follow two alternative traditions: historical materialist and neo-Heideggerian; or, post-Hegelian and anti-Hegelian.[1] The explanation for its emergence is, at one level, clear enough. The messianism in question asserts the possibility of change in the most unlikely of times. The messianic names the minimal promise of a different time to come. It is premised upon the indeterminacy of the future, from the standpoint of messianic historical time. As Walter Benjamin concludes his 'Theses on the Philosophy of History' (1940),

> We know that the Jews were prohibited from investigating the future... This does not imply, however, that for the Jews the future is turned into homogenous, empty time. For every second of time was the strait gate through which the Messiah might enter.[2]

The 'weak messianic force' is perceived most keenly in hopeless times, in times when the Messiah is not expected. Responding to Jacques Derrida's *Specters of Marx* (1993), Fredric Jameson observed the following:

> You would not evoke the messianic in a genuinely revolutionary period, a period in which changes can be sensed at work all around you; the messianic does not mean immediate hope in that sense, perhaps not even hope against hope; it is a unique variety of the species hope that scarcely bears any of the latter's normal characteristics and that flourishes only in a time of absolute hopelessness, a period like the Second Empire, or the years

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[1] Where this broadly post-Heideggerian tradition is concerned, see, for instance, Giorgio Agamben's *Homo Sacer* (Stanford University Press, 1998) and *The Time That Remains* (Stanford University Press, 2005), and Jacques Derrida's *Specters of Marx* (London & New York: Verso, 1993). Massimo Cacciari was 'ahead of the game' here, with such works as *Dallo Steinhof* (1980, translated into English as *Posthumous People*, Stanford University Press, 1996). Examples in the historical materialist tradition include Peter Osborne's *The Politics of Time* (London & New York: Verso, 1995) and Fredric Jameson's *Archaeologies of the Future* (London & New York: Verso, 2005).

[2] Benjamin, Walter. 'Theses on the Philosophy of History', in *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (London: Pimlico, 1999), p.255.

> between the Wars, or the 1980s and 90s, when radical change seems unthinkable, its very idea dispelled by visible wealth and power, along with palpable powerlessness. It is only in those trough years that it makes sense to speak of the messianic in the Benjaminian sense.[3]

Insofar as the trough years persist, Jameson's remark remains pertinent, and even self-evident. The philosophical-messianic literature on has waned of late – a consequence both of its perceived resignation and of a turn away from substantial considerations of history. This study will acknowledge that there are fundamental problems with existing forms of philosophical messianism, and with historical materialism, but will equally contend that the equating of all messianisms with resignation amounts to a misapprehension of the varieties of waiting.

Philosophical messianism never went away. The recent studies lean upon the 'modernist' wave. Implicitly drawing upon the newer literature, this thesis will focus upon two figureheads of the opposing camps: T. W. Adorno and Martin Heidegger. Adorno can more obviously be situated within a Jewish intellectual tradition of messianism – though not for everyone.[4] Heidegger's relation to Jewish thought is of course vexed in the extreme. Nevertheless (a big 'nevertheless'), this student of Hölderlin remains a thinker of the messianic, so long as we read across all periods of his work. 'Only a god can save us', Heidegger will say, from the grave. Heidegger upholds the messianic ban upon depicting what is to come: 'We cannot think' the coming god 'into being here; we can at most awaken the readiness of expectation'.[5] To this extent, Heidegger shares with Adorno an opposition to the status quo in the name of a different future.

The productive dissonance between these thinkers has, with a few exceptions, remained muted.[6] They have been traditionally opposed, philosophically and politically

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[3] Jameson, Fredric. 'Marx's Purloined Letter' in, Derrida, J. et al. *Ghostly Demarcations: A Symposium on Jacques Derrida's Specters of Marx* (London & New York: Verso, 2008), p.62.

[4] The Jewish theologian Jacob Taubes finds Adorno's 'Finale' to *Minima Moralia* 'wonderful, but finally empty'. Following Taubes, Giorgio Agamben claims that, 'Despite appearances, negative dialectics is an absolutely non-messianic form of thought, closer to the emotional tonality of Jean Améry than that of Benjamin.' Taubes, Jacob. *The Political Theology of Paul*, trans. Dana Hollander (Stanford University Press, 2003), p.74; Agamben, G. *The Time that Remains*, p.38. Cf. Chapter 5, p.234, below.

[5] Heidegger, Martin. 'Only a God Can Save Us', in *Philosophical and Political Writings* (London & New York: Continuum, 2003), p.38.

[6] The recent studies on 'Adorno and Heidegger' include: Düttmann, Alexander García. *The Gift of Language* (London: Athlone, 2000) and *The Memory of Thought* (London &

– the Nazi versus the thinker of Auschwitz, both too real and too unreal an opposition. Adorno's polemics against Heidegger are well known. For his part, Heidegger is recorded as saying of Adorno: 'I have read nothing by him'.[7] Without explaining away the fundamental divergences, a critical comparison will be attempted in what follows, on the grounds that they share an approach to a shared, crucial problem. Specifically, Adorno and Heidegger each connect a notion of waiting to their respective, extra-philosophical conceptions of metaphysics, both as a symptom of its crisis and as a means of addressing it. Moreover, their conceptions of metaphysics constitute attempts to understand, in various ways, modernity. The question of waiting is fundamental to both of these philosophical projects. It is in this sense that they contribute to the possibility of a philosophy after messianism.

It will perhaps be objected that a political-philosophical appropriation of messianism, such as is to be found in Benjamin, is not concerned with the nature of waiting, and is actually opposed to waiting. Messianic thought tends to privilege the category of hope over that of waiting. Waiting normally signifies inactivity, not activity – though it is true that hope can signify inactivity, and that in some languages, hope is also waiting (as with the Spanish *esperar*). At the same time, waiting waits *for* activity, an act or event that is awaited in advance. When waiting, we wait for something in the absence of that something, a something that is nevertheless made present as that which is awaited. In waiting, we have and do not have what we are waiting for, at the same time. It is on account of this perpetuating contradiction that waiting is often described in terms of a privation – whether as boredom, forbearance or patience.[8]

The notion of patience brings us to the heart of the theological problem of messianism, which can scarcely be dealt with adequately here. For it is (all too) tempting to introduce a distinction between two structures of the messianic along 'Jewish and Christian' lines, especially if we contrast apocalyptic- (as opposed to restorative-) messianism with Protestant-Augustinian patience. Is not waiting closer to patience than to hope? The dominant Christian tradition of patience, *the* virtue, is

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New York: Continuum, 2002), and the collection of essays, *Adorno and Heidegger*, eds. Iain Macdonald & Krysztof Ziarek (Stanford University Press, 2008).

[7] Cited in: Walker, Nicholas. 'Adorno and Heidegger on the Question of Art: Countering Hegel?' in, *Adorno and Heidegger*, p.87.

[8] Following Simone Weil, Maurice Blanchot drew a connection, within his French language, between waiting and attention. Waiting is thus a comportment of activity. But waiting equally remains a privation from the act: 'Attention, waiting. Waiting, affliction [*L'attention, l'attente. L'attente, le malheur*]'. Blanchot, Maurice. *The Infinite Conversation*, trans. Susan Hanson (University of Minnesota Press, 1993), p.123.

founded in interpretations of Paul's epistles. In one crucial sense, however, Paul perpetuates the ban on representations of the coming Messiah:

> by hope we are saved: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why waiteth he yet? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

The verse from Paul's epistle to the Romans (viii: 24-25) is central to Augustine's *De Patientia* (c. 417).[9] According to most Christian orthodoxies, the Messiah has always already come, as Jesus, and yet is equally always already yet to come, as Christ. Giorgio Agamben's assertion that Paul is the first and greatest writer in the messianic tradition rests upon an exclusive translation of '*christos*' as 'Messiah' and not 'Jesus Christ' or 'Christ Jesus' – the collapsing of the having-come and the to-come into the presence of the ever-same.[10]

Paul teaches of patience in Jesus Christ. Patience arises from the structure of Christian 'messianism' itself. Christ is 'not seen', in the flesh. The Resurrection means victory over sinful, worldly finitude. Christ conquers death. The Pauline-Platonic valorisation of Spirit over flesh, faith over works, is already a determination of hope as patience. The finite knowledge of Spirit, faith, is sustained by hope. Faith is already hope and hope faith. Inner justification cannot be seen in the way that the outer-worldly is seen. Idealised hope becomes patience in the face of an otherwise unbearable forbearance. 'But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.' This is not to say that patience is absent from Jewish and other messianisms (it is not) but rather that patience becomes constitutive of the inner-spiritual form of the Christian Church and of its consciousness; of, by way of Protestantism, a particular modernity (and hence capitalism, in Max Weber's thesis). For Nietzsche, the debt of patience that cannot be repaid becomes determinative of passive nihilism.[11] But this 'spirituality' can, at the same time, become the possibility of an auto-revaluation of values, including the value of the otherworldly. Nietzsche *returns* to waiting (see chapter 2). In contrast to virtuous patience before the personal God, apocalyptic messianism – after, or amidst the

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[9] The authorship of *De Patientia* is in fact disputed.
[10] Agamben, G. *The Time That Remains*, p.16.
[11] 'The inoffensiveness of the weakling, the very cowardice with which he is richly endowed, his standing-by-the-door, his inevitable position of having to wait, are all given good names such as "patience", which is also called *the* virtue'. Nietzsche, Friedrich. *On the Genealogy of Morality*, trans. Carol Diethe (Cambridge University Press, 1994), p.30.

event of Judeo-Christian modernity – asserts that the Messiah has not come but that, for this very reason, is to-come, as an event of sociality and not personality.

Can this latter messianism be characterised in terms of waiting? If waiting is defined as otherworldly patience then waiting cannot bring about change in this world. Waiting is inactivity; the infinite deferral of the act. Waiting perpetuates the existing world since patience always pays the price of forbearance and suffering, the price of which can never be too high. Patience can wait forever. The category of waiting is in that case redundant to any utopian-materialist project of constructing 'heaven on earth'. In his commentary on Romans viii, the Protestant theologian Karl Barth argues against inactive waiting. Waiting is the locus of active existence: 'Existentially we see what to us is invisible, and therefore we wait'.[12] Barth speaks of a 'we' here, but the inner-spiritual nature of this waiting serves to evacuate any utopian-political content from it:

> Men are compelled to wait and only to wait; they are impelled to hope, and not to sight. By faith, however, their waiting is a waiting upon God alone; and this is to be at peace with Him.

Barth's God is no post-Hegelian absolute here. For, 'we speak of a future which can never be in time.'[13] Barth's gloss on 'all Israel shall be saved' (Romans xi: 26), under the heading of 'The Goal', is similarly anti-historical. So much for waiting. And yet, an attempt will be made here to show why the category of waiting is, even more than hope, central to a philosophically 'viable' messianism – precisely because of its categorical mediation of passive nihilism on the one side and utopian hope on the other. Both are the concern of the problem and possibility of modernity. The equivocation of waiting becomes a question: waiting in vain?

Why is this thesis not on Benjamin, who understood the messianic tradition so intimately? Benjamin remains ever-present in what follows. He lies behind much of Adorno's thought, often as a critic of it. Much of the post-Heideggerian studies *also* rely upon Benjamin (Agamben, Cacciari). In that case, the name of Walter Benjamin unites the recent literature. The 'Finale' of Adorno's *Minima Moralia* (1945-47) seems to come close to the last of Benjamin's 'Theses'. It is my contention, however, that there is a deeply ironic departure from Benjamin's messianism in Adorno's later work. This departure involves a confrontation with the metaphysical presuppositions of a philosophical messianism. It is ironic because Benjamin himself had confronted some

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[12] Barth, Karl. *The Epistle to the Romans*, 6th edition, trans. Edwyn C. Hoskyns (Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 314-5.
[13] Ibid. p.151; p.310.

of these problems in a more explicit way to Adorno, since Benjamin more explicitly attempted its philosophical appropriation. It is also ironic because Adorno's critique brings him closer to the territory of his adversary, Heidegger.

There are accordingly two competing critiques of messianism at work in this thesis, each of which relates to the question of waiting. The first works with the existing critiques of the neo-Kantian infinite task, which threatens to turn utopian messianism into a dystopian waiting in vain. This critique echoes the initial critiques of transcendental Idealism, in Hegel and Schelling (see chapter 1). The second critique takes metaphysics as a whole, *including* the post-Kantian metaphysics of the first response, as its 'object' of problematisation. There is an inherent tension between these two responses; between a metaphysical and post-metaphysical orientation.

In his discussion of Sabbatian messianism, Jameson shows an awareness of some of the problems encountered in its philosophical appropriation: 'we must be very subtle in the way in which, particularly those of us who are not believing Jews and are very far from such kinds of beliefs, we understand the coming of the Messiah.'[14] The meaning of the appropriation stands in need of elucidation as much as subtlety, so long as the appropriation aims to be philosophical. The younger Benjamin attempted to think through this appropriation by way of the Jewish neo-Kantian philosopher, Hermann Cohen.[15] For Cohen, the affinity of Jewish monotheism to the Kantian '*Aufklärung*' lay in the non-representable nature of the absolute for both (Cohen's 'infinitesimal method' and 'infinite task' being epistemological and ethical interpretations of Kant's system).[16] But for the later Adorno, and for Heidegger, Kantian metaphysics remains equally problematic. To respond with recourse to that which was appropriated becomes a viciously circular exercise, to the extent that the truth of the theological tradition is disclosed in the philosophical appropriation. Of course, the appropriation and expropriation of the theological was always the problem of modern philosophy *as* modern; the possibility of a *system of freedom*. The problem of the system of freedom overlaps with the concern of philosophical messianism since the latter posits the necessity of an open future; of that which cannot be included into its system by virtue of its system.

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[14] Jameson, F. 'Marx's Purloined Letter', p.62.

[15] Though Scholem took the rationalist Cohen to have misunderstood the inherent anarchism of Sabbatianism.

[16] This is in spite of Cohen's claim to have overcome all metaphysical absolutes. Cf. Lambrianou, N. 'Neo-Kantianism and messianism: origin and interruption in Hermann Cohen and Walter Benjamin', in ed. Osborne, P. *Walter Benjamin: Critical Evaluations*, vol.1 (London: Routledge, 2005), p.88.

For Adorno, modern philosophy cannot hold-on to metaphysical presuppositions 'after Auschwitz'. The problematisation of metaphysics is equally a problematisation of messianism, since promise *is* metaphysics (see chapter 5). This is the second critique of messianism. If metaphysical absolutes cannot be posited in their current form – as the ground or grounding of philosophy – then such a metaphysics cannot substitute for the hope embodied in the future actuality of the Messiah (the Messiah *as* future actuality). Benjamin writes that 'the Messiah *might* enter'.[17] But so long as messianism is, the Messiah is. The critical-philosophical problem is that of whether philosophical messianism can ever be in a position to question the 'if?' along with the 'when?'

Messianic waiting is not expectation. Expectation is characteristic of much of the traditional intellectual opponent to capitalism: historical materialism. A-waiting is, it seems, the comportment of a logical-historical unfolding, expressed in Hegelian-Marxist terms, however difficult the struggle for the awaited will no doubt be. Messianism is a different kind of a-waiting. In terms of historical materialism, the messianic problematises expectation, not in order to cease to expect but, quite conversely, to begin to expect.

However 'weak' Benjamin's 'messianic force', it remains a force. It *remains in force*. In contrast to this minimally powerful, hopeful waiting, Adorno writes in *Negative Dialectics* (1966) of 'waiting in vain [*vergebliches Warten*]'; of, that is, hopeless waiting:

> Pure metaphysical experience becomes unmistakably paler and more desultory in the course of the process of secularization, and this softens the substantiality of the older one. It conducts itself negatively in that "Is that all?", which comes closest to being realized as waiting in vain. Art has demonstrated this; in *Wozzeck* Alban Berg ranked those bars as highest, which express, as only music can, waiting in vain, and cited its harmony at the decisive caesuras and conclusion of *Lulu*.[18]

Of course, the problematisation of metaphysics was well under way by the time of Adorno's intervention. It was Heidegger's life's project. Adorno and Heidegger share a critique of Western metaphysics that seeks to avoid the three pitfalls of passive nihilism, unreflective positivism (including, for Adorno, dialectical materialism) and neo-vitalism. Judeo-Christian modernity comes to self-determine its project through a

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[17] My emphasis.

[18] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, trans. Dennis Redmond, accessed at, www.enf.org/~dredmond/ndtrans.html, on November 23, 2008. All subsequent page numbers refer to the German text of *Negative Dialektik* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Suhrkamp, 1966), pp.366-8.

representing-willing comportment of domination, as the metaphysical will (to power). As was suggested, waiting can equally be determined in terms of a represented object of expectation – even, or especially, if that object is nothing. The will to nothing, passive nihilism, becomes the problem not only of modernity but also of metaphysics. But how can the existing totality be overcome, in the name of another totality, without an act of the – political – will? Adorno and Heidegger each propose that what is required for historical change is not (only) the willing of a new history, but equally a new historical comportment, as a new kind of waiting.

The ground of this expression of waiting in vain remains obscure in Adorno – *especially* since it appears amidst the quandary of metaphysics and systematic philosophy (can there be a ground without system?). Adorno seems to rely once again upon the inextinguishable hope in the face of despair characteristic of traditional messianism. Heidegger can nevertheless help to philosophically substantiate Adorno's expression, because for Heidegger waiting is an ontological and not traditional-metaphysical issue (not just the being of waiting, but the waiting of Being). At the same time, Adorno's emphasis upon historical expression provides a critique of Heidegger's event of thinking (which, in some ways, marks a stoical return to Augustinian patience). Its expression is no less political than it is artistic in its determinacy. The philosopher of waiting fails to express it determinately – because he has rejected the Hegelian metaphysics of universal-historical self-determination (Heidegger will become dangerously aware of this). Heidegger's Freiburg Rectorship of 1933 is, in this sense, a political mis-expression, or failure of waiting-expression. Whereas, the lesser crime politically, the practitioner of waiting in vain, Adorno, fails to philosophise it adequately. This mutual inadequacy signals a third possibility.

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The means for staging the above philosophical drama is music. This may seem arbitrary, but there is a long tradition of philosophising with music, up to and including Adorno and Heidegger. This tradition has been motivated by three affinities between metaphysics and music, the order of which changes historically: mathematics (form), language and affect. The idea of music in modern philosophy comprises a mythic mimesis of ancient encounters with *mousike* (derived from the muses, *mousa*, and their divinities, the *mousai*). For the Presocratics, *mousike* was, by virtue of its unification of

the muses, synonymous with philosophy itself.[19] In Plato, it comes to mean education, *paideia*.[20] These two ideas of music, as unity and as education, each in relation to a question about language, re-appear in early German Romanticism, and in Benjamin's Goethean critique of it – 'the muse-ical [*das Musische*]'.[21]

The mimesis of *mousike* is also necessarily modern on account of the fragmentary nature of the ancient models. *Mousike* is contested *within* Plato and his dialogues, the word receiving no stable meaning. In Plato's *Republic*, *mousike* means education *and* music alone. The modern philosophical inventions exploit this equivocation, fuelled by the contemporaneous rise of absolute music (at the end of the eighteenth-century). Again, there are no complete models, since little that was performed was written down in the ancient world. Philosophical ideas of music meant the re-invention of another musical tradition, often in the absence of *music*: the harmony of the spheres. This is also Platonic and Neoplatonic. In the *Timaeus*, Plato describes an original harmonious attunement of cosmic soul and body. The harmonic-intervallic ratios uncovered by Pythagoras are the measure of attunement.[22] Neoplatonism develops this idea, via neo-Pythagorean Platonism, and bequeaths it to modern philosophy. It reappears in the Rationalist systems, in the pantheism controversies of German Idealism, and even in historical materialism.

Adorno's claim that 'music alone' can 'express' waiting in vain is taken entirely seriously in this thesis, not so as to valorise modern music, but rather in order to understand what might be meant by the 'musical' expression of waiting in vain – as a means of elaborating the nature of this expression. To this end, Adorno's writings on music, which constitute over half of his writings, will be examined. Adorno's philosophy of music is integral to his overall philosophy. Philosophy 'is truly the sibling of music'.[23] Adorno thus seems to follow in the above tradition of 'philosophy and music'. He is nevertheless anti-traditional because his idea of music is informed by an experience of modern music (rather than a *classical idea* of music). There are other historical exceptions where theory and practice are concerned. Notably, Johannes

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[19] Murray, P. & Wilson, P. Eds. *Music and the Muses* (Oxford University Press, 2004), p.372.
[20] Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Desmond Lee (London: Penguin, 1955), p.71.
[21] Benjamin, W. 'The Concept of Criticism in German Romanticism', in *Selected Writings*, vol.1 (Harvard University Press, 1997), pp.179-80.
[22] Plato, *Timaeus and Critus*, trans. H. D. Lee, (London: Penguin, 1965), p.48.
[23] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.114-116.

Kepler based his *Harmonice Mundi* (1619) on the polyphony of Orlando di Lassus.[24] Again, Adorno disrupts this tradition, with an idea and practice of *dissonance*.

Music is less obviously integral to the work of Heidegger. But a notion of music appears at two decisive moments of his thought. As in Adorno, both of these moments are connected to a thinking of the whole, to metaphysics, in relation to modernity *as* (historical) totalisation. The first moment corresponds to an attempt to ground philosophy in the 'fundamental attunement [*Grundstimmung*]'. In his 1929-30 lecture-course, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, Heidegger explicitly draws upon the musical connotations of *Stimmung* – which relates etymologically to notions of tuning and, more distantly, to the voice, *Stimme*:

> An attunement is a way, not merely a form or mode, but a way [*Weise*] – in the sense of a melody that does not merely hover over the so-called proper being of man, but that sets the tone for such being, i.e., attunes and determines the manner and way [*Art und Wie*] of his being.[25]

This sense of at-tunement, which is also to be found in Benjamin and Adorno, recalls the Neoplatonic tradition. But a reason why Adorno *and* Heidegger can draw upon this tradition without being avowedly Neoplatonic is that the relating-attunement becomes non-harmonious, moving from vibration into becoming; nature into history.

But why is this philosophical appropriation not precritical, echoing the above problem with messianism? And why is it not a historicist appropriation? The dissonant attunement gives a qualitative sense of the danger of modernity – as a problem and as an opportunity. In Heidegger, this appears in the contention that 'profound boredom' is the fundamental attunement of 'our contemporary Dasein'. More explicitly, where music is concerned (this is his *second* musical moment), Heidegger will situate music at the height of Western metaphysics, only to suggest that its nihilism is to be 'twisted free' of, out-of this height *musically*. This means reading Heidegger against Heidegger (see chapter 2). The resulting 'dialectic of nihilism' can be connected to Adorno's philosophy of music, which always exceeds music alone: 'The unity of the two spheres of music is that of an unresolved contradiction' (see chapter 3).[26]

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[24] The third part of Kepler's study is devoted entirely to the theory of harmony. Cf. translators' introduction to Kepler, Johannes. *The Harmony of the World*, trans. E. J. Aiton, A. M. Duncan & J. V. Field (American Philosophical Society, 1997), xvii.
[25] Heidegger, M. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Indiana University Press, 1995), p. 67.
[26] Ibid. pp.392-3.

The assessments of music in Adorno and Heidegger were prompted by a German musical culture that, for the most part, no longer exists. As was Thomas Mann's assessment of German music in *Doctor Faustus* (1946). For Mann, modern music allegorises the German will to destruction. It is remarkable that Mann's musical advisor, he who forbade poetry after Auschwitz, has so little to say about the deployment of music in the Third Reich, including its sadistic use in the camps. It was left to a poet and survivor – one who took exception to Adorno's literal ban by honouring it in spirit – to enunciate the catastrophic destiny of the land of J. S. Bach.[27] Of course, Paul Celan was interested in the possibility of an-other destiny. And is not *Todesfuge* a work of musico-poetic dissonance of its own? Was Mann then simply too Platonic about dissonance in his contemporaneous book?

The problem of historical memory after Auschwitz goes on – but not, today surely, the problem of a specifically German imperialism. Imperialism has migrated elsewhere. The old debates over music in German philosophy nevertheless remain strangely timely, given the spectacular success of music *since* the war. Music now crosses borders, those of language and culture, more readily than other cultural commodities, almost as if mimicking the movement of exchange itself. Music even seems to impinge upon the meaning of utopia and dystopia by way of the question of totality (see chapter 4). In his 'philosophical biography', *Nietzsche* (2000), Rüdiger Safranski writes that, today,

> Music is all-pervasive as white noise, atmosphere, and milieu, and has become the acoustic backdrop of our entire existence. Anyone who listens to a Walkman while sitting in a subway or jogging through the park is straddling two worlds. Travelling and jogging are Apollonian activities; listening to music is Dionysian. Music has socialised the act of transcendence and turned it into a sport for the masses. Discotheques and concert halls are today's cathedrals. A substantial portion of the population between the ages of thirteen and thirty now lives in the extralinguistic and prelinguistic Dionysian spheres of rock and pop. The inundation of music knows no bounds.[28]

Safranski conflates Adorno's 'two spheres' of music into one here. This is symptomatic of the difficulty in maintaining a notion of art music (given the problem of 'classical music') today. Rather than pointing the way forward for a musical avant-garde, this

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[27] Cf. Felstiner, John. *Paul Celan: Poet, Survivor, Jew* (Yale University Press, 1995), pp.28-30.

[28] Safranski, Rüdiger. *Nietzsche. A Philosophical Biography*, trans. Shelley Frisch (London: Granta, 2002), pp.101-2.

thesis suggests that an expression of waiting in vain is in some crucial sense musical. The expression takes the form of the constellational gesture or artwork. The question of art is at the forefront of the philosophies of Adorno and Heidegger. In comparison to Adorno's statement on the relationship between philosophy and music, Heidegger says that 'art' is 'the sister of philosophy.'[29] Of course, Heidegger means poetry, as *not* music.

It might then seem strange that the example of an expression of waiting in vain that we shall encounter will be a work of modern music: Luigi Nono's *Prometeo* (1984). The fact that this work works against the medium of music offers only a partial response to this problem. There is a tradition of philosophers employing examples of music, often in philosophies of time (see chapter 3). As ever, the vulgarity of the employment of *this* example becomes a virtue when it serves the function of clarification: in this instance, that of the spatio-temporal character of an expression of waiting in vain. Waiting is clearly an experience of time (examined in chapter 3), but it is also, as utopian waiting, an experience of (no-) place (the theme of chapter 4). *Prometeo* is a work 'about' time and 'about' space, in an interrelated manner.

The use of this example is complicated and enriched by the fact that its text was compiled by a philosopher well versed in Benjamin, Heidegger and messianism. *Prometeo* is a self-consciously messianic work, with all of the dangers that implies. Some of Cacciari's writings will be discussed. But it is Nono, the artist, who provides this study with an authority on modern music that is external to Adorno (and, obviously, to Heidegger). Nono's later work takes music in a direction that Adorno did not foresee. *Prometeo* is thereby a critique of Adorno's musical waiting in vain as much as it is an expression of it. This, it is hoped, is in keeping with the claim that ideas of music are nothing without musical works, and, more crucially, that there is no waiting without expression-construction.

Other, non-musical examples of waiting could no doubt have been examined; examples of time-based media, such as film. More obviously: Samuel Beckett, about whom there is a philosophical literature coming from both the historical materialist and the existentialist traditions. If Beckett were to be included, the example would be, as it is in Adorno, *Endgame* and not *Waiting for Godot*. The latter is no parable of the messianic, understood as a task. It remains firmly within the idiom of post-war existentialism (and is quite compatible with Barth's patient waiting). The jargon of this

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[29] Heidegger, M. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, p.5.

existentialism becomes, according to Adorno, the object of *Endgame*'s ridicule.[30] Even Heidegger, upon seeing a performance of *Godot*, is reported to have said: 'That man must have read Heidegger'.[31]

Each of the five chapters comprise a response to the question of 'waiting in vain?' by way of specific readings of Adorno, Heidegger and (in two of the chapters at least) Nono. It will be necessary to take into consideration a broader philosophical literature. Each chapter is supposed to contain both itself and the whole. There is also a sequential order. The music-philosophical debate moves from early Romanticism in the first chapter, to Nietzsche and Wagner in the second, to Schoenberg and the post-war musical avant-garde in chapter 3, and to Nono in chapters 3 and 4. The final chapter addresses the question of the title more explicitly than the preceding ones, on the basis of their findings: what is it that is musical about an expression of waiting in vain?

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[30] Much of Adorno's 1958 essay on *Endgame* is taken up with the attempt to distinguish Beckett from traditional (and literary) existentialism. In Beckett, 'Absurdity is relieved of the doctrinal universality which in existentialism, the creed of the irreducibility of individual existence, linked it to the Western pathos of the universal and lasting'. Adorno's assessment is applicable to *Waiting for Godot*, in which the meaninglessness of indeterminate waiting becomes its determinate meaning. Adorno, T. W. 'Trying to Understand Endgame' in *Notes to Literature*, trans. Shierry Weber Nicholsen (Columbia University Press, 1991), vol.1, p.241.

[31] Cited in: Magee, Bryan. *Talking Philosophy* (Oxford University Press, 2001), p.74.

1

Melancholy Science as Dissonant System

It has been stated on more than one occasion that the philosophy of Adorno is one of resignation. Adorno seems to have accepted this 'reproach', in advance, having characterised his thought as 'melancholy science', the only possibility of philosophy amidst conditions of 'damaged life'.[1] A totalising theory of reification (the 'totally administered society') leads to a reification of the theory itself. In determining late capitalist society as a total object, such a theory denies its own objective and political efficacy. Objections to resignation in Adorno have in fact come from traditions of both Marxism and Nietzschean vitalism. Adorno puts forward a competing interpretation, or critique, of each of them. The melancholy science is, say the former, critique without practice; say the latter, the mere opposite of the joyful science.[2] Some of the objections have, no doubt, been anti-philosophical (where philosophy is conflated with idealism). But the objection to a decisively theoretical abstraction from practice can be, and has been put *philosophically* as an objection to the legacy of neo-Kantianism in twentieth-century philosophy. Few of the detractors pursue this objection, and many are subject to it themselves.

In *Negative Dialectics*, Adorno writes that '*praxis*' is 'delayed for the foreseeable future'.[3] Practice is not thereby ruled out. But that it is not explicitly ruled in, that the possibility of such *praxis* is delayed indefinitely, raises the problem of the infinite task – a maxim of neo-Kantianism. Is Adorno's indefinitely deferred *praxis* the *regressive* infinity in disguise, as it is (I will suggest below) in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*? Is the infinite task a possible task? Or is it a form of waiting in vain? If the melancholy science is an infinite task, then it invites those problems associated with the

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[1] Adorno, T. W. *Minima Moralia*, trans. E. F. N. Jephcott (London: Verso, 1978), p.15. The 'reproach of resignation' appears in Adorno's radio-lecture, 'Resignation', in *The Culture Industry* (London: Routledge, 2001), p.198.

[2] Combining these two traditions to some extent, Antonio Negri considers Adorno a representative of the 'deconstructive phase of critical thought', that, with the 'exit from modernity, has lost its effectiveness'. The 'new task' is not deconstruction, but 'constructing, in the non-place, a new place'. Negri, Antonio & Hardt, Michael. *Empire* (Harvard University Press, 2000), p.217.

[3] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.15-16.

Kantian antinomy of reason, later replicated in neo-Kantianism under different circumstances to those of Kant.

In *Hegel Contra Sociology* (1981), Gillian Rose categorised Adorno under 'neo-Kantian Marxism'. But three years earlier, she had published a sympathetic introduction to his thought: *The Melancholy Science*. In this earlier study, Rose reassures both her reader and herself that the 'melancholy science is not resigned, quiescent or pessimistic.'[4] By the time of her Hegel study, however, Rose concurs with a more traditional understanding of melancholy, as a sickness, without examining the nature of this sickness. Freud distinguished 'melancholia', the masochistic displacement of a lost but unknown object for the ego, from 'mourning [*Trauer*]', which works through the loss of a known object, the beloved. When 'completed the ego becomes free and uninhibited again.'[5] Freud's distinction serves to indicate that melancholy is not one-dimensional here.[6]

Rose's attack was directed against a perceived sociological turn in philosophy (to *theory*) in the early twentieth-century, but also against a consolidating post-modern turn (as a consequence) towards its end. The disavowal of truth is the philosophical counterpart to the disavowal of the lost non-object, masochistically enjoyed and thus constantly reaffirmed. Rose was right to raise the problem of neo-Kantianism in Adorno and in contemporary philosophy generally, but surely wrong to respond with a restoration of Hegel and 'the law'.[7] Moreover, Rose's turn against Adorno can be understood as a consequence of her previous definition of the melancholy science. This definition remained incoherent on account of her restricted account of melancholy.[8] As

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[4] Rose, Gillian. *The Melancholy Science* (London: Macmillan, 1978), ix.

[5] Freud, Sigmund. 'Mourning and Melancholia', trans. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1964), p.245.

[6] But Freud only takes us so far philosophically with this problem, to the extent that analysis, *as* a form of mourning, is the working-through of a known object (a human subject comprised of ontologically definitive characteristics) and not a hitherto unknown subject-object. Is it possible to mourn in the name of *utopia*, without melancholia?

[7] Cf. Osborne, Peter. 'Hegelian Phenomenology and the Critique of Reason and Society', in *Radical Philosophy* 32 (1982), p.14.

[8] Rose initially reads *Ursprung des Deutschen Trauerspiels* as a work of history and not philosophy. 'The melancholy portrayal of objects and persons in baroque drama conveys the prevalent attitude to the natural world at the time.' Elsewhere, she acknowledges Benjamin's motivation against neo-Kantianism, but understands this as an intra-Kantian gesture. Benjamin 'attempted to revise Kant's notions of experience and knowledge.' Benjamin's speculative transformation, not revision, of experience is a confrontation with the regressive infinity, not a repetition of it. Rose, G. *Hegel Contra Sociology* (London: Athlone Press, 1981), p.22, p.32; *The Melancholy Science*, p.37.

Rose would have known, the melancholy science translates, '*Die traurige Wissenschaft*' – hence, *Trauer*, not *Melancholia*.[9]

According to Rose, neo-Kantianism reduced Kant's systematic project to a dichotomy between validity and value; the Marburg and Freiburg Schools tending to follow these two concerns respectively. Or, neo-Kantianism merely formalised Kant's failure to mediate his theoretical and practical projects systematically (and without opting for the responses of either German Idealism or materialism). For these reasons, Rose could have said that the dualism is already anticipated in the first *Critique*, which attempts to deduce a ground of reason transcendentally that can only be confirmed empirically, in 'what it does'. Practical reason 'constitutes the *keystone* of the whole structure of pure reason'. No transcendental Idealism, and thus no Subject, without actual freedom.[10] Freedom is not, however, critically deduced in Kant's second *Critique*, which accordingly leans upon the 'deduction' that is not given in the first (see chapter 5). Reason is the uniquely human task arising from its antinomical nature. The critique of pure reason shows the task of reason to be critique; the pursuit of knowledge through science. Upholding the principle of sufficient reason, Kant conceives of science as the pursuit of 'conditions [*Bedingungen*]'. The central problematic of the Kantian system can be said to concern the contradiction of conditioned, *Bedingt*, and unconditioned, *Unbedingt*; of nature and freedom.

If 'the conditioned is given', Kant states in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, 'then the whole sum of conditions, and hence the absolutely unconditioned, is also given, through which alone the conditioned was possible.'[11] Kant uses 'given' in two opposing senses. The conditioned is given in experience, as appearance. Whereas the sum of conditions, which is (the) unconditioned, is given as an 'idea'; not in experience (by which Kant means sense; the idea is supersensuous). As with the thing-in-itself, the unconditioned is necessary transcendentally, as the ground of appearance ('through which alone the conditioned was possible'), but equally, this metaphysical realm is not available to experience itself. Since the unconditioned can only be known in this way, each of the four antinomies refer to the question of whether the unconditioned totality, the whole, is finite or infinite; that is, whether it *is* unconditioned or *not*.

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[9] Rose later distinguished between mourning and melancholy, in her unfinished, posthumously published *Mourning Becomes the Law* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.11.

[10] Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Practical Reason*, trans. Mary Gregor (Cambridge University Press, 1997), p.3.

[11] Kant, I. *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Paul Guyer & Paul W. Wood (Cambridge University Press, 1998), A409/B436, p.461.

The problem is that the antinomies are answers, not questions. According to Adorno, the third antinomy 'develops thesis like antithesis non-contradictorily in itself. To that extent it by no means comfortably disposes of the antithesis, but wishes to demonstrate its inevitability.'[12] But is not this inevitability comforting (a happy non-ending)? Elsewhere in *Negative Dialectics*, Adorno defends infinity without considering its problems.[13] He tends to understand Kantian critique as the direct anticipation of Hegel's 'determinate negation', as if the antinomy were what Kant himself called it: 'dialectic'.[14] Adorno thereby overlooks Hegel's overall '*Aufhebung*' of Kant's 'abstract reason', in the name of 'actual reason' – the cue for Rose's Hegelian attack upon neo-Kantianism.

Of course, the antinomy of reason is 'given to us as a problem'.[15] The unconditioned grounds and ends reason. But since the antinomy of reason is by its own account constitutively insoluble, Kant must, in the end, side with (a particular) infinity, towards which there can be no progress, and hence no *task* of reason. Crucially, Kant's mechanistic paradigm of conditions looks like what Hegel will come to term the 'bad infinity'.[16] Kant's distinction between a mathematical and a philosophical infinity does not pre-empt Hegel's attack (and this bears upon Adorno's delayed *praxis*). Negative, indefinite infinity (an 'indeterminately continued regress') is contrasted with the positive, mathematical infinity. The former names the non-finitude that accompanies the finite conditioned, negatively. But this throws Kant back onto the antinomy, and *its* infinite insolubility.[17] According to Heidegger, the second edition of the first *Critique* 'helped to prepare the turn away from an uncomprehended finitude toward a comforting infinitude'.[18] Kant's own dissatisfaction with the antinomy of reason can be sensed from his third *Critique* (*of Judgement*, 1790), which allows for that which was ruled-out of the previous *Critiques*: an *experience* of reason. But this exceptional experience of the

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[12] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.238-239.
[13] Ibid. pp.24-27.
[14] Kant, I. *Critique of Pure Reason*. A498/B526, p.513.
[15] Ibid. A647/B675, p.592.
[16] Or, the 'spurious infinity', since the infinite '*straight* line' is *an* infinity (the mathematical infinity) but not *the*, absolute infinity. Hegel, G. W. F. *Science of Logic*, trans. A. V. Miller (London: Humanity Books, 1969), p.149.
[17] Kant, I. *Critique of Pure Reason*, A510-11/B538-9, A512/B540, pp.521-2; A518/B546, p.525.
[18] Heidegger, M. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Indiana University Press, 1995), p.209. Heidegger's 1929 reading of Kant was of course opposed to neo-Kantianism, as his debate with Ernst Cassirer makes clear. Cf. *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 5th edition. trans. Robert Taft (Indiana University Press, 1997), Appendix IV, pp.193-207.

sublime is accordingly natural, not historical. In the face of an infinitely sublime 'object', 'our own position is secure'.[19]

Adorno is a critic of bourgeois, 'instrumental reason'. He is a philosophical-materialist critic of philosophical idealism (this is why he is worth saving today, in light of the manic reactions to left-wing melancholy).[20] Nevertheless, Adorno's critiques of reason raise as many questions as they answer. What is the ground of the critique of reason (which Adorno tends to use interchangeably with 'rationality')? Which reason, if any, makes such critique possible? Hence, when is critique, to use the Hegelian term, *actually* critical? The awkwardness of these questions is exacerbated by the fact that Adorno's alternative, unstated (unnameable?) reason looks Kantian in form, albeit with historical content added-on. In *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, progressive critique is construed as the reflexive self-consciousness of regress, myth. This reflection is a second-order myth, as, for instance, mimesis (art as the myth of myth). For Fichte, who attempted to complete Kant's system, self-consciousness is similarly, at bottom, reflexive. Reflection is the answer to the perpetuating contradiction of 'I' and 'not I'. As an infinite task, the contradiction gives rise to the infinite longing for knowledge (the science of knowledge). It is infinite because the 'not I' remains constitutively unknowable, Kant's thing-in-itself. 'Man must approximate, *ad infinitum*, to a freedom he can never, in principle, attain.'[21] Fichte faces the same objections made of Kantian reason. The structure of 'reason' in *Dialectic of Enlightenment seems* neo-Fichtean – surprising, perhaps, given that the domination of the 'not I' as nature would be a model of *regress* in the study.

It is nevertheless suggested in what follows that many of the resources to address these problems can already be found within an intellectual milieu of Adorno (a milieu that nevertheless needs to be produced). As was suggested, the philosophical history of melancholy forms a part of this milieu. As does Adorno's philosophy of music. Rose's methodological neglect of Adorno's writings on music, which 'constitute

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[19] Kant, I. *The Critique of Judgement*, trans. James Creed Meredith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), p.110.

[20] In his review of Erich Kästner, '*Linke Melancholie*' (1931), Benjamin attacks the Weimar intelligentsia, a 'phenomenon of bourgeois dissolution'. Benjamin does not write '*Trauer*' here, but his critique anticipates some of the mis-interpreters of himself and Adorno. 'Left-Wing Melancholy', trans. Ben Brewster, in *Selected Writings* (Harvard University Press, 1997), vol. 2, p.424.

[21] Fichte, J. G. *Science of Knowledge*, trans. Peter Heath & John Lachs (Cambridge University Press, 1982), p.115.

over a half of his published work', might also account for her limited interpretation.[22] It will be suggested that Adorno critically disrupts a tradition of the harmony of the spheres, and produces a philosophy of dissonance *as* melancholy science. This constellational dissonance comes to the fore where we find Adorno at his most systematic; in his 'anti-system'.[23] On the other hand, in reversing this musical (muse-ical) philosophy, Adorno perpetuates the mythical tradition of *mousike*. Adorno draws upon all three of the associations of 'music and philosophy' listed above – language, form and affect – only to subvert them.

System, *Logos*, Music

Adorno's writings on music almost always reflect upon something other than music. Language is a case in point. And it is through the problem of language that Adorno addresses one aspect of the problem of philosophy. This can be understood as an intervention into debates arising from (mostly German) philosophical and music-aesthetic traditions. Adorno reads these debates through the early writings of Benjamin, especially after the war (in the context of his co-editing of Benjamin's collected writings). Like Benjamin, Adorno contends that the problem of philosophy lies, immediately, in its mode of presentation. For, 'presentation [*Darstellung*] is not a matter of indifference or external to philosophy, but immanent to its idea.'[24] The question of presentation is immanent to the question of the possibility of systematic philosophy, to the extent that the philosophical system is the mode of (re-)presentation of the whole. The problem of the system and of the whole is already the problem of (the regressive) infinity, introduced above – either because the whole is said to be infinite (unconditioned) or because the system incorporates that infinity within it.

The problem of presentation leads to questions about the presentational meaning of language as such, since language is (at one level) the medium of philosophy. The system that re-presented the whole would have rendered language transparent to itself. Such a system would be a language beyond language, resulting in a dualism that signalled the impossibility of the system. But this impossibility only follows from a representational paradigm of language. Benjamin introduces this problem in his *Epistemo-Critical Prologue* to *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* (1928). Under the

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[22] Rose, G. *The Melancholy Science*, x.
[23] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, Prologue.
[24] Ibid. pp.29-31. Translation amended.

influence of Cohen, Benjamin invokes the problem of logic, in all but name, only to transgress the boundaries of Cohen's rationalist account of experience. The attempt to re-present the *logos*, '*more geometrico*', is a 'renunciation of that area of truth towards which language is directed', because *logos*, as language, is constitutive of the presentation of philosophy.[25] The Latin phrase refers to the Rationalist systems that employed (and continue to employ) a mathematical conception of representation – as if philosophy were the measure of a preconstituted whole.[26]

> Inasmuch as it is determined by this concept of system, philosophy is in danger of accommodating itself to a syncretism which weaves its spider's web between separate kinds of knowledge in an attempt to ensnare the truth as if it were something that came flying in from outside.[27]

Benjamin does not move from this statement to a disavowal of the system. Rather, he responds with a mode of presentation that is systematic yet fragmentary. Benjamin attempts to circumvent the formal logic of representation – of system and whole – with a mode of presentation called 'constellation'. In his later work, Adorno reformulates Benjamin's constellation amidst a renewed questioning of the possibility of philosophy as metaphysics. Indeed, *Negative Dialectics* begins and ends with the question of this possibility. Its introduction reflects 'On the Possibility of Philosophy' by way of a consideration of presentational form. The concluding 'Meditations on Auschwitz' address the contemporary possibility of metaphysics *as such*.

Adorno attributes the 'antinomical character of systems' to the 'antinomy of totality and infinity'. This Kantian definition proves, as was said, to be problematic. But Adorno is attracted to the negativity of the antimony as a critique of positive syncretism. Echoing Benjamin, the 'systematic need' of Rationalism is attributed to the bourgeois '*ratio*' itself. Hence, 'the systems of the seventeenth century had an especially compensatory purpose.'[28] Rationalism imports a positive-scientific criterion of truth

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[25] Benjamin, W. 'Epistemo-Critical Prologue', in *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne (London: Verso, 1998), p.27. Translation amended.

[26] Benjamin thus attempts to draw a distincion between the Rationalism of Descartes and Spinoza on the one hand, each of whom indroduce their systems with the epigram on geometric method, and Leibniz on the other, whom Benjamin will rely upon for his idea of the monad. This contradictory approach to Rationalism explains the contradictory 'harmony of the spheres' of the 'Prologue' itself. As will be suggested, the relationship between Spinoza and Leibniz, in a text like Benjamin's, is complicated by the reception of Spinoza in modern German philosophy and literature (as 'Spinozism').

[27] Benjamin, W. 'Epistemo-Critical Prologue', p.28.

[28] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.31-33.

into philosophy, irrationally. Adorno questions the appropriateness of mathematical reasoning for philosophical presentation. Mathematical reasoning is 'successful' in that it equates to that which is represented. But philosophical presentation does not equate to the whole, as an absolute identity. Neither are the two sides incommensurable. An understanding of language as non-representational is appropriate to the problem of philosophical presentation insofar as it recognises in (its) language a corresponding non-correspondence to (of) the whole. The 'model' of the constellation is 'the conduct of language', because the constellation,

> offers no mere sign-system for cognitive functions. Where it appears essentially as language, becoming portrayal [*Darstellung*], it does not define its concepts. It obtains their objectivity through the relationship in which it posits the concepts, centred around a thing.[29]

Benjamin and Adorno each dismiss the propositional *answer* to the question of the system, but not the *question* of the system itself. They put forward a new response to the old problem. Since they accept the terms of the problem, they must give an account of the presentational mode of philosophy and of the categorical legitimacy of metaphysics. Adorno is perhaps never more metaphysical than when he writes about music.

In an essay entitled 'Music, Language and Composition' (1956), Adorno writes the following:

> Music is similar to language in that it is a temporal succession of articulated sounds that are more than just sound. The succession of sounds is related to logic; there is a right and a wrong. But what is said cannot be abstracted from the music; it does not form a system of signs.[30]

The ground of the comparison between music and language is 'temporal succession' and 'articulated sound'. This is more evident in Adorno's German. '*Sprache*' does not readily accommodate itself to the French *langue-parole* distinction. *Sprache* is also speech. Adorno exploits characteristics of both *langue* and *parole* in his *Sprache*. Hence, in *Aesthetic Theory*, Adorno considers the 'articulation' or 'linguistic quality', *Sprachcharakter*, of the artwork. 'Art's linguistic quality gives rise to reflection over what speaks in art'. Adorno rejects the twofold possibility that the artist or the beholder speaks, subjectively. And yet, the work does speak, as if it were a subject. Lyric poetry

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[29] Ibid. pp.164-66.
[30] Adorno, T. W. 'Music, Language and Composition', in *Essays on Music*, ed. Richard Leppert (University of California Press, 2002), p.113.

and music are obvious cases of *Sprachcharakter*. Although it 'remains undecided whether the latent "I", the speaking "I", is the same in different genres of art', Adorno hints at a preference: 'Here again music gives the most extreme expression to certain characteristics of the artistic, though this by no means bestows any primacy on music.'[31]

Insofar as *Sprachcharakter* refers to speech, Adorno upholds a traditional affinity between music and the voice – that of the human or even animal. It is a philosophical-anthropological observation that has a certain empirical validity. Instrumental music evolved out of choral and vocal traditions. But does not this association of language, music and the voice all amount to a sustained phonocentricism? Derrida had found in Jean-Jacques Rousseau *both* a privileging of the voice – the self-present 'spirit' as the exclusion of the 'dangerous supplement' to speech, writing – *and* a latent understanding of writing *as* 'différance'.[32] Rousseau belongs and does not belong to the history of the metaphysics of presence. Central to Derrida's deconstruction is Rousseau's *Essay On the Origin of Languages, in which Something is said about Melody and Musical Imitation* (1781). But *modern* music, says Adorno (and Rousseau?) *is* a kind of writing. 'The traditional doctrine of musical forms has its sentence [*Satz*], phrase, period and punctuation.'[33] Music has a grammatical 'right and a wrong'. There is something, perhaps everything, of *écriture* in *Sprachcharakter*.

But given that music has no privilege over what is 'right and wrong', even where art alone is concerned, the question of the specificity of Adorno's question – of the relationship between music and language – comes to the fore. Why is music as *logos* privileged? Music is the other of 'communicative language [*meinende Sprache*]', and '*meinende Sprache*' is the problem of the possibility of experience, *Erfahrung*. Benjamin and Adorno each conceive of *Erfahrung* metaphysically, as a relation to the whole. Philosophy begins and ends with experience, not formal logic. In his essay 'On the Final Scene of *Faust*' (1959), Adorno makes a distinction between 'communicative language [*der kommunikativen*]' and 'expressive discourse'.[34] Communicative language communicates everything and, for that reason, nothing. The subject is not called upon, inter-subjectively, to produce meaning. Sociality would not be possible without

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[31] Adorno, T. W. *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (London: Athlone Press, 1997),
pp.166-167. Hullot-Kentor translates '*Sprachcharakter*' both as 'articulation' and as 'linguistic quality'.
[32] Derrida, J. *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (John Hopkins University Press, 1976), part II, 1-3.
[33] Adorno, T. W. 'Music, Language and Composition', p.113.
[34] Adorno, T. W. 'On the Final Scene of *Faust*', in *Notes To Literature*, vol.1, p.112.

communicative language. But the hegemony of the solely communicative becomes a symptom of alienation; the alienation of sociality. For Hegel, language is 'the existence of spirit'; for Marx, 'practical consciousness that also exists for other men'.[35] To say that the human being is the social being and the linguistic being is to say the same thing in a different way. It is likely that Adorno makes these connections in the light of Benjamin's essay, 'The Storyteller' (1929).

The underlying thesis of 'The Storyteller' is that the transformation of communication presents both a danger and a possibility for the transformation of social experience. 'The new form of communication is information.'[36] Information, communicative language, is a story without its being told, listened to and transmitted. This calls for a transformation of social experience – or rather, for a kind of communication that would bring about such transformation. Benjamin has by the 1920s moved away from the 'idealist' problem of philosophical presentation. Though still a question of language, in the most expanded sense of *logos*, the question of the whole must exceed institutional philosophy, in a more systematic manner, because it would in that case present the whole in practice and not only theory.

Erfahrung, which Benjamin relates to happiness, connotes a notion of the whole of life, within a whole tradition or community (but not yet *society*). Hence, the figures of the 'first child' and the 'mature man'. This is a prominent trope in the Classicism of Goethe, with whose writings Benjamin was particularly familiar. 'The happiest man is one who can link the end of his life with its beginning.'[37] The link, a narrative, is not merely the representation of the individual contents of (a) life. It is qualitative, as lived through. *Erfahren* comes from *fahren*, to journey. *Erfahren* is to journey through; also, to learn.[38] Goethe's naturalistic and Neoplatonic pantheism is prominent in Benjamin's

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[35] Hegel, G. W. F., *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford University Press, 1979), p.395; Marx, Karl. & Engels, Friedrich. *The German Ideology*, ed. C. J. Arthur (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1974), p.51.

[36] Benjamin, W. 'The Storyteller', in *Illuminations*, p.88.

[37] Goethe, J. W. *Maxims and Reflections*, trans. Elizabeth Stopp (London: Penguin, 1998), p.16.

[38] In his study on Goethe's pantheism, Wilhelm Dilthey observes that it is through a conception of the whole of life that Goethe comes closest to expressing a philosophically systematic position. Like Kant, Goethe takes the possibility of the system to be the concern of the antinomy of finitude and infinity. That the infinite, in the whole of nature, must remain 'impenetrable' to human knowledge, leads Goethe to doubt the possibility of a 'universally valid metaphysical system'. At the same time, it is due to the 'energy' produced in this very contradiction – of the finitely 'comprehensible' and the infinitely 'impenetrable' – that we 'experience [*erfahren*]' life, as a 'journey [*Zug*]'. Typical of the cult of Goethe in the German intellectual life of

metaphysics. Goethe is a post-Kantian critic of idealist philosophy. The 'Epistemo-Critical Prologue' begins with a citation from Goethe's monadological theory of colour.[39] And through his Leibnizian appropriation of Goethe, Benjamin configures a harmonious conception of the whole, the very conception that Adorno attributes to bourgeois Rationalism *on the basis of* Benjamin's own critique of it in the same 'Prologue':

> Just as the harmony of the spheres depends on the orbits of stars which do not come into contact with each other, so the existence of the *mundis intelligibilis* depends on the unbridgeable distance between pure essences.[40]

Benjamin may well have been familiar with Leibniz's belief that music is 'an expression of the universal harmony which God brought into the world'.[41] In appropriating Benjamin's constellation, Adorno unwittingly draws upon its harmony of the spheres. The correlation of semblance and harmony is itself Neoplatonic. But this is not uniquely precritical. The Copernican turn (the dedication is not accidental) did not break-up the harmony of the spheres. Kant transferred it to (the *task* of) the 'harmony of the cognitive faculties'.[42]

Adorno similarly takes over Benjamin's Goethean-Kantian conception of experience as a unified whole. The 'unity that artworks... achieve makes them analogous to the logic of experience [*Erfahrung*].'[43] The unity of the artwork is 'analogous' to the unity of experience because the artwork is the 'semblance [*Schein*]' of unity. The artwork is unity 'as' disunity, harmony 'as' dissonance. Semblance is

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the beginning of the twentieth century, Dilthey conflates Goethe's concept of the whole of life with the whole of the life of Goethe the man: 'In adulthood, he stretched the sphere of the comprehensible, which he continued to reach out to. In maturity, the feeling of an impenetrability of the actual won more power over his soul once again. This is the natural course of middle age [*Lebensalters*].' Dilthey, W. *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol.2 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1923), p.394.

[39] Benjamin, W. 'Epistemo-Critical Prologue', p.27.

[40] Ibid. p.37.

[41] Haase, Rudolf. *Leibniz und die Musik* (Eckhardt, 1963), p.25. Leibniz's dictum, that music 'is the hidden arithmetical exercise of an unconscious mind that it is calculating' appears in the same year as the *Monadology* (1714), the principle source of Benjamin's appropriation. Much has been made of Leibniz's contemporaneity with J. S. Bach, but, as ever, it is seemingly an *idea* of music that the philosopher is thinking of. But there is, no doubt, a deeper, shared *mathesis* in the 'work' of these figures. Leibniz, G. W. 'Principles of Nature and Grace', in *Philosophical Essays*, trans. & eds. Roger Ariew & Daniel Garber (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1989), p.212.

[42] Kant, I. *The Critique of Judgement*, trans. James Creed Meredith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), p.59.

[43] Adorno, T. W. *Aesthetic Theory*, p.136.

neither the full experience of truth, nor is it mere deception. This equivocation corresponds to the social equivocation of art. In the essay on *Faust*, Adorno states that the 'two antagonistic media', communicative and expressive language, are 'nevertheless still one, never completely separate from one another'. This internal inseparability, semblance, is the (political) problem and possibility of art. The artwork posits its otherness to communicative language as semblance. The artwork communicates in spite of, and because of, its otherness. The artwork is in this precise sense incomprehensible. And it is incomprehensibility that provides the final clue to the meaning of Adorno's characterisation of music as *Sprache*. Modern music *is* and *is not* language:

> Music aims at an intention-less language, but it does not separate itself once and for all from signifying language, as if there were two different realms. A dialectic reigns here; everywhere music is shot through with intentions.[44]

A dialectic reigns here. Music's 'similarity to language is fulfilled as it distances itself from language.'[45] The meaning of music, as art, is not intentional; *meinende Sprache*. But neither is it meaningless. Its meaning is, though the term ought to be qualified, ambiguous. Is not this movement from the intentional to the ambiguous an abstraction? And if so, why is the abstraction of music privileged over other abstractions? Adorno does single-out the abstraction of music (see chapter 3). But at issue here is the role of music in Adorno's dialectic of language, as it pertains to the problem of the system. In order to elucidate this, Adorno's 'dialectic' of music and language will be examined a little further.

Modern music abstracts from intentional meaning to such an extent, a limit, that the opposite happens: 'intentions flood into it'. This is another way of saying, though Adorno does not always keep to his insight, that modern music is *not* absolute because it *is* musically absolute. Even absolute music occupies an already interpreted world of significations. But the intentionless is not merely the occasion for further intentions, a receptacle of signs. That would not be dialectical but reciprocal. The intentionless has a singular character. The musical idea intimates at the intentionless:

> What music says is a proposition at once distinct and concealed. Its idea is the form [*Gestalt*] of the name of God. It is demythologised prayer, freed

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[44] Adorno, T. W. 'Music, Language and Composition', p.114.
[45] Ibid. p.117.

> from the magic of making anything happen, the human attempt, futile, as always, to name the name itself, not to communicate meanings.[46]

It is now possible to begin to understand Adorno's attempt to think the problem of philosophy with an idea of music – and with music's 'idea'. The constellation 'offers no mere sign-system for cognitive functions'. Music is Adorno's paradigm for a non-representational mode of presentation. Music 'does not form a system of signs'. The signifier, philosophy, does not signify the signified, the whole. But this is only the negative side of Adorno's dialectic. By itself, it would amount to a form of anti-systematic philosophical scepticism. There is equally a positive, though 'futile', intimation of the absolute; the 'name of God'. Music is the idea of naming in that the name is non-representational language. In the name, signifier and signified are expressed as one. The expression is itself naming. Returning to the two ends of *Negative Dialectics*: intimation is a metaphysical ground for philosophical presentation. But without this possibility of presentation there would be no expression of the intimation: it would remain mute. This understanding of the name and of naming would, once again, have come to Adorno from Benjamin; in particular, from the essays 'On Language as Such and on the Language of Man' (1916) and 'The Task of the Translator' (1921).

The Post- German Idealism of Benjamin and Adorno

In the essay 'On Language', Benjamin conceives of language as fundamentally non-representational: 'all language communicates itself *in* itself; it is in the purest sense the "medium" of the communication.'[47] This is contrasted with the 'bourgeois conception of language'.[48] A philosophy of language, rather than a science of language, considers the name, because the name mediates 'spiritual being' and 'thing'.[49] Naming is the possibility of mediation. However, Benjamin's critique of the bourgeois conception of language cannot succeed, on the evidence of the 1916 essay alone. For it relies upon a version of what Adorno will call the bourgeois conception of philosophy itself: nominalism, the idea that the thing lies in its name alone and not in a reality independent of the name. Not only are things named (the 'language-lamp'), there are 'thing languages', in which 'we find a translation of the language of things into an

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[46] Ibid. p.114.
[47] Benjamin, W. 'On Language as Such and the Language of Man', trans. Edmund Jephcott, in *Selected Writings*, vol.1, p.64.
[48] Ibid. p.65.
[49] Ibid. pp.63-4. Translation amended.

infinitely higher language.' Benjamin names some of these languages, languages of art: 'a language of sculpture, of painting, of poetry.' Music is deliberately not listed: 'We are concerned here with nameless, non-acoustic languages, languages issuing from matter.' Benjamin combines a realist pantheism with an idealist nominalism: 'we should recall the material community of things in their communication [*Mitteilung*].'[50] Adorno is critical of Benjamin's precritical nominalism. But matters are more complex than this. For Benjamin directs his version of nominalism against the regressive infinities of Kantian philosophy, in an attempt to understand metaphysics anew. This might look like a return to the pantheism of the *Goethezeit*. It is, in part. But Benjamin's pantheism is equally post-Kantian, when read in a specific philosophical context.

Benjamin's 'On Language' equivocates between being a treatise on naming and one on names. The latter, nominalism, is replicated in the 'Prologue': 'Ideas are displayed, without intention, in the act of naming.' Ideas as names are nothing prior to an act of naming. Essence does not precede existence here. Except that Benjamin's commitment to a notion of anamnesis leads him to conceive of these ideas as the 'limited number' of 'pure essences'.[51] Benjamin's ideas are disclosed historically. 'Philosophical doctrine is based on historical codification'. Ideas are, like Goethe's ur-phenomena, hypothetical and contingent. But their hypothetical contingency must equally exclude the (hypo-) thesis for (their) finite plurality. For, *which* plurality of ideas and names? This Platonic immutability in Benjamin's thought is nevertheless opposed by a mutable philosophy of active naming.

There is strong evidence within Benjamin's treatise 'On Language' of a deep affinity to Schelling's system of freedom, as represented in three texts: *Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom* (1809), the *Stuttgart Seminars* (1810) and *The Ages of the World* (three drafts, 1811-15). In light of the *Freiheitschrift* in particular, a post- and not anti-idealist Benjamin can be discerned. Benjamin shares Schelling's post-Goethean intention to overcome the regressive infinity of transcendental Idealism on the one hand and mechanistic pantheism (*and* nominalism) on the other – without upholding Hegel's absolute identity in contemporary history. Schelling has moved away both from transcendental Idealism and from the system of absolute identity (including intellectual intuition).

The affinity of these texts is attested to by their shared approach to a shared question. Is it possible to give a systematic (necessary) account of freedom; a

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[50] Ibid. p.73.
[51] Benjamin, W. 'Epistemo-Critical Prologue', p.37.

philosophy of the name and of naming? While acknowledging the contradiction, both answer in the affirmative, taking up the opposing standpoints in the *Trauerspiel* of world history: God and humanity. Philosophy 'is properly speaking the progressive demonstration of the absolute'.[52] For Schelling, the theological and political question of the existence of evil is the question of how actual human freedom can be dependent upon absolute freedom, since every act of freedom is, qua its freedom, absolutely free (unconditioned). As in Benjamin's text, God is in some way presupposed. But this theological tradition is, as Jürgen Habermas suggested, a heretical one that traverses Jewish and Protestant mysticisms. This counter-history forms another connection between Schelling and Benjamin; one that opens up a form of messianism that is not neo-Kantian.[53] The 'theological' standpoint is, in Schelling and Benjamin, complemented by and opposed by a phenomenological standpoint; that of historical facticity.

For Schelling, the theological problem dovetails with the Kantian problem of idealism (freedom) and the *Naturphilosophie* problem of realism (and nature). Indeed, the *Freiheitschrift* is best understood against the backdrop of the 'pantheism controversy', the 'thunderbolt' (Hegel) that struck German philosophy in the 1780s and continued in spite of Kant's attempted break with dogmatism. Affirming Kant's break-through ('the higher light of Idealism shines upon us'), Schelling now accuses Kantian Idealism of failing to mediate itself wholly, leading to the collapse of its system. The Rationalist systems of Spinoza and Leibniz did at least posit a single Substance. For Kant, this was dogmatism, since an unconditioned (or self-conditioned) Substance could only be posited from the standpoint of God, not philosophy. Schelling has no problem with putting himself in the position of God. His complaint is rather that the Rationalists do this in a thoroughly unproblematic manner, reducing the divine to a thing, thus extinguishing freedom in fatalism. Instead, the identity of God and nature (pantheism) must remain the problem and task of philosophy. Hegel *says* this. But according to Schelling, Hegel remains on the side of spirit, against nature. This becomes clear by the

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[52] Schelling, F. W. J. 'Stuttgart Seminars', trans. Thomas Pfau, in *Idealism and the Endgame of Theory* (State University of New York Press, 1993), p.199.

[53] Habermas, Jürgen. 'Dialectical Idealism in Transition to Materialism: Schelling's Idea of a Contraction of God and its Consequences for the Philosophy of History', trans. Nick Midgley & Judith Norman, in *The New Schelling* (London: Continuum, 2004), pp.64-5; cf. 'The German Idealism of the Jewish Philosophers', in *Philosophical-Political Profiles*, trans. Frederick G. Lawrence (London: Heinemann, 1983). Given the likely influence of Baader and Molitor on Benjamin, the tradition of which Habermas speaks also traverses Catholic mysticism.

time of, for instance, the *Aesthetics* lectures, in which spirit names the 'inwardisation [*Erinnerung*]' of nature.[54] Hegel extends the Fichtean 'I' to the 'We', leading to 'the complete annihilation of nature', the 'not I'.[55]

Pantheism means 'One in All', or 'All in One'. If God is every-thing, or if all things are in God, then human freedom cannot be free. Schelling frames this dilemma in terms of the identity philosophy familiar to Hegel. What is the identity of identity and difference? This (il-)logical judgement has hitherto been misunderstood. Anticipating Adorno's understanding of the problem of (re-)presentation and language, Schelling writes that,

> The reason for such misinterpretations, which other systems have also experienced in full measure, lies in the general misunderstanding of the law of identity or the meaning of the copula in judgement.[56]

Philosophy, as judgement (*Ur-teil*), is a matter of presenting the opposition absolutely such as it is not absolutely opposed. To this end, Schelling employs language familiar to his earlier, monistic *Naturphilosophie*. But he has now grown dissatisfied with the attempt to define Science by way of the natural sciences. For Jacobi, the unique insight of Spinoza lay in the consistency with which he employed the principle of sufficient reason. His philosophy concurs with the view of the natural sciences that nature, *including* humanity, is entirely conditioned. Hence: atheism and fatalism, for God and freedom are each unconditioned. Jacobi states, against the natural sciences, that the acceptance of the impossibility of the unconditioned for human reason leads to a necessary act of unreason: faith. Schelling wants to uphold a notion of freedom without the dualism of faith and reason; to paradoxically produce a system of freedom.[57]

Schelling attempts to overcome the contradiction of Spinozism, for which nature is immanent, and Idealism, for which nature is transcendent, by describing nature in

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[54] 'The spirit in its truth is absolute. Therefore it is not an essence lying in abstraction beyond the objective world. On the contrary, it is present within objectivity in the finite spirit's recollection or inwardization of the essence of all things [*im endlichen Geiste die Erinnerung des Wesens aller Dinge*] – i.e. the finite apprehends itself in its own essence and so itself becomes essential and absolute'. That 'things' refer here to nature is clear from the fact that the Symbolic form of art is that one most burdened with outwardly sensuous matter; whereas, by contrast, the Romantic arts are the most spiritual and hence inwardly sensuous (including, of course, music). Hegel, G. W. F. *Aesthetics*, vol.1, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1998), p.101.
[55] Schelling, F. W. J. 'Stuttgart Seminars', p.215.
[56] Schelling, F. W. J. 'Philosophical Investigations', p.223.
[57] Ibid. p.220.

non-mechanistic terms – by attributing freedom to it. Rather than this being solely dogmatic or anthropomorphic, the attribution is the necessary act of freedom itself:

> Man never obtains control of [the] condition [which existence requires in order to be actual], although in evil he strives to do so; it is only loaned to him, is independent of him; thus his personality and selfhood can never rise to perfect act. This is the sadness clinging to all finite life, and if in God, too, there is a condition which is at least relatively independent, then within him there is a well of sadness, which, however, never comes to actuality, but serves only for the eternal joy of overcoming. Hence the veil of despondency spread over all of life, the deep, indestructible melancholy of all life.[58]

'*Schwermut*' and '*Melancholie*' arise from the contradiction between free existence and the condition or ground of existence, which, as conditioned, cannot be free. This is, so it seems, the famous lament to finitude, which always comes too soon from the standpoint of this eternally 'perfect act'. Except that, since melancholy is the experience of the contradiction of existence and ground, it is the original possibility of actual, finite freedom. Actual freedom is the concern of nature because it means the determinate and material act of freedom. Freedom must be actual, not ideal, in order to be free. As in Kant, there must be an unconditioned ground of freedom, an intelligible character. But this remains formal-transcendental, and hence too dualistic for Schelling: 'there is no transition from the unconditioned to the conditioned.'[59] Man and nature are melancholy together. As Heidegger puts it in his lectures on the *Freiheitschrift*, 'nature also is intrinsically ego-like'.[60] Adorno, who never discusses Schelling's system of freedom, nevertheless acknowledges that the philosophical concept of construction comes from Schelling. Referring to the earlier 'Jena' Schelling, Adorno writes that, 'Nature itself is seen as an aspect of subjectivity.'[61] This shows that Adorno is latently aware of the issues at stake in the system of freedom – in his own philosophy, as mediated through Benjamin.[62]

In comparable terms to Schelling, Benjamin writes of the 'deep sadness [*Trauer*] of nature':

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[58] Ibid. p.271.
[59] Ibid. p.258. Translation amended.
[60] Heidegger, M. *Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Ohio University Press, 1985), p.89.
[61] Adorno, T. W. 'On Some Relationships Between Music and Painting', p.77.
[62] In the same essay on music and painting, Adorno quotes from Benjamin's essay 'On Language', in relation to the languages of art. Ibid, p.71.

> Because she is mute, nature mourns. Yet the inversion of this proposition leads even further into the essence of nature; the sadness of nature makes her mute.[63]

The muteness of nature is at once a lament to its alienation from the language of man and its call to be named by that language, to become *logos*. Nature already possesses 'linguistic being', not as a language of its own but as a waiting-to-be-named. Since the name is a unity – of word and thing – this waiting has a redemptive-utopian meaning. According to Schelling, in 'his perfect existence, man must await a... perfect state of nature'.[64] This differentiates Benjamin from Adorno (initially at least) for whom naming, as waiting, is seemingly constitutively in vain:

> In the utopian and at the same time hopeless attempts at naming is located music's relation to philosophy, to which, for this very reason, it is incomparably closer, in its idea, than any other art. But the name appears in music only as pure sound, divorced from its bearer, and hence the opposite of every act of meaning, every intention toward meaning.[65]

To say that naming the name is in vain is to propose a transcendent or ideal name beyond all naming. Naming in vain is the impossibility of intimation. Not awaiting, but waiting in vain (nature as thing-in-itself; unconditioned). For Benjamin, by contrast, the absolute name must be constitutive of naming. For Schelling too, freedom 'can only be thought as what posits and what is posited at the same time'.[66] Melancholy waiting expresses disunity within unity. It is a positing of unity, the whole, as that which is not – hence, a peculiar manner of positing. Adorno does not say that all naming is in vain, but rather that naming the name in art and (institutional) philosophy is in vain, since they each remain forms of appearance, *Schein* (or, 'pure sound'). Adorno thus follows Benjamin's subsequent turn against idealism from within language – which, for Adorno, means music, or rather, that which is dissonantly *musical*.

The melancholy of which Schelling and Benjamin write is no subjective feeling. Schelling acknowledges that 'many are driven to' the possibility of a pantheism that is not fatalistic 'by the liveliest feeling of freedom'.[67] This Romantic feeling is but a clue, since it remains too immediate. It might just as well be the delusion of freedom,

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[63] Benjamin, W. 'On Language as Such', p.73.
[64] Schelling, F. W. J. 'Stuttgart Seminars', p.242.
[65] Adorno, T. W. 'On the Contemporary Relationship of Music and Philosophy', trans. Susan H. Gillespie, in *Essays on Music*, p.140.
[66] Schelling, F. W. J. *Ages of the World* (second draft), trans. Judith Norman (The University of Michigan Press, 1997), p.125.
[67] Schelling, F. W. J. 'Philosophical Investigations', p.222.

ideology. Melancholy is more than feeling because it expresses a relation beyond the immediate to a possible whole, negatively. This is what is meant by the attribution of melancholy to nature: 'It is by means of melancholy [*Schwermut*] that man feels a sympathetic relation to nature'.[68] This mode and mood of relating that is more than a feeling can be termed an attunement, *Stimmung*, on account of what Agamben has termed its 'acoustico-musical dimension'. Melancholy is an attunement, as both mood and relation.

Agamben highlights a connection between *Stimmung* and *Stimme*, also at stake in Benjamin's idea of nature.[69] However, Agamben does not consider the possibility of the specifically *non*-harmonious attunement that is latently proposed by Schelling and Benjamin:

> *Stimmung* appears in the German language like a translation of the Latin *concensus*, of the Greek *armonia*. From this point of view, Novalis' notion of *Stimmung*, not as a psychology, but as an 'acoustics of the soul', is illuminating.[70]

The attunement of melancholy is a negative relation of the whole. In his lectures on *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, Heidegger refers to 'melancholy' as another name for the '*Grundstimmung*' of 'profound boredom' (see chapter 5).[71] Melancholy is a fundamental attunement. *As* fundamental, as the concern of grounding the whole, *this* melancholy is not ostensibly resigned: 'Joy must have sorrow, sorrow must be transfigured into joy'. Schelling speaks of the 'attraction of nature', which simultaneously gives rise to 'longing'.[72]

But this brings us to a certain limit of the *Freiheitschrift*. For the indeterminate longing of nature looks like the ideal, not actual will (transcendent, never empirical). In *The Ages of the World*, this becomes the distinction between an eternal will 'to nothing'

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[68] Schelling, F. W. J. 'Stuttgart Seminars', p.230.
[69] The idea of muteness in language reappears in the *Trauerspiel* study, in connection with melancholy. The language of these plays is polarised between speech and writing. Jacob Böhme, an important theologian for both Schelling and Hegel, understood this polarity as 'the Language of Nature [*Natur-sprache*]'. Benjamin surely has Böhme in mind when he describes the relationship between experience and storytelling: 'This whole created world speaks not so much with the human voice as with what could be called "the voice of Nature".' Benjamin, W. *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p.202; 'The Storyteller', p.103.
[70] Agamben, G. *Language and Death*, trans. Karen E. Pinkus with Michael Hardt (University of Minnesota Press, 1991), pp.55-56.
[71] Heidegger, M. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, pp.182-3.
[72] Schelling, F. W. J. *Ages of the World*, p.147.

and a particular will 'to something'. In the *Freiheitschrift*, Schelling attempts to explain their connectedness through a notion of existence as productive contradiction. But is not this the existential hypostatisation of Kant's third antinomy? The intelligible character is not the harmonious 'kingdom of ends', as Kant has it, but is conversely 'evil'. It is the darkness against which the light shines (but is evil *nothing*?). Since evil is similarly foundational (the 'unground'), existence cannot appropriate its ground or condition. Existence never actually gets a foothold on nature, meaning that there is no actual freedom and hence no determinacy. Sorrow and joy are then not dialectical, but infinitely-regressively reciprocal. Not *Trauer*, but *Melancholia.*

Schelling is aware of this problem, as can be sensed from his increasing interest in theogony. Rather than separation from the absolute infinitely perpetuating itself, Schelling now speaks of 'periods', 'potencies' and 'ages of the world'. In his essay, 'Dialectical Idealism in Transition to Materialism: Schelling's Idea of a Contraction of God and its Consequences for the Philosophy of History' (1970), Habermas reads *The Ages of the World* and the *Stuttgart Seminars* as unrecognised, foundational works of historical materialism. Schelling upholds the 'Promethean task' of appropriating the divine out of opposition to it, without, like Hegel, upholding the actuality of the appropriation in the status quo. Habermas recalls Schelling's 'baroque worldview': 'Does not everything bear witness to a fallen world?'[73] This is Schelling's phenomenological argument, from experience, including his experience of politics: the failed French Revolution (for Benjamin, the First World War and, increasingly, capitalism as such). Not only does the corruption of the world show an absence of unity, the corrupt world presents itself as a false unity of its own:

> This natural unity, this second nature superimposed on the first, to which man must necessarily take recourse, is the [modern] *state*; and, to put it bluntly, the [modern] state is thus a consequence of the curse that has been placed on humanity. Because man no longer has God for his unity, he must submit to material unity.[74]

The Habermas of the 1960s is drawn to these texts (rather than the *Freiheitschrift*) because they open up the possibility, through historical stages, of a negation of the negation. Melancholy remains a form of alienation: 'man... must submit to material unity.' But if man is the 'inverted God', an expansion through love into nature as a consequence of God's egoistic contraction into Himself, then why, asks Habermas, can

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[73] Habermas, J. 'Dialectical Idealism in Transition to Materialism', p.55.
[74] Schelling, F. W. J. 'Stuttgart Seminars', p.227.

this material submission not be overcome materially? Schelling does not grasp the opportunity to pursue this possibility, which is instead half-grasped by Marx. Schelling's system will split, in the late philosophy, into a rationalist materialism on the one hand and a mythological idealism (which opposes 'material unity' *as such*) on the other.

Nevertheless, unlike in Hegel's system, Schelling's account of alienation from nature includes nature on the side of the alienated. The negation of this absolute separation, of nature and spirit, is the hope of their reconciliation: 'the production of the human race offers a prospect for the resurrection of nature.'[75] Habermas reads Schelling in terms of the problematic of identity and difference. The hangover of *Naturphilosophie* in Schelling's system of freedom means that his Böhmean theogony is proto-materialist without being materialist in a positivist-naturalistic way. Schelling's 'second nature' appears as a polemical inversion of Hegel's concept (the term was no doubt 'in the air'). The modern state leads not to freedom but to submission. Second nature is the time of the fall from first nature. And this is the problem with the interpretation of Schelling in Habermas. In following Schelling's auto-critique, from freedom to history, Habermas follows and exaggerates its onto-theogonic presuppositions. This involves a regression in the concept of nature. The immanent critique of pantheism that is the *Freiheitschrift* becomes an immanent critique of theism in these subsequent texts. In the former treatise, there is a fundamental equivocation over nature's independence from man and God. Hence, Schelling can define nature both as the 'dark ground' and as 'the will of love, through which the word is spoken'.[76] Melancholy is already both 'subjective' and 'objective'. Whereas, in the subsequent fragments, nature refers to the initial potencies alone, which precede and ground 'spirit' (hardly mentioned at all in the *Freiheitschrift*, because existence does its work). 'God himself is *above* nature, nature is his throne, subordinate to Him.'[77] This comparison is complicated by the divergence in the employment of 'potencies' and 'stages' between the *Stuttgart Seminars* and *The Ages of the World.* But nature undoubtedly slips back into the ground towards the end of Schelling's system of freedom. In the *Freiheitschrift*, by contrast, nature is as much the end as it is the beginning: 'each successive process comes closer to the essence of nature.'[78]

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[75] Habermas, J. 'Dialectical Idealism in Transition to Materialism', p.78.
[76] Schelling, F. W. J. 'Philosophical Investigations', p.267.
[77] Schelling, F. W. J. 'Stuttgart Seminars', p.210.
[78] Schelling, F. W. J. 'Philosophical Investigations', p.241.

Specifically, there are two connected problems in Habermas, who was right to connect Schelling's system of freedom to historical materialism, but for the wrong reasons. First: the presupposition of creation, fall and redemption of nature (the potencies; A^1, A^2, A^3). This remains the immanent *problem* of the *Freiheitschrift*. Habermas ultimately understands this teleological story according to an anthrotheology along the lines of Ludwig Feuerbach. In which case, why go back to Schelling? The 'transition to materialism' is from Schelling and not Feuerbach, Habermas implies, because the latter's sensuous humanism is but the abstract negation of 'dialectical idealism', not its sublating-transition. The second problem is a consequence and embellishment of the first. The materialism that Habermas finds in Schelling is a traditional and not historical materialism. Nature as the ground of spirit is read as the material conditions of society. But this involves a split in nature and spirit that Schelling had already confronted in Spinozism. According to Habermas,

> what seems to be called for is... something that precedes reason itself, a ground on which reason denies its own grounding without being able to seize hold of this grounding as such. Matter is such a ground.[79]

The younger Marx opposed the materialism of sensuous matter with '*practical*, human-sensuous activity'.[80] It would be unfair to attribute vulgar materialism to Habermas unreservedly, since he seeks to deploy Schelling against that materialism – in a similar way that, he writes in 'Ernst Bloch: A Marxist Schelling' (1960), Marx deployed Böhme's dynamic conception of nature 'against the mechanistic materialism of the English seventeenth and the French eighteenth centuries.'[81] But Habermas confusedly synthesises the equivocation of the *Freiheitschrift*. Apropos of Bloch's *late* Schellingian sympathies: 'Matter as World Soul.'[82]

Habermas follows Schelling's Aristotelian turn, to an opposition of matter and spirit (the unmoved mover *in* the moved), only to reintroduce this idea of nature back into the Aristotelian Marx, partly on the *philological* basis that Marx may have interpreted Hegel's dialectic via Schelling's Berlin lectures.[83] But Habermas has to acknowledge the incongruity: 'Of course Marx confines the material life-process to the

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[79] Habermas, J. 'Dialectical Idealism in Transition to Materialism', p.53.
[80] Marx, K. *Early Writings* (London: Penguin,1975), p.422.
[81] Habermas, J. 'Ernst Bloch: A Marxist Schelling', in *Philosophical-Political Profiles*, pp.67-8.
[82] Ibid. p.69.
[83] It was Engels, not Marx, who attended Schelling's lectures. In any case, Marx's dialectic is not that of Engels.

reproduction of social life, where Schelling, the natural philosopher, still understood it as universal.'[84] Habermas makes no distinction here, between the Spinozist Schelling and the auto-critique of the *Freiheitschrift*, which states that,

> The error of [Spinoza's] system lies by no means in the positing of things *in God*, but rather that there are *things* in the abstract concept of the world's beings, instead of the infinite substance itself, which in fact is also a thing for him.[85]

Against Spinozism, Schelling introduces a concept of alienation that, against idealism, is immanent to nature and spirit taken as a whole. Habermas remains an idealist to the extent that his alienation still pertains to the opposition of inner and outer, spirit and nature. Not only that, matter now refers solely to the pejorative sense of second nature: reification. This concept of matter cannot do the work Habermas wants it to, in relation to the '*double* meaning' of reification in Marx (though in another sense, Habermas exaggerates the 'romanticizing anthropology of the Paris Manuscripts'):[86]

> The theme of work is thus the reification of the species life [*Gattungswesen*] of mankind: this is because man sees himself doubled not only intellectually in consciousness but actually in work, and thus sees himself in a world of his own making.[87]

That Habermas seeks an account of externalisation as reification from Hegel, before subjecting it to the critiques of Schelling and Marx, displays an understandable need for a metaphysically inflected historical materialism.

But what if the Marxian inauguration of historical materialism is read back into Schelling's system of freedom, as a philosophy of historical 'existence', not 'matter'? Its affinity to the concepts of alienation and second nature invites this possibility. In his comprehensive study of *The Concept of Nature in Marx* (1962), Alfred Schmidt sought

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[84] Habermas, J. 'Dialectical Idealism in Transition to Materialism', p.79.
[85] Schelling, F. W. J. 'Philosophical Investigations', p.230.
[86] Schmidt, Alfred. *The Concept of Nature in Marx*, trans. Ben Fawkes (London: New Left Books, 1971), p.128. Schmidt contends that Marx increasingly distances himself from this early nature-Romanticism. But for Schmidt, this is at the price of doing without a concept of reification. For the early Marx, famously: 'The *devaluation* of the human world grows in direct proportion to the *increase in value* of the world of things [...] The realisation of labour is its objectification. In the sphere of political economy this realisation of labour appears as a *loss of reality* for the worker, objectification as *loss of and bondage to the object*, and appropriation as *estrangement*, as *alienation*.' Marx, K. *Early Writings*, p.324.
[87] Cited in: Habermas, J. 'Dialectical Idealism in Transition to Materialism', p.78.

to avoid the 'neo-existentialist tendency... to reduce Marx's thought to an unhistorical 'anthropology' centred on the alienation problematic of the early writings'.[88] Unlike Habermas, Schmidt does not seem to think that metaphysics is necessary as the ground of that which supersedes it, materialism (Schmidt is quite open about Marx's social Darwinism, for instance).[89] Schmidt and Habermas share a philosophy of natural history that diverges significantly from the idea of their teacher. Adorno's philosophy of 'natural-history', revisited in *Negative Dialectics*, is too metaphysical for Schmidt and not metaphysical enough for Habermas. In the former there is no place for longing; in the latter there is only longing. Again, the latter is a consequence of the creeping Aristotelianism within Schelling's system of freedom (the *potencies*), which Habermas reads by way of the 'precritical' Bloch.[90] The former position is a consequence of its positivist historical materialism. In *Negative Dialectics*, in contrast to both of these positions, Adorno writes of an expression of waiting in vain, amidst the 'fall' of metaphysics; a metaphysics that is synonymous with the name of Aristotle.[91]

This expression of waiting in vain inevitably takes on existential overtones (Sartre is approvingly cited on four occasions in the *Metaphysics* lectures of 1965, much to the chagrin of Schmidt no doubt). Insofar as there is a continuity within Adorno's thought, between the melancholy science, the idea of natural-history and an expression of waiting in vain, a genealogy may be traced to the *Freiheitschrift* (without, as Habermas puts it, 'getting into the question of intellectual historical continuity'). This is not the existentialism of Kierkegaard, which, however ironically, 'has nothing to do with the System', *including* Schelling's.[92] Kierkegaard's existentialism forms a strand of the incomplete system of Heidegger's *Being and Time*. 'Resoluteness' before the

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[88] Schmidt, A. *The Concept of Nature in Marx*, p.9.
[89] Ibid. p.37; pp.43-46.
[90] Habermas, J. 'Ernst Bloch: A Marxist Schelling', p.76.
[91] In his essay on the *Ages of the World*, Slavoj Žižek draws a parallel between Schelling's positivist turn and the turn within Frankfurt School critical theory, from the first to successive generations:

> in both cases, we have first a condensed great breakthrough that, however, ends in failure and is then followed by a kind of compromise formation, an immense system elaborated in great detail, yet somewhat flat, with the impetus of the earlier work lost [...] The problem with the late Schelling is... not that he is a reactionary "irrationalist" (the standard hardline Marxist approach), but that he is too "rationalist." The ultimate irony of this homology between Schelling and Habermas, of course, is that Habermas... the first to formulate clearly the "regressive" character of Schelling's late philosophy with regard to the *Weltalter*, plays the same "regressive" role in the history of the Frankfurt School.

Žižek, Slavoj. 'The Abyss of Freedom', in Schelling, F. W. J. *Ages of the World*, pp.36-7.
[92] Kierkegaard, Soren. *Fear and Trembling*, trans. Alistair Hannay (London: Penguin Books (1985), p.42.

'fundamental state-of-mind', 'anxiety', means 'bringing oneself into a factical taking-action'.[93] 'Authentic' existence, Dasein, is not thereby the determinate taking action of itself – the act of freedom. *Being and Time* tends to remain, against Heidegger's intentions, formal-transcendental (see chapter 5). In Benjamin's Schellingian reflections, by contrast, the attunement of melancholy is already naming as the act of freedom. The possibility of this determinacy is the possibility of a praxis-oriented, and thus politically-oriented, theory. According to Adorno's idea of natural-history, a philosophical account of alienation does not exclude a philosophy of history, as the history of determinations (including those mis-determinations of the false consciousness), but rather presupposes it, since historical determinacy and nature are inseparable. The result is a notion of historical *facticity* – not the subjectivist existentialism that rightly worries Schmidt. In his early lecture on 'The Idea of Natural History' (1932), Adorno complains that Wilhelm Dilthey 'did not engage facticity with sufficient seriousness', in spite of his critique of historicism.[94] It remains to be shown *how* the melancholy science is historical, without explicitly following the response of *The Ages of the World.* The melancholies of Schelling and Adorno diverge, as divergent historical facticities: 1810 is not 1965.

The Melancholy Science of Natural History

In his study of the baroque *Trauerspiel*, Benjamin distinguishes between a productive and an unproductive melancholy – as if to anticipate Freud.[95] Baroque, post-Reformation (but *not* counter-Reformation) melancholy is 'sublime melancholy [*erhabene Melancholie*]' – in the sense, perhaps, that it sublates, *hebt auf*, the medieval-Christian, 'pernicious kind' of melancholy. This sublation is signalled in the appropriations of non-Christian sources – notably, 'Arabian' astrology. Saturn 'rule[s] over the melancholy disposition.'[96] Benjamin's distinction within melancholy shows the two faces of the baroque, one looking to the medieval and the other looking to the modern.[97]

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[93] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), p.341.
[94] Adorno, T. W. 'The Idea of Natural History', trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor, in *Telos* 60 (New York: 1984), p.122.
[95] Benjamin, W. *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p.151.
[96] Ibid. p.149.
[97] It is perhaps because Habermas does not make this distinction, in his account of Schelling's 'baroque world-view', that his materialism comes to resemble the

According to Benjamin, the allegorist 'betrays the world for the sake of knowledge'.[98] This dialectical formulation captures Benjamin's melancholy science of allegory (where this melancholy must be understood as the 'sublime' kind). The allegorist distances (things) in order to know (things), and hence to bring (things) into nearness, for the first time. Benjamin is as interested as Schelling in the question of actual, not contemplative freedom. Or at least, the allegorist is ironically contemplative. Allegorical practice must be temporal, or rather temporalising (hence the *Origin* of Benjamin's title), since the same (thing) cannot be simultaneously distant and near. There is, in effect, a temporal-historical splitting of 'world', just as there must be a splitting of 'nature' in Schelling. The 'world' that is betrayed is the 'fallen world'. But this world is all-too-near. Adorno call this world a 'second nature', explicitly recalling Schelling (it comes to him from Lukács, who denounced Schelling as 'irrational'). 'The natural lawfulness of society is ideology.'[99] The distancing of this all-too-near world, in allegory, yields a world of 'knowledge'. Distancing on its own would be an abstract negation, leading to the passive nihilism of world denial. Of course, such 'knowledge' might be understood as completely theoretical and not practical at all – hence the figure of contemplation, Dürer's *Melancholia*. But read in relation to Benjamin's essay 'On Language' and Schelling's *Freiheitschrift*, this melancholy dialectic implies human-sensuous activity, in a situation of its possibly finite 'delay'. This temporalised idea of nature means that the attunement is of itself temporal. The 'despondency' of this attunement is the dissonance between the existing facticity and that which the existing facticity excludes, as possibility.

In his 1932 lecture, Adorno is curious about, if not positively motivated by Heidegger's failed attempt to produce a systematic philosophy of history *after* Hegel, in *Being and Time*. Like Heidegger, a more obvious heir to Schelling, Adorno is interested in 'the concrete unity of history and nature.'[100] Adorno's response involves the synthesis of a Lukácsian interpretation of reification along with Benjamin's account of allegory. The idea of natural-history is, as a consequence, deeply ironic. History tends

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'pernicious kind', according to which death places man in a subservient relation to God. This is the opposite of what Habermas wants to say. But his sense of matter comes closer to the spiritless body than it does to labour, practice or even *techne*. Crucially, in this regard, Benjamin suggests that 'the dualism of Descartes is baroque', meaning that Descartes is a philosopher of the baroque period, not a baroque philosopher; a late scholastic, not the father of modern philosophy, who is of course Leibniz. Ibid. p.217.

[98] Ibid. p.157.

[99] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.347-351.

[100] Adorno, T. W. 'The Idea of Natural History', p.117.

towards nature through reification: second nature. Yet nature can become historical through allegory. As Benjamin writes, '"History" is writ across the countenance of nature in the sign language of transience'. For Adorno, the 'deepest point where history and nature converge lies precisely in this element of transience.'[101] Reification, transience as decay, here becomes *also* the possibility for interpretation; transience as new growth, in this baroque world. Reification is the all-too-near world, interpretation is the allegorical distancing, and new growth is knowledge.

As in the *Freiheitschrift*, nature and spirit are dialectical, *as* existence – or rather, for Adorno, historical facticity. The difference is that, whereas Schelling can define nature philosophically as well as philologically (in his theogonical hermeneutics), Adorno's early concept tends to rely upon the philological alone: the art and literary historical elements of Benjamin and Lukács. These traditions are conferred with a truth content that is not accounted for, as if the ruse of reason were assumed to be at work within them. By contrast, Schelling also *philosophically* argues that nature cannot be the absolute other of spirit, and hence history; not if we are to have spirit and history *at all*. To make such a claim, as Fichte does, is to engage in a performative contradiction, since it is already made from the standpoint of spirit *as not nature*.

This philosophical deficit of 'The Idea of Natural History' leads Adorno to repeat the neo-Kantianism that he outwardly opposes (as 'critical idealism') in both historicism and *Being and Time* (see chapter 5). Is not the irony of the 'Idea' its problem? If history tends towards nature and nature towards history then another infinite regress ensues, which sides with nature and not history, just as Kant's antinomy sides with a bad infinity. This problem is surely repeated in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, which in many respects comprises the development of the 'Idea' under a horrifically changed historical facticity.[102] Enlightenment is (only) ironic. In the lecture at least, Adorno is latently aware of this issue, since it is internal to the nature-history problem. The problems of historicism and value-judgement in the human sciences, to which Adorno is in part responding, are forms of the problem of the regressive infinity. Like Schelling, Adorno worries that history either dominates nature (Hegel) or simply leaves nature to its own law (historicism, positivism, ideology). There are of course varying and contradictory notions of nature at stake in Adorno's idea: fate, myth, death – even Being. Adorno takes over a messianic idea of nature from Benjamin, but this in turn

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[101] Ibid. p.119.
[102] cf. Hullot-Kentor, Bob. 'Introduction to Adorno's "Idea of Natural History"', in *Telos*, no.60 (1984), p.104.

seems to rely upon a later Kantian determination of nature as the unconditioned, harmonious 'kingdom of ends'. The opposition of nature to history is already a metaphysical problem, to the extent that metaphysics is the philosophical question of the whole. It is in this sense that Adorno is aware of the problem of the regressive infinity in his idea of natural-history.

Benjamin's 'Schellingian' *Trauer* can be reemphasised within Adorno's melancholy science – so as to make it more Scientific – given that Schelling had confronted similar problems in the Kantian philosophy of his day. As was suggested, there is a limit to Schelling's response. The younger Adorno is aware, and wary, of his proximity to Schelling:

> if philosophy wanted to be nothing more than the shock that the historical presents itself at the same time as nature, then such a philosophy would be subject to Hegel's criticism of Schelling's philosophy as the night of indifference in which all cats are grey. How does one avoid this night?[103]

Of course, Hegel's critique pertains to Schelling's system of absolute identity.[104] Yet the notion of 'absolute indifference' remains fundamental to the *Freiheitschrift*. And insofar as the treatise does not succeed in breaking-out of the mutability of the existential aporia, Hegel's criticism stands. Habermas ultimately knows that *The Ages of the World* cannot do the historical work that he wants it to. Towards the end of 'Schelling's Idea of a Contraction of God', Habermas reads the dialectic of contraction and expansion through Hegel's dialectic of externalisation.[105] In Adorno's later version of natural-history, by contrast, Hegel's 'world spirit is the ideology of natural history'. In fact, Habermas attempts to find a metaphysical ground for the negation of this second nature, which requires an alternative account of sublation. Hence, Habermas pursues an immanent critique of the Hegelian dialectic. Is it possible to produce a strong concept of history without either the assumption of progress or the presumption of catastrophe? In order to answer this question, Hegel's phenomenological deduction of history, as the whole, must be briefly reconstructed. This is found in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*

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[103] Ibid. p.122. Translation amended.

[104] Hegel was equally dismissive of the *Freiheitschrift*, though this time on methodological grounds: 'Schelling has made known a single treatise on freedom. It is of a deep speculative nature, but it stands alone. In philosophy, a single piece cannot be developed.' Cited in, Snow, Dale E. *Schelling and the End of Idealism* (New York: SUNY Press, 1996), p.142.

[105] The 'external world... obtains its existence through self-consciousness' *own* externalisation and separation of itself.' Hegel, G W F. *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p.294.

(1807) – and not, as Habermas contends, in the *Science of Logic* (1810) – because only the phenomenological argument remains critical, not dogmatic.

Hegel seeks to overcome the subjective Idealism of Kant and Fichte by showing that cognition is constitutively recognition. In the *Phenomenology*, Hegel substantiates his existing criticisms of Fichte's solipsistic, infintite reflection (which must become speculative *reason*).[106] The subject, always already inter-subjective, is the production of an object – crucially, *without remainder*, in-itself (Hegel does not need the 'subject' in the *Phenomenology*). If the 'not-I' is not to remain perpetually 'in itself' (as 'negation') then it must be cognised without becoming 'all reality' once over. Only another self-consciousness, or the otherness of self-consciousness, can negate the negativity of the in-itself. The '*in itself* turns out to be a mode in which the object is only for an other.' This is the 'Notion of *Spirit*', which is worked-out in the (historically) successive shapes of consciousness. The success of Hegel's overcoming of transcendental Idealism will depend upon whether his whole can actually be historically constituted (*and* constitutive). According to the dialectic of (mis-)recognition, the other (in itself) is but what is cognised by others, to-come. 'Absolute knowing' is, to anticipate the *end* of the *Phenomenology*, the necessary possibility of humanity as a historical whole. Knowledge is as finite as humanity; humanity is as finite as knowledge. Hegel will later acknowledge the circularity of this 'speculative' gesture ('With What Must Science Begin?). If Hegel cannot get to the end then he cannot begin at the beginning. The virtuousness of the circle is contingent upon its becoming. The fact that a quasi-naturalistic finitude is also pursued in the *Phenomenology* ('Force and the Understanding', which arrives on the scene [for *whom*?] *prior* to self-consciousness) raises a suspicion that Hegel only secures his historically 'finite' absolute by way of a

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[106] In his *Differenzschrift* (1801), Hegel states that, to speak of a 'limited' moment of reflection only becomes meaningful with respect to the 'connection' of reflection to 'the Absolute', as a totality of connections. There is no limit to infinite reflection. For Hegel, reflection, or rather reason, now connects the limited to the whole in a manner that determines both: 'reflection nullifies itself and all being and everything limited, because it connects [the limited] with the Absolute. But at the same time the limited gains standing precisely on account of its connection with the Absolute.' These (Spinozist) claims are only substantiated in the *Phenomenolgy* to the extent that the absolute remains a postulation here in the *Differenzschrift*. Hegel needs the phenomenology of (re)cognition in order to break out of the solipsistic shell of subjective reflection, *critically*. *The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy*, trans. H. S. Harris & Walter Serf (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977), p.94.

lapse into the *Naturphilosophie* that Schelling was to critique.[107] By 'dominating' nature, rather than incorporating it, Hegel unwittingly falls back into it.

Schelling confronts the problem of beginning more severely than does Hegel, if only because Schelling dwells upon the problem to a greater extent. Knowledge of the absolute is not a presupposition, not even speculatively (as the speculative is understood by Hegel). This is the irony of Hegel's remark about Schelling's 'shot from the pistol'. The absolute is *constantly* presupposed, and thus posited in Hegel. This positing is (only) confirmed retrospectively, from the phenomenologically 'impossible' standpoint of that which remains, the end. For Schelling (at his most 'progressive', let us say), the *problem* of knowledge of the absolute is phenomenologically constitutive of existence. For this reason, the speculative unity of humanity and nature in the absolute must correspond to an experience of the speculative, from the standpoint of a historical facticity that is not yet this unity (the not yet *of* this unity). There is accordingly an active 'hesitation' over the identity of dialectics and the historical whole for Schelling. Whereas, Hegel does *not* hesitate in producing this identity in the presentation of *his* system. According to Schelling,

> From time to time the opinion is ventured that the most complete dialectic is to be regarded as science itself; but this reveals a restricted outlook, inasmuch as the very existence [*Daseyn*] and necessity of the dialectic proves that the true science (ἱστορία) has not yet been found.[108]

This 'not yet' is the fundamental problem of philosophy. Since the philosophical system negates its representational mode of presentation ('*more geometrico*'), it strives towards the presentation of a whole that is not yet; an unknown whole. This task can only be expressed in the future anterior tense: 'Then God is in all actuality everything, and pantheism will have become true.'[109] Schelling too speculates (the *perfect* future anterior). But his speculation is phenomenologically internal to the problem of existence, as the melancholy attunement. Rather than being the 'potency' of something positive, this distancing imposes its sheer negativity in the name of nearness, positive freedom.

Hegel tends to use the traditional (pre-Schellingian) concept of existence (especially in the *Science of Logic*). Nevertheless, the famous passages from the Preface to the *Phenomenology* come close to an idea of facticity as at once alienation and

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[107] Hegel, G. W. F. *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p.104.
[108] Schelling, F. W. J. *Ages of the World*, p.116.
[109] Schelling, F. W. J. 'Stuttgart Seminars', p.243.

negation of alienation. The 'science of the experience of consciousness' is 'the path of despair', not the flight from despair.[110] It is this concept of '*Erfahrung*' that Adorno interprets in Hegel, alongside Benjamin's post-Kantian conception. And it is the *experience* of the speculative that Hegel stands accused of neglecting, *not the speculative possibility of the whole as such* (on the contrary). The actual divergence of the rational from the actual, amidst the facticity of contemporary capitalism, calls for the experience of the speculative in existence. Rose distinguishes Hegel's speculative from Kant's regulative, only to treat the speculative as a logical problem of the copula in speculative judgement. This diverges from Schelling's problematisation of the copula because the posited predicates are of a different order. In Rose, they are already mediated, by positive tradition. The positing of the predicates themselves remains unproblematic (why the identity of *this* religion and *this* politics?). In which case, the copula is equally unproblematic, against the stated intentions of the speculative judgement itself. This can equally be directed against Rose's earlier attack on Adorno, who, she writes, failed to produce 'a speculative sociology of the proletariat'.[111] For, rather than positing a universal subject *abstractly*, only to apply the speculative 'framework' after the fact, the speculative must also be a positing, the positing also speculative. This results in a different conception of positing – a non-representing positing and a presenting non-positing (see chapter 2).

In philosophical mediation, Adorno writes, what 'is suspended is nothing other than the expression of the inexpressible in itself.' This is comparable to music. The suspended is not merely a decision for indecision. This would be the negative moment alone. According to Adorno, and if we follow Benjamin, the inexpressible, that which music names in vain, makes expression possible, for the first time. Strictly speaking, the inexpressible is not inexpressible. The speculative whole, as the name, is constitutive of naming, of the melancholy science. Adorno's 'intimation' is too negative (too Romantic) because it has already decided to be in vain. Whereas, an *expression* of waiting in vain might be open to the possibility that it is not, after all, in vain. Adorno comes close to this conclusion in his later reflections on metaphysics (see chapter 5).

This reading of Adorno would distinguish him from Schelling, who remains an absolute Idealist. The pure indeterminacy of absolute indifference takes on a positive character, anticipating Schopenhauer's will that wills nothing. Idealised longing becomes a longing for nothing. Hence, it could be said that Schopenhauer

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[110] Hegel, G. W. F. *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p.49. Translation amended.
[111] Rose, G. *Hegel Contra Sociology*, p.32.

misunderstands the indeterminacy of music by absolutising it – or rather, the champion of Rossini understands music *only harmoniously* (see chapter 2). Longing is both too abstract and, for that reason, too determinate (the will *to* nothing remains a will *to* something re-presented). Adorno's upholding of the *Bilderverbot* extends to representation *both* in the sense of the image *and* in the sense of a structure of willing that places a totality before it, in its presence (re-presentation=*Vor-stellung*). For these reasons, the messianism of Benjamin and Adorno diverges from that of Ernst Bloch's *Principle of Hope*, which is full of 'wishful images' (of course, Bloch's monumental study was influential upon Benjamin's *Arcades Project*). The determinacy of these images, their political orientation, distinguishes Bloch's speculative materialism from the idealist will that wills nothing. But this will to something is, like the will to nothing, close to a representing-willing: '*Antizipation*'. An expression of waiting in vain does not posit the object of *longing*, utopia. Neither does it proscribe all such positing. An expression of waiting in vain is anticipation without expectation (as *anticipatory*). This is the nature of its positing.

It is notable in this regard that Bloch does not recognise modern music after Schoenberg's expressionism. Habermas connects this 'being affronted by modern art' to a 'melancholy of fulfilment'. He unwittingly reveals the gap between the melancholies of Bloch and himself on the one side, and Benjamin and Adorno on the other.[112] Bloch remains a Wagnerian. Of course, Wagner does not equate to Schopenhauer. But the dissonant Wagner only reveals himself as a prophet of what was to come by way of Schoenberg *and after* (see chapter 2).

A reconciled Adorno and Bloch could nevertheless agree in the 1960s that the problem of utopia presents itself as: 'Something's Missing'.[113] This expression, taken from Brecht's *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahogony* (1928-9), is surely closer to an expression of waiting in vain than to *Sehnsucht* (some-thing is missing; not nothing, nor everything). Adorno's expression of waiting is his alternative, dissonantly historical dialectics. His account of the constellation and the modern artwork, each a 'monad', is an attempted extension and partial substantiation of the melancholy science. Before that can be shown, a philosophical tradition of the musical idea in modern philosophy will be briefly reconstructed in order to show how Adorno develops *and* opposes it.

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[112] Habermas, J. 'Ernst Bloch: A Marxist Schelling', pp.72-3.

[113] 'Something's Missing: A Discussion between Ernst Bloch and Theodor W. Adorno on the Contradictions of Utopian Longing', in *The Utopian Function of Art*, trans. Jack Zipes & Frank Mecklenberg (Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1988).

Ideas of Music and the Musical Idea

In his early writings, Benjamin reiterates the belief, shared by Herder, Hamann and Rousseau, that music is a language *sui generis*: 'the last remaining universal language since Babel'.[114] This tradition includes early German Romanticism. It is therefore surprising that, in *The Literary Absolute* (1978), Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy take their study of the Jena circle to concern 'exclusively the *question of literature*'. They 'eliminate... music in particular', only to entitle their first chapter, 'Overture: The System Subject'. The anonymous 'Earliest System-Programme' provides them, quoting Novalis, with 'the musical theme' of the early Romantic project. 'An overture, then, in more than one sense'.[115] What is this other sense, if the question of music has already been methodologically eliminated? Lacoue-Labarthe would later come to recognise the problem of this elimination, referring to Agamben's translation of Benjamin's '*das Musische*' as the '"concurrence" of all the arts'.[116] Benjamin's 'muse-ical', introduced in his thesis on early Romanticism, reflects his ongoing confrontation with Neoplatonism and nominalism, along with the regressive infinity (Schlegel's infinitely becoming literature). The muse-ical does not name the totality of (the names of) the muses, but rather their individuation with respect to the whole, 'generated by a refraction [*durch eine Brechung bezeichnet*].' This generation, *bezeichnen*, is, in that case, to mark or to name, *zeichnen*. The muse-ical compliments Benjamin's philosophy of naming, but is not of itself a coherent response to the problems of Fichtean idealism in early Romanticism.[117]

The interest of the early Romanics in an idea of music can be understood according to a broader Romantic aesthetics. Karl Dahlhaus has shown that evaluations of instrumental music follow the rising importance of aesthetic autonomy. For most eighteenth-century aestheticians, moral sentiment was to be represented in historical and allegorical themes – hence the dominance of history painting, sculpture and literature. But what if art can be morally sentimental, sensuous, without narrative or representation? What if art can intimate *at* narrative, representation, *as such*? What was

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[114] Benjamin, W. *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p.214.
[115] Lacoue-Labarthe, Philippe. & Nancy, Jean-Luc. *The Literary Absolute*, trans. Philip Barnard & Cheryl Lester (State University of New York Press, 1988), p.28.
[116] Lacoue-Labarthe, P. *Musica Ficta*, trans. Felicia McCarren (Stanford University Press, 1994), pp.62-3; p.152f.
[117] The other main problem being the Classicist paradigm of the muses itself. Benjamin, W. 'The Concept of Criticism in German Romanticism', in *Selected Writings*, vol.1, pp.179-80. Translation amended.

previously considered to be banal was now considered profound. Absolute music as autonomous art; according to E. T. A. Hoffmann, a *critic* of Beethoven's instrumental music: 'the independent art'.[118]

But sentiment and autonomy are not at all the same things. The early Romantics rejected 'the eighteenth century culture of sentiment and social life, a culture they found narrow-minded.'[119] They are drawn instead to the *ambiguity* and *rhythm* of music. In one of his thirteen *Athenaeum* fragments to mention music (but no *music*), Friedrich Schlegel writes:

> Many people find it strange and ridiculous when musicians talk about the ideas in their compositions; and often happens that one perceives they have more ideas in their music than they do about it. But those who have a feeling for the wonderful affinity of all arts and sciences will at least not consider the matter from the dull viewpoint of a so-called naturalness that maintains music is supposed to be only the language of the senses. Rather, he will consider a certain tendency of pure instrumental music toward philosophy as something not impossible in itself. Doesn't pure instrumental music have to create its own text? And aren't the themes in it not as developed, reaffirmed, varied, and contrasted in the same way as the subject of meditation in a philosophical succession of ideas?[120]

Schlegel's musical idea is not merely one idea among others. It approximates that which Schlegel will elsewhere disavow: an idea of ideas, the Idea. Where the 116th *Athenaeum* fragment sets-out the programmatic 'aim… to reunite all the separate species of poetry… with philosophy', the above fragment describes 'the wonderful affinities of all arts and sciences,' in relation to an idea of music and a musical idea. Which idea of music informs this idea? Which works – ultimately, which work – informs it (if in-forming is the correct and revealing term)? The absence of music criticism in the Jena circle would suggest that this idea of music is in fact traditional and Classicist. Music, or rather that which is musical, denotes a concurrence, as flow and as bringing together. Benjamin appears to draw upon this tradition when he defines 'the muse-ical' as a 'harmonic discontinuum'. The musical idea is in both cases systematic, as if to invoke the Presocratic *mousike*.

Several of the recent interpretations of the early Romantics, including Agamben's (above) draw upon this sense of harmonious flow (the flow of the message

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[118] Dahlhaus, Karl. *The Idea of Absolute Music*, trans. Roger Lustig (The University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp.1-17.
[119] Ibid. p.6.
[120] Schlegel, Friedrich. *Philosophical Fragments*, trans. Peter Fitchow (Minnesota University Press, 1991), p.92.

from Hermes: herme-neutics). Manfred Frank and Andrew Bowie have, in different ways, reconfigured the early Romantic experiment as a model of interpretation, according to which musicality and rhythm are central (see chapter 3). Paul de Man attempted to show the constitutive blindness and insight of all criticism by way of a critique of Derrida's deconstruction of Rousseau. Music is the secret to Rousseau's modern break with Platonic mimesis. Rousseau already knows what Derrida is trying to make him say, but Derrida is necessarily blind (or, deaf) to him. De Man's reading turns on a (pre-)conception of music. In Rousseau's *Essay*,

> Diachronic structures such as music, melody, or allegory are favoured over pseudo-synchronic structures such as painting, harmony, or mimesis because the latter mislead one into believing in a stability of meaning that does not exist.[121]

What does it mean to speak of music *as such* as 'diachronic structure'? As with Schlegel and Novalis: *which* music? It should be noted that de Man opposes music to Platonic harmony. Nevertheless, the early Romantic problem is unproblematically repeated. For de Man, 'movement', 'narrative' and 'succession' are the musical attributes of rhetoric; musical, because they are fundamental attributes of music. But there is no *music* to which these attributes could be attributed, given that they are attributable to any and all music – except, that is, *modern* music. There are two connected problems here. Firstly, generalisation (cliché), and secondly, the determination of this generalisation as harmony – drawing, no doubt, upon the pantheism of the early Romantics themselves: 'Every philosophy of philosophy that excludes Spinoza must be spurious'.[122]

Bowie gives an account of the historical convergence between philosophical Romanticism and Romantic music. Against Dahlhaus, he stresses the significance of practice for theory.[123] Dahlhaus has good reason not to stress this, where the early Romantics are concerned at least. As one commentator on the relationship between Jena Romanticism and music has noted,

> It was amongst the dying wishes of Friedrich von Hardenberg (Novalis) in March 1801 to hear his brother play a piece by Mozart on the harpsichord.

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[121] De Man, Paul. 'The Rhetoric of Blindness: Jacques Derrida's Reading of Rousseau', in *Blindness & Insight* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp.132-3.
[122] Schlegel, F. *Philosophical Fragments*, p.255.
[123] Bowie, Andrew. *Aesthetics and Subjectivity* (Manchester University Press, 1990), p.222.

> Mention of any great knowledge or appreciation of music, of specific composers and musical works, and evidence of any practical musical skill are, nevertheless, absent from the corpus of his writing.[124]

The closest instance of music criticism in the early Romantic circle occurs with Schelling's lectures on art, given at the University of Jena between 1802 and 1803. They provide the first elevation of music within a philosophical system: 'The art form in which the real unity [with the ideal] purely as such becomes potence and symbol is music.'[125] But Schelling's sole example, Haydn's *Creation*, is *faulted* for its programmatic content. Hence, this is not early Romantic *criticism*: the work offers no standard for critique.

A certain non-convergence thus reigns between early Romantic ideas of music and contemporaneous music, specifically Beethoven, pointing to a larger issue. While Novalis was asking for Mozart on his deathbed, Beethoven was composing, or about to compose, mature works: the opus 30 piano sonatas, opus 31 violin sonatas, and the *Eroica* Symphony all date from 1801-2. This moment of Beethoven's oeuvre marks a sublation – completion and negation – of musical Classicism (including that of Mozart and Haydn). Modern music is, after Beethoven, dissonant, in the expanded sense of being paradoxically autonomous in, and thus against, bourgeois society. The staccato chords that announce the *Eroica* are ruptures in the Classicist orthodoxy of a music of the spheres (the *Eroica* as Copernican revolution in music). This reversal of harmony was already Friedrich Schlegel's programme – but for *literature*.

Hence, early Romantic wit concerns the unity of ideas, and its *Bund*. But there is an opposing, dissonant moment, since this *Bund* is 'without any exaggeration... the first "avant-garde" group in history'.[126] Wit tends to become ironic, not affirming the actuality of a concurrent polis, but negating it (only abstractly, in the case of its aestheticism). The 'musicality' of the early Romantics is not affirmative, according to the ideology that 'music brings people together'. Commodity music has, no doubt, contributed to a sort of (dystopian) social synthesis (see chapter 4). But what if the musical idea were informed by a dissonant, not harmonious music? Dissonance could in

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[124] Hodkinson, J. 'The Cosmic-Symphonic: Novalis, Music, and Universal Discourse', in Donovan, Siobhán & Eliott, Robin (eds.), *Music and Literature in German Romanticism* (Rochester: Camden House, 2004), p.13.
[125] Schelling, F. W. J. *The Philosophy of Art*, trans. Douglas W. Scott (University of Minnesota Press, 1989), p.109.
[126] Lacoue-Labarthe, P. & Nancy, J-L. *The Literary Absolute*, p.8.

that case be understood *against* the pre-established harmony of the bourgeois *ratio* and *its* system.

Dissonance of the Spheres

There is a tension within Adorno's reception of Benjamin's early writings that can be understood by way of Schelling's immanent critique of pantheism. The introduction of alienation into pantheism raises the possibility of a mutable and historical metaphysics. We also find in Benjamin (and Schelling, supported by Goethe) a precritical, immutable pantheism. The Platonic idea becomes a Leibnizian monad, and a name. This might be understood as a critical reappropriation of Leibniz, in the manner of Schelling. According to Heidegger, the affinity of Leibniz to German Idealism lies in the fact that 'Substance, self-existent beings are what they are as *perceptio* and *appetites*, representing and striving.'[127] For Benjamin too, of all the Rationalists only Leibniz remains attentive to the individual and the whole in an *active* manner. But Benjamin tends to leapfrog the critical debate back into a Leibnizian ontology:

> The idea is a monad. The being that enters into it, with its past and subsequent history, brings – concealed in its own form – an indistinct abbreviation of the rest of the world of ideas [*Ideenwelt*], just as, according to Leibniz's *Discourse on Metaphysics* (1686), every single monad contains, in an indistinct way, all the others.

Leibniz is initially appropriated analogously here ('just as'). Yet significantly, the terminology shifts from '*Ideenwelt*' to '*Welt*'. The monadology becomes a binding account of 'world', not a restricted epistemology or logic. 'The idea is a monad – that means briefly: every idea contains the image of the world [*Bild der Welt*].'[128] Neither is this ontology confined to the younger Benjamin, since this thought evolves, to some extent, into the 'dialectical image' of the *Arcades Project.*

For Kant, Hegel and Schelling, Leibniz's metaphysics remains incoherent, because he gives no account of individuation with respect to the whole, from the standpoint of the experience of such individuation. In Schelling's terms: how is the individual free *of* the whole, but not in the sense of (negative) freedom *from* it? In the words of Leibniz himself, the monads, in 'a confused way all strive after the infinite, the

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[127] Heidegger, M. *Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*, p.95.
[128] Benjamin, W. 'Epistemo-Critical Prologue', pp.47-8.

whole.'[129] The absolute of Leibniz is infinite *and* whole, a 'simple' *and* 'infinite Substance'. Creationism is invoked in order to resolve an absolute contradiction, and to avoid fatalism. Ours must be the 'best of all possible worlds', chosen from an infinity of possible worlds. 'God is sure always to choose the best'.[130] God saves Leibniz from the regressive infinity, but he pays the price of relinquishing pantheism in the name of an updated theism (notwithstanding the important differences between the *Monadology* and the *Theogony*). God, not man, establishes the 'pre-established harmony'. Of course, Benjamin writes of 'the unbridgeable distance' between monads. But this distance is itself harmonised, 'between pure essences' – in a similar way to the 'harmonic discontinuum' of the muses within the muse-ical 'ideal'.

The melancholy science negates this harmony of the spheres. Translated from Rationalism to the bourgeois *ratio*, harmony serves to conceal an absence of harmony. A science that upheld this nominalism would be powerless against it, since the archetypal names, of a second nature, preclude the possibility of naming; of Science itself. For these reasons, Adorno takes up Benjamin's constellational monad in *Negative Dialectics*, only to extirpate its metaphysical (including Marburg neo-Kantian) presuppositions:

> One need by no means start out from its own content, according to metaphysical investigations like Benjamin's *Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels*, which grasp the concept of truth itself as a constellation.[6] One could return to a scholar of so positivistic a bent as Max Weber. He indeed understood the "ideal types", quite in keeping with subjectivistic epistemology, as an aid in approaching the object, excluding every substantiality in itself and to be reliquefied any which way. But just as in all nominalism, however null and void it may consider its concepts, something of the constitution of the thing strikes through this and reaches beyond the thought-practical advantage – not the least motive for the critique of unreflective nominalism – so are the material works of Weber derived far more from the object, than the southwestern German methodology would lead one to expect. In fact the concept is adequate grounds for the thing, insofar as the investigation of an at any rate social object becomes false, where it limits itself to a dependency inside its domain, which grounded the object, and which ignores its determinations through the totality.[131]

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[129] Leibniz, G. W. *The Monadology*, trans. Robert Latta (Oxford University Press, 1968), p.250.
[130] Leibniz, G. W. *Discourse on Metaphysics*, §13, trans. Jonathan Bennet, accessed at, www.earlymoderntexts.com/f_leibniz.html, on November 23, 2008. Cf. *The Monadology*, pp.247-9.
[131] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.166-8.

Adorno finds in Weber a post-metaphysical interpreter of Goethe's ur-phenomena, to counterpoise against Benjamin's metaphysical Goethe. Does Adorno, in supposedly rejecting Benjamin's metaphysics and supposedly affirming Weber's positivism, thereby reject metaphysics as such? If so, what does Adorno mean by 'the totality'? If Adorno's philosophy is solely one of scientific critique, motivated by the sciences other than philosophy (Science) then it can offer no response to the question of the ground of its critique. Such a determination of philosophy as critique appears to lead to the problem of methodology. Philosophy becomes an instrument, applied to a pre-constituted totality. Adorno writes of the 'investigation of... an object' in relation to 'its determinations through the totality'. Does not this positivistic (and deterministic) totality lead to the problem of value, without Weber's novel response to it? (see chapter 4)

For Rose, the problem of methodology is the neo-Kantian problem of validity without value, and value without validity. Adorno's post-metaphysical constellation can be said to avoid this fate (of unreflective positivism), if it is understood in terms of his overall, 'dissonantly musical' philosophy. Adorno does not refute Benjamin's nominalist metaphysics. Instead, he radicalises it. The greatest possibility of philosophy today may indeed be as an instrument, amidst the exceptional facticity of an actually established harmony: history as (second) nature. Adorno's nominalism is a reflective nominalism in that the monad refers to a speculative whole, negatively, just as the melancholy attunement is the attestation of 'Something's Missing'. Adorno's nominalism is accordingly a dissonant nominalism. The monad – as the critical constellation or the artwork – is the (non-)positing of a speculative whole against the existing whole, unreflective nominalism, just as allegory is directed against second nature from 'within' it. The speculative whole does not mean a depiction of utopia, but rather the semblance of wholeness in the 'coherence' and 'unity' of the monad *as* dissonant semblance (see chapter 4). 'Unreflective nominalism' means nominalism that is not self-conscious of its nominalism, and thereby considers itself the only possible, and to that extent *true* whole. The system presents itself, in ideology, as utopia. It thereby precludes the thinking of a different whole. The question of utopia today, Adorno remarks to Bloch, is one of thinking 'the totality as something that could be completely different', in a situation where 'people [are] sworn to this world'.[132]

Adorno's philosophy of dissonance is, almost uniquely, informed by his experience of modern music. As in Schoenberg, dissonance is atonal, not untonal.

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[132] Adorno, T. W. & Bloch, E. 'Something's Missing', p.4.

Dissonance, though antithetical to harmony, must act upon harmony. Hence, the 'task of art today is to bring chaos into order.'[133] This does not imply an ordered chaos; a harmony of the Dionysian and Apollonian forces (*The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music*). Neither does Adorno's remark signify a call to replace order with chaos (acosmism). The determination of dissonance as 'complimentary harmony' in fully 'twelve-tone' music threatens to negate the specificity of dissonance altogether.[134] Instead, chaos is brought into an existing order in the name of a different, quasi-messianic 'order'. Hence, the anti-system of negative dialectics is not anti-*systems*. The *negative* of negative dialectics corresponds to the *anti-* of the anti-system.

Adorno's philosophy of dissonance can be understood in relation to nominalism and music. This is because nominalism is equally the problem of formalism, and because music has been understood as pure form as much as pure language. Adorno and Horkheimer explore the mythic prehistory of nominalism in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Odysseus cheats Polyphemus by naming himself without naming himself. His 'name *Udeis* can mean either "hero" or "nobody"':

> Odysseus discovered in words what in fully developed bourgeois society is called *formalism*: their perennial ability to designate is brought at the cost of distancing themselves from any particular content which fulfils them, so that they refer from a distance to all possible contents, both to nobody and to Odysseus himself. From the formalism of mythical names and statues, which, indifferent like nature, seek to rule over human beings and history, emerges nominalism, the prototype of bourgeois thinking.

Nominalism is formalism because the posited, absolute difference of name and named – the name of Odysseus, somebody, names nobody – means that language comes to be a formal container. Content, world, can be represented absolutely in form, particularly by way of 'modern mathematics'.[135]

This notion of language having become mathematics appears in Adorno's reflections on music and language. The 'intertwining' of music and language 'has not been realised in all new music. Much has absented itself, with modish phrases, from the dialectical effort and merely rebelled reactively against the linguistic element.'[136] Adorno has in mind both Stravinsky's Neoclassicism and, more contemporaneously, the

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[133] Adorno, T. W. *Minima Moralia*, p.222.
[134] Adorno, T. W. *Philosophy of Modern Music*, trans. Anne G. Mitchell & Wesley V. Blomster (London: Continuum, 2003), p.85.
[135] Adorno, T. W. & Horkheimer, Max. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford University Press, 2002), p.47.
[136] Adorno, T. W. 'Music, Language and Composition', p.119

Serialist and Aleatoric schools, which both employ quasi-mathematical means as ends in themselves. Adorno's musical modernism is, in a sense, equally a musical post-Romanticism. It follows the break with the Neoplatonic understanding of music as a synthesis of *harmonia*, *rhythmos* and *logos*. The first two elements come to dominate the third – the rational-geometric organisation of space and time respectively.[137] This break is all the more decisive, given that, with musical Romanticism, music not only is not primarily mathematical, it is now primarily *Sprache*: a song without words.[138] Modern song *with* words must, for that reason, be an 'absurdity'.[139] There is no going back – hence Adorno's worry about a return to mathematics, in both music and philosophy. Hence too Adorno's claim that modern music (or rather, modern art) must distance itself from language so as to return dialectically to language. A *kind* of formalism, of abstraction, becomes the bleakly ironic means to an end (content), not an end in itself.

In his thesis on early Romanticism, Benjamin does not explicitly pursue the musicality of the muse-ical, perhaps because this would threaten to exacerbate, not address his problem: 'what is missing in Schlegel… is the *content of art.*'[140] Absolute music is supposed to be what Eduard Hanslick termed 'tonally moving form', with 'no nameable content'.[141] In this sense, Schlegel's musical idea (of literature) is a symptom of his formalism; a consequence of the regressive infinity within Fichtean Idealism.

Given Adorno's dialectic of music and language, there is a sense in which the formalism of modern music becomes its virtue. Adorno radicalises Schlegel's irony, and brings it closer to tragedy, or rather: *Trauerspiel*. In his 1929 essay on Alban Berg's *Wozzeck*, which he later takes to exemplify an expression of waiting in vain, Adorno relates the 'tragic irony' of this '*Trauerspiel*' to the 'distance' of (messianic) hope reflected in the music – since dissonant music is itself *traurig*.[142] Where unreflective

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[137] Dahlhaus, K. *The Idea of Absolute Music*, trans. Roger Lustig (The University of Chicago Press, 1989), p.8.
[138] I refer to Felix Mendelssohn's *Lieder ohne Worte* (1830-45).
[139] 'Since the happily hapless meeting of Odysseus with the Sirens all songs have ailed; the whole of western music suffers from the absurdity of song in civilization, yet the motive force of all art-music is song.' Adorno, T. W. & Horkheimer, M. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, p.47
[140] Lacoue-Labarthe, P. & Nancy, J-L. *The Literary Absolute*, p.93
[141] Hanslick, E. '"Content" and "Form" in Music' (1854), trans. Geoffrey Payzant, in, eds. Jost Hermand & Michael Gilbert, *German Essays on Music* (New York & London: Continuum, 1994), p.84.
[142] Adorno, T. W. *GS* 18, pp.472-479. Adorno and Benjamin attended the second performance of *Wozzeck*, in 1925. Cf. Benjamin to Adorno, December 27th, 1935, in

nominalism names names, dissonant nominalism names in the name of the name itself. It is in this task that Adorno compares philosophy to music. The name is awaited and named on account of its determinate indeterminacy (rather than its 'hopeless' transcendence). The delay of *praxis* to which Adorno refers is not necessarily infinitely deferred. The constellation and artwork call for a third category, in-between theory and practice. Practice-oriented thought is in this sense an expression of waiting in vain.

The monad is both the principle of private property, within the whole market, and (positive) freedom, within the social whole. Leibniz presents the danger and the possibility of modernity. Adorno refers to the danger in his 'Meditations on Metaphysics', at the end of *Negative Dialectics*. The Lisbon earthquake prompted Voltaire to deride the 'best of all possible worlds', the pre-established harmony of Leibniz. Whereas this natural catastrophe challenged the unity of reason in the age of Rationalism, the historical catastrophe challenges the unity of Western metaphysics as such. This is why Adorno attempts to ground his 'micrology', his dissonant nominalism, in the 'fall' of metaphysics. This is also why we must return to the metaphysics of the idea of natural-history.[143]

The Complete Correspondence, trans. Nicholas Walker (Harvard University Press, 2001), pp.119-120.

[143] Adorno, T. W. *Metaphysics: Concept and Problems*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), p.101.

2

The Metaphysics of Willing in the Case of Wagner

Through Wagner modernity speaks most intimately, concealing neither its good nor its evil – having forgotten all sense of shame.[1]

Nihilism. It is ambiguous.[2]

– Friedrich Nietzsche

In spite of the obvious divergence between Adorno and Heidegger, a convergence can be seen to have taken place at a precise time. Both converge upon the figure of Richard Wagner in the second half of the 1930s. Adorno's book *In Search of Wagner* is, unlike Heidegger's lecture course on Nietzsche, an explicit treatment of the composer. But Wagner is no less fundamental, implicitly, to the first of Heidegger's *Nietzsche* lecture-courses, 'The Will to Power as Art' (1936). This coincidence might initially be explained away as a continuation of the divergence – a divergence between the one who fled National Socialism and the one who supported it. *In Search of Wagner* comprises a search for the 'source of Hitler's ideology', an ideology supported by Heidegger from at least 1933 up to at least the time of the last of the *Nietzsche* lectures: 'European Nihilism' (1940).[3] Heidegger's assessment of Wagner is mediated through his readings of Nietzsche. As David Farrell Krell puts matters: 'Take the thinker of the "blond beast". Add another who is a card-carrying member of the Nazi Party. The result bodes

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[1] Nietzsche, Friedrich. 'The Case of Wagner', in *The Birth of Tragedy and The Case of Wagner*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (London: Vintage, 1967), p.156.
[2] Nietzsche, F. *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufman & R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Random House, 1968), Book I, §22, p.17.
[3] Where this second 'at least' is concerned, I am thinking of Löwith's recollections of Heidegger in Rome. Cf. Löwith, Karl. *My Life in Germany Before and After 1933*, trans. Elizabeth King (London: Athlone, 1994), p.44; p.60.

ill for the matter of *thinking* that is Heidegger's *Nietzsche*.'[4] Add an anti-Semitic composer, and the matter does not seem to bode any better.

Several factors contradict, without refuting, this thesis of a continuity of divergence. Most obviously, Heidegger explicitly opposes Wagner and Wagnerism in his lectures. Wagnerism was in decline during the 1930s, yet Wagner had become sanctified by Hitler personally. In his posthumously published interview with *Die Spiegel* (1966, pub.1976), Heidegger retrospectively situates his break with the Nazi movement within these *Nietzsche* lectures: 'Anyone who had ears to hear heard in these lectures a confrontation with National Socialism'.[5] This 'confrontation [*Auseinandersetzung*]' to which Heidegger refers involves, in the earlier lectures, a refutation of biologically inflected vitalism – the interpretation of Nietzsche that had been cited to legitimate racism – and, in the later lectures, the implication of National Socialism *within* 'European nihilism' itself. Heidegger's confrontation with (his own) National Socialism thus coincides with his confrontation with Nietzsche. The 'will to power', as 'active' or 'classic nihilism', turns out to manifest a culmination of the metaphysical will, not the 'countermovement' to it, as Nietzsche supposed. Whereas, in the first lectures, Heidegger seeks to interpret the will to power as art, in the latter lectures he interprets the will to power according to a destiny of Western metaphysics, unfolding before his eyes: 'the absolute dominance of pure power over the earth through man'.[6] This acknowledgement of a tragic *destiny* can equally be read as an attempt on the part of Heidegger to distance himself from *historical* responsibility (see chapter 5).

The question of a philosophical and political divergence or convergence over Wagner is further complicated by the fact that Adorno is not simply opposed to Wagner. Add to this mélange the fact that Adorno, the Leftist Hegelian, suppresses Wagner's

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[4] Farrell Krell, David. 'Heidegger Nietzsche Nazism', translator's introduction to *Nietzsche* (London: Harper Collins, 1991), vols. I & II, ix.

[5] Heidegger, M. 'Only a God Can Save Us', in *Philosophical and Political Writings*, p.33.

[6] In the 'European Nihilism' lectures (1940), Heidegger alludes to the contemporansous French defeat at the hand of Germany in the following way:

> We today are witness to a mysterious law of history which states that one day a people no longer measures up to the metaphysics that arose from its own history; that day arrives precisely when such metaphysics has been transformed into the absolute... It is not enough that one possess tanks, airplanes, and communication apparatus; not is it enough that one has at one's disposal men who can service such things... What is needed is a mankind that is from top to bottom equal to the unique fundamental essence of *modern* technology and its metaphysical truth; that is to say, one that lets itself be entirely dominated by the essence of technology precisely in order to steer and deploy individual technological processes and possibilities. In the sense of Nietzsche's metaphysics only the *Übermensch* is appropriate to an absolute "machine economy", and vice versa he needs for it the institution of absolute dominion over the earth.
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> Heidegger, M. *Nietzsche*, vol.4, .8; pp.116-7.

Left-Hegelianism, and we are left with a series of contradictions and coincidences that, by themselves, do not necessarily contribute to a productive conversation about Wagner, between Heidegger, Adorno and us. To use Adorno's term: what is the *Aktualität* of this conversation, today?

The problem of the relationship between modernity and the will – including the politics of willing – lies at the heart of both Wagner 'critiques'. It will be suggested that Adorno and Heidegger each address this issue through an understanding of modernity as being, in some fundamental respect, 'musical' (and each in relation to a question about language). From the standpoint of a history of ideas, these coincidences are a consequence of the shared influence of Nietzsche, and of a wider German philosophical and musical tradition. However, this virtual dialogue promises to give rise to a new position that relates to the overall problematic of this thesis. There can be no utopian-messianic waiting without willing (the German *wollen* means 'to wish for'; 'to intend'). At the same time, willing as intending turns utopianism into a bad science. What, then, is the relationship between willing and waiting?

From the late 1930s onwards, Adorno and Horkheimer had found in Nietzsche a resource for responding to the problems within contemporary historical materialism – specifically, the possibility of change amidst a perceived crisis within the Marxist tradition. Of course, the 'philosophical turn' in Marxism, partly motivated by the failure of German socialism, was already underway in the 1920s, with the work of Lukács and Karl Korsch. This was subsequently fuelled by the discovery of Marx's 'Paris Manuscripts'. Adorno and Horkheimer nevertheless uniquely identify the question of humanism as a central problem of historical materialism, the means for the critique of which were, accordingly, to be found outside of the existing historical materialist discourse.[7] As a speculative 'historical materialism', the possibility of change is understood *socially* by Adorno and Horkheimer; hence, beyond the *community* of Heidegger's 'province' (see chapter 4). And yet, Heidegger's deepened account of the will is already intimately concerned with those metaphysical-humanist problems that confronted, and continue to confront, historical materialism.

Rose notes that, 'Adorno and many other German writers of the inter-war period were attracted to an anti-humanist stance'. In *The Melancholy Science*, Rose was happy to go along with Adorno's response: by 'undermining humanism on its own grounds'.[8]

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[7] Cf. Jay, Martin. 'The Frankfurt School's Critique of Marxist Humanism', in *Permanent Exiles* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), pp.14-27.
[8] Rose, G. *The Melancholy Science*, p.138.

By the time of *Hegel Contra Sociology*, however, Rose loses patience with Adorno's 'ironic' humanism. The regressive nature of this irony meant that Adorno could not ground any 'speculative sociology of the proletariat'. Rose nevertheless faces a problem of her own, relating to the nature of the speculative positing itself (which, it was suggested in the previous chapter, is not speculative enough). In this chapter, another interpretation of Adorno's 'anti-humanism' will be proposed, *as* an-other, 'speculative' humanism. Adorno's anti-humanism, understood in relation to Heidegger's longer-standing anti-humanism, constitutes an attempt to put humanism on a surer footing than the existing humanisms – including Marxist humanism, where the most is at stake. Reaching beyond these 'German' debates, an internal, necessary relationship will be introduced between waiting, capitalist modernity and the possibility of the utopian.

Part I. Adorno and Wagner

In Search of Wagner was written between 1937 and 1938. In an introductory note to its eventual German publication of 1952, Adorno explains his intentions to contribute to an understanding of Nazism:

> The aim was to shake off the notion of a mere historical accident and to uncover the origin of fascist totalitarianism within the social processes that supported it. The source of Hitler's ideology was to be researched without regard for its relation with appropriated cultural values. The work of Richard Wagner forced itself to the forefront of this task.[9]

The decline of Wagnerism during the 1930s gives rise to an immediate question: does Adorno's search for 'the source of Hitler's ideology' amount to a psychology of the *Führer*? The attribution of 'Hitler's ideology' to Hitler alone would not, it seems, constitute a sophisticated understanding of this particular fascism, as a mass phenomenon. Of course, the cult of the leader is already a mass phenomenon. The source of Hitler's ideology precedes and circumscribes both Wagner and Hitler. Adorno goes in search of a historico-psychological type.

The first two chapters of the Wagner monograph address the authoritarianism and the anti-Semitism of this character-type. Adorno draws upon Wagner's output as a whole: the theoretical tracts, the letters and the libretti. In the music too we hear the

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[9] Adorno, T. W. '*Selbstanzeige des Essaybuches* Versuch über Wagner', in *GS* 13, p.504. Cited in: Bauer, Karin, *Adorno's Nietzschean Narratives* (State University of New York Press, 1999), pp.117-8.

convulsive movements of this reactive-reactionary (but also: revolutionary). Once again, in what sense is Wagner to be understood as the 'source' of Nazism? This methodological anomaly points not only to a problem but also to an opportunity for the interpretation of *In Search of Wagner*. The near-exceptionality of Hitler's obsession with Wagner (within the Nazi hierarchy) might signal that *this* Wagner – the bombastic Wagner of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* – is not the *only* Wagner. There is *another* Wagner.

The other Wagner surely emerges at the end of the 1920s, in the interpretations of Otto Klemperer and Ernst Bloch.[10] A young Adorno reviewed Klemperer's 1929 performance of Wagner's early music-drama, *The Flying Dutchman* (written by Marx's Jewish friend, Heinrich Heine) in a minimalist production of Ewald Dülberg at Berlin's Kroll Opera. In their negation of 'metaphorical dust, hollow symbolism, theatrical piety and romantic costuming', the Kroll had 'mobilised a reserve of actuality [*Aktualität*] in Wagner... which will explode today or tomorrow.'[11] Adorno suggests that the other Wagner is opposed to the traditional, Bayreuth Wagner. At the same time, this untapped actuality was only ever a possibility; hence, 'today or tomorrow'.[12]

The other Wagner is, appropriately enough, muted in the monograph. Wagner would remain profoundly 'ambivalent' for Adorno – the term he uses in his 1963 lecture '*Wagners Aktualität*'.[13] As ambivalent, Wagner encompasses the regressive and the progressive in one. The lecture marks a shift in the direction of the progressive, for reasons that can only be understood in the light of the 1930s work. The commonality of the two moments, progressive and regressive, is not simply ironic. Rather, a progressive movement *is* possible, out of – in the sense of the emancipation from – the regressive one. The resources of progress are not transcendent of history. This is the lesson of

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[10] Bloch, E. 'Paradoxes and the pastoral in Wagner's music', in *Essays on the Philosophy of Music*, trans. Peter Palmer (Cambridge University Press, 1985), p.153. Bloch wrote the programme notes for the Kroll production of *The Flying Dutchman*.

[11] Adorno, T. W. '*Berliner Opernmemorial*', in *GS* 19, p.270. Trans. Peter Heyworth, in *Otto Klemperer. His Life and Times* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), vol.1, pp.278-9.

[12] The Kroll production was presented at the 1938 exhibition of 'degenerate music', as 'one of the greatest cultural outrages of the Weimar Republic.' Ibid. p.280.

[13] Adorno, T. W. '*Wagners Aktualität*', in *GS*. 16, p.543. Translated by Susan H. Gillespie as, 'Wagner's Relevance for Today', in, ed. Leppert, R. *Essays on Music*, p.584.

Horkheimer's 'Egoism and Freedom Movements' (1936), with which the composition of *In Search of Wagner* was, admits Adorno, 'intimately bound up'.[14]

It is no exaggeration to say that Wagner stands at the centre of most of Adorno's intellectual concerns. In Wagner, not only do we find the source of German fascism, we find the source of the culture industry and the source of modern art. Adorno takes Nietzsche completely seriously: 'the philosopher is not free to do without Wagner'.[15] As in Nietzsche, Wagner stands for modernity itself. The importance of Wagner for Adorno can be understood in relation to the 'musical' metaphysics examined in the previous chapter. For the dissonant, melancholy science is already a philosophy of modernity.

In Search of Wagner is a collection of essays, plural. There is no single 'main thesis', as Slavoj Žižek has put it, seamlessly uniting the problems of fascism, commodification and art – though these are indeed its chief concerns.[16] Is *In Search of Wagner* a constellation? That would depend upon whether the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. And it is with this question that a revealing asymmetry emerges. The progressive Wagner corresponds to his anticipation of modern art, to 'the artwork of the future'. The form of modern, autonomous art is paradoxically bound to the form of the commodity. Adorno had already begun to conceive of this relationship in his contemporaneous essay 'On the Fetish-Character in Music and the Regression of Listening'. The problem of art and commodity is *mediatedly* related to the problems of fascism and anti-Semitism (there is another asymmetry *here*). Adorno and Horkheimer conceive of this mediation as the problem of egoism amidst the emergence of an authoritarian ego, whether the ego of the actual dictator or of the spectral dictator, the market. The problem of their analysis therefore concerns a slippage between the specific fascism of Nazism, and capitalism, united under an all-encompassing bourgeois *ratio*. The proliferation of capitalism after the demise of Nazism points to the need for a conceptual-historical distinction, though not separation.

Adorno finds the progressive Wagner *in the music alone*, thus tending to dismiss Wagner's dramatic narrative; his myth. This, in part, is a function of Adorno's absolutist conception of music – or rather, his conception of a music that becomes

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[14] Adorno, T. W. Preface to *In Search of Wagner*. In a letter to Walter Benjamin of 22 September 1937, Adorno writes, 'The Wagner piece is beginning to take shape, after much collecting of materials and many discussions with Max [Horkheimer], and will be focused around the concept of progress and reaction.' *The Complete Correspondence*, trans. Nicholas Walker (Harvard University Press, 2001), p.213.

[15] Nietzsche, F. 'The Case of Wagner', p.156.

[16] Žižek, Slavoj. 'Foreword: Why is Wagner Worth Saving?', in ibid. iix.

expressive language in its distancing of communicative language.[17] But Adorno's evaluation equally arises from his Nietzschean critique of Wagner's early humanism. *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (conceived in the 1840s, but only performed in the 1870s) is steeped in ideas taken from Ludwig Feuerbach, whom Wagner had studied in exile, after his involvement in the Dresden uprising of 1848. Wagner's manifesto *The Artwork of the Future* (1849) is dedicated to Feuerbach.

Adorno's difficulty with Feuerbach can perhaps be sensed from his (mis-) attribution of the *Ring*'s libretto to Hegel and Schopenhauer:

> In its form, the *Ring* is a metaphor of the totality of world history which perfects itself by achieving consciousness of what it had been in itself from time immemorial. If this reminds us as much of Hegel as of Schopenhauer, from whom Wagner borrowed the content of the allegory, then it remains true that beyond all this there is one particular aspect in which the *Ring* is in agreement with Hegel's philosophy of history. And this is the ruse of reason. Whatever opposition there is to the totality, to Wotan's universal will, is also in accord with it, because Wotan's absolute spirit has nothing in mind but its own annihilation.[18]

Adorno conflates two critiques into one here. The first is the critique of the false whole, familiar to *Negative Dialectics*. Wagner produces a music-dramatisation of world-history, a history that has already passed ('from time immemorial'). There is also the suggestion that Wagner transgresses the ban on representations of utopia (of course, *Götterdämmerung* does not end in utopia. It is perhaps more akin to a dystopia). More generally, Adorno disregards the central problematic of the *drama* of the *Ring*: the relationship between love and the law; both the law of the state and of private property, capital.[19] Wagner, like many of the Young Hegelians, conceives of this relationship as the modern problem of the political itself. Adorno's suspicion of kitsch dilettantism in Wagner – the *representation* of a system in art-myth – threatens to spill over into a

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[17] This is not to say that Adorno opposed programme music. His own compositions of lieder, as well as the remarkable *Singspiel* fragment (of 1932-3, based upon Mark Twain's adventures) points in the opposite direction. Adorno maintains that in programme music, the musical component should retain a quasi-autonomous moment, informed by a progressive musical language of its own. Berg's *Wozzeck* was proof that a synthesis of progressive music and drama was not only possible but necessary. It is, then, even more notable that Adorno rejects the Ring's dramatic *possibilities*, if its Young Hegelianism can indeed be considered dramatically and politically progressive (did Adorno *know* the 'Feuerbach Ending?).

[18] Adorno, T. W. *In Search of Wagner*, p.119.

[19] Ibid. ix

scepticism towards these genuine problems that Wagner addresses *extra*-mythically; problems that extend beyond Wagner into the historical materialist problematic.

According to Adorno, Wagner's high-Romantic valorisation of human love serves to conceal affirmatively its historically emergent and ideological character. In *Minima Moralia*, Adorno writes:

> The very involuntariness of love, even where it has not found itself a practical accommodation beforehand, contributes to the whole as soon as it is established as a principle. If love in society is to represent a better one, it cannot do so as a peaceful enclave, but only by conscious opposition. This, however, demands precisely the element of voluntariness that the bourgeois, for whom love can never be natural enough, forbid it.[20]

Love as conscious opposition to bourgeois love means the transformation of bourgeois love. Adorno *does* find 'love' in Wagner, in his music. And this more speculative love counters the scepticism encountered in Adorno's earlier reception of Wagner. Adorno can be said to conceive of the 'structure' of modern art, after Wagner, in those terms that the younger Hegel and the Young Hegelians had conceived of love: the ego (and its negation). Adorno's critique of (their) bourgeois love is filtered through the insights of Nietzsche, whereby the question of the ego becomes a question of the will; the question of egoism a question of willing.

The drama of the *Ring* centres about an opposition between self-interest and love (recalling Schelling's system of freedom). This opposition can be mapped onto further, Promethean oppositions: the gods and humanity, fate and history. The *Ring* is inconclusive precisely because these oppositions are not presented dualistically. The gods are capable of human love, as in Wotan's partial mercy towards Brünnhilde. The human representatives of love, Siegfried and Brünnhilde (who becomes human for the love of human love) are, like the gods, flawed. The ring symbolises both love, in the marriage of the hero to Brünnhilde, and self-interest, when the ring reveals that a drugged Siegfried has tricked Brünnhilde into being released into Gunther's bondage. All are tainted in the *Ring*, by the ring. This complexity of structure corresponds to the difficulty of bestowing any specific political primacy upon the work. As the *Ring* is completed over the next three decades, this difficulty becomes a near-impossibility for Wagner, who comes to adhere to a Schopenhauerian-apolitical metaphysics of love.

Wagner had studied Feuerbach's *Thoughts on Death and Immortality* (1830) in 1849. He almost certainly read the mature works, including *The Essence of Christianity*

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[20] Adorno, T. W. *Minima Moralia*, p.172.

(1841), in the following years.[21] Feuerbach's conception of love finds its way into Wagner's theoretical writings, as well as the *Ring*. In Feuerbach's *Thoughts*, Wagner would have read the following:

> the personal being as such, only as person, does not love, but only excludes and repels; the person strictly conceived as person cannot love but can only hate, divide, estrange. In order to be capable of love, the person must be able to surrender his harsh, excluding, being-for-self. But the person cannot accomplish this surrender if there does not exist in him an abode, so to speak, where he is not-person, where he is not divisive separator and expelling distinction, but in which all is one and one is all... love is being-together, being-in-common.[22]

By the time of *The Essence of Christianity*, Feuerbach's Left-Hegelian, pre-Marxian 'communism' is now in place. Love is understood quasi-dialectically. Self-relinquishment is found in another ego, as a moment; in the mutual negation of another ego. Equally Hegelian, initially at least, egoism is not founded in the love of two beautiful souls, but is, in the end, universally constituted *and* is universality-constituting. Love is the idea of humanity. However, this non-individual other remains universal humanity *itself*, which, being an externalisation of the Christian God's abstract perfection, can only be determined *in the negative*; beyond, in a sense, all possible individuals: 'The Thou belongs to the perfection of the I: only together do human beings form a single human being, only together are human beings what they are, and what they can and must be'.[23]

This understanding of love arguably becomes, in Wagner's fragment *Der Künstlertum der Zukunft* (1849): 'It is in communism that egoism achieves its greatest satisfaction, in other words, through the total denial and supersession of egoism.'[24] In comparison to Feuerbach's anthrotheology, Wagner finds *his* universality in androgyny.[25] The 'utopian' Volsungs, of whom Siegfried is the first, are born of the incestuous love between Siegmund and Sieglinde:

> Bride and Sister you are to your brother – thus let the Volsung's blood bloom.[26]

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[21] Nattiez, Jean-Jacques. *Wagner Androgyne*, trans. Stewart Spencer (Princeton University Press, 1993), p.123.
[22] Feuerbach, Ludwig. *Thoughts on Death and Immortality*, trans. James A. Massey (University of California Press, 1980), p.29.
[23] Cited in: Nattiez, J-J. *Wagner Androgyne*, p.123.
[24] Cited in: ibid. p.125.
[25] Cf. ibid, ch. 5.
[26] Wagner, Richard. *Die Walküre*, Act I, Scene 3.

It is this naturalistic and biological conception of humanity that Adorno takes exception to. The proto-communism of the *Ring* is enslaved to an archaic model of community. Alberich's theft of the gold, which sets the curse of the ring in motion, is the despoiling of an original state of nature through self-interest – the extraction of capital, in the exchange of its curse, from pure gold. Wotan repeats the curse by (not) paying the giants for Valhalla, and so on.

Siegfried, the hero, is exempt from bourgeois law, having been kept in isolation from it. Neither does he understand fear, meaning that he is not alienated from his labour and from others. Not recognising the division of labour, Siegfried forges the sword with no expertise at all (the smelting of the fragments being another trope of unity). Citing examples other than these, Adorno proposes that Siegfried is the prototypical Romantic anti-capitalist:

> The Romanticized concept of the proletariat… is complemented here by the no less Romantic notion that society would be able to regenerate itself if only it could find its way back to its unsullied origins.[27]

In Wagner, we find 'the chimera of the pure, unhistorical, immediate human being.' This is Adorno's critique of naturalistic humanism in Wagner – by extension, in Feuerbach, who is notable by his absence from *In Search of Wagner* (and his scarcity in Adorno's writings as a whole, despite his student Alfred Schmidt). Importantly, as we shall see, Adorno considers this immediacy, the 'Romanticized idea of the proletariat', a spurious universality – meaning that there is another, genuine universality.

Siegfried's sadism towards the 'Jewish' Mime represents the *ressentiment* of the Germanic hero. But why does Adorno tend to read the *Ring* through Siegfried, who only appears in the third music-drama? Why, for that matter, does Adorno interpret the *Ring* through the male characters alone? Is Wagner's androgyny lost on Adorno? In the so-called 'Feuerbach Ending' – the early draft of *Götterdämmerung*, which Adorno does not mention – Brünnhilde speaks of redemption through love, not death (of the gods), as happens in the final 'Schopenhauer Ending'. The ring is not the despoiling of nature alone. It is the origin of self-interest *and* of love. Against Adorno's reading, this contradiction *is* historical, but only in the sense of being pre-historical. The contradiction, the ring, must be sublated if the cyclical repetition of fate is to be broken and love is to become the law – which would no longer be the law (of history) as we know it. The problem of the ending is not Brünnhilde's death (for she remains, just

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[27] Adorno, T. W. *In Search of Wagner*, p.120.

about, one of the gods) but rather the need to return the ring to the Rhine – to nature, and not to history; not even natural-history.

Adorno substantiates his critique of the *Ring*'s naturalism by arguing that Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk* rests upon a misapprehension of art and the arts – poetry and music in particular: 'Music is called upon to do nothing less than retract the historical tendency in language, which is based upon signification, and to substitute expressiveness for it.'[28] Adorno does not deny the mythic-Romantic unity of music and language. It is nevertheless a lost unity. Adorno conceptualises music as (anti-) language. All art is a question of 'logicity' and '*Sprachcharakter*'. Where Wagner is concerned, Adorno equates an absence of logical development with the pre-linguistic. The pre-linguistic is the language of ineloquent gestures. An anecdote recalling an encounter between Wagner and Nietzsche, in which Nietzsche remained silent, recalls the tumult of Wagner's character type. Wagner's 'musical consciousness',

> exhibits one peculiar instance of regression: it is as if the aversion to mimicry, which became increasingly powerful with the growth of Western rationalisation and which played a by no means insignificant role in crystallising out the autonomous, quasi-linguistic logic of music, did not have complete power over him. His music lapses into the pre-linguistic, without being able to divest itself wholly of quasi-linguistic elements.[29]

In the absence of logical development, Wagner dramatises the individual gesture; paradigmatically, the *Leitmotiv*. Having criticised Wagner the bad-Hegelian, Adorno now criticises Wagner the anti-Hegelian; or rather, in musical terms, Wagner as contra-Beethoven. In Beethoven, themes and counter-themes are developed through contrasting variations. These are in turn overcome in new contrasting themes and variations: 'the history of a theme' (Schoenberg). In spite of his revolution, Beethoven adheres to the sonata-form (exposition, development, recapitulation). There is no such history in Wagner's music-drama, complains Adorno. But Wagner is doing something altogether different to Beethoven. Indeed, beneath the surface of Adorno's critique of nominalism in Wagner lies a thesis on decadence as the possible transformation of egoism. And this has consequences for the question of humanism in historical materialism and philosophical messianism.

Wagner's later music, including parts of the *Ring*, displays a dialectical relation to language after all, Adorno now acknowledges. Citing the Prelude to *Tristan und*

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[28] Ibid. p.88.
[29] Ibid. p.24.

Isolde, Adorno suggests that the complaint of logical inconsistency – its 'unending melody' (Nietzsche) – arises from a Classicist or Baroque understanding of music.[30] Wagner not only marks the de-cadence from Baroque and Classical *styles*; he anticipates the modern music of Schoenberg and beyond. Nietzsche 'still heard' Wagner 'with the ears of the Biedermeier listener'.[31] Adorno's account of this 'progressive' moment of Wagner's musical consciousness has implications reaching beyond the consciousness of music.

Wagner equally anticipates the culture industry. Adorno compares the repeated gesture of the *Leitmotiv* to advertising: 'the music is designed to be remembered, it is intended for the forgetful.'[32] In the essay 'On the Fetish Character', it is suggested that the *Leitmotiv* is a symptom of unreflective nominalism. Listening 'atomistically' and 'less attentively' is distinctive of all 'commodity music' (see chapter 3). Chromatism takes the ambivalence of major and minor, which underpinned previous musical Romanticism, and turns it into multi-valence. Tonal multi-valence distracts and decentres concentration. Music as art 'can only be bodied forth' in 'the most intense effort of memory and anticipation'.[33] Lack of attention is a symptom of a weakened ego amidst a flawed society:

> the weaker the social and hence, too, the aesthetic determination the ego became, the less it was able to exteriorise itself as an objective expression of a totality, the greater the arrogance with which an unfettered individuality asserted itself.

On Adorno's more ambiguous reading of Wagner, however – if we stress its dialectical character – the later music *is* a music of 'memory and anticipation', but *only as* a music of forgetting and distraction. Far from displacing concentration *with* distraction, or anticipation *with* presence, Wagner redefines concentration *within* distraction; anticipation *within* presence.

Chromatism is supposed to oppose concentration because it goes everywhere and nowhere. Unending melody is no melody; no 'grand style' (Nietzsche). But Adorno observes that, in works such as *Tristan*, Wagner develops chromatic harmony within smaller-scale tonal structures. He thereby avoids the perpetual modulation that would

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[30] Nietzsche, F. 'The Case of Wagner', p.157.
[31] Adorno, T. W. *In Search of Wagner*, p.45.
[32] Ibid. p.21.
[33] Ibid. p.88.

invite Nietzsche's charge. The three-part 'bar' form that governs this structure is itself quasi-dialectical:

> Wagner draws his productive force from an irreducible contradiction, and wrests a progressive constructiveness from the regressive moment of gesture. This goes as far beyond mere subjective expression, as it cancels as it preserves it in the double Hegelian sense.[34]

What is this 'irreducible contradiction' from which Wagner drew his 'productive force'? An answer can be proposed in the light of both the later essay on music and language and *Aesthetic Theory*. The musical logic of tonality disintegrates, but modern music integrates another 'logicity' out of this disintegration. Far from seeking an unhistorical union of music and language, Adorno suggests that Wagner emphasises their mythic affinity in an exaggerated and even tragic manner:

> In fact, Wagner, with his radical demand for a declamation that would do justice to language, not only drew vocal music much closer to music than it had ever been before, and did so in a specifically mimetic way, but also assimilated musical construction itself to the gesture of language to the point of exaggerated clarity.[35]

Wagner turns the disintegration of music – and language – against itself, as an integrating gesture. Wagner 'wrests a progressive constructiveness from the regressive moment of gesture'. The individual, empirical gesture is pushed to an extreme, and is exploded beyond its isolated individuality. It *becomes* an eloquent gesture, speaking beyond itself to another, and from another: the 'latent "I"' (but not *the Thou*?). The eloquent gesture is an expressive language. Wagner's nominalism is accordingly a dissonant nominalism.

The Ambivalence of Decadence

Nietzsche's definition of decadence, given in 'The Case of Wagner' (1888), is indebted to Paul Bourget. Nietzsche defines Wagner's decadence as literary, not musical:

> What is the sign of *literary decadence*? That life no longer dwells in the whole. The word becomes sovereign and leaps out of the sentence, the

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[34] Ibid. p.37.
[35] Adorno, T. W. 'Music, Language and Composition', in *Essays on Music*, p.122.

> sentence reaches out and obscures the meaning of the page, the page gains life at the expense of the whole – the whole is no longer a whole.[36]

For Nietzsche, Wagnerian 'atomisation' signals an unreflective nominalism. Decadence is a symptom of the sickness that is passive nihilism. But the definition of this sickness in the *Genealogy of Morality* should be recalled in order to indicate *its* ambivalence. 'Bad conscience is a sickness, there's no point in denying it, but a sickness rather like pregnancy.'[37] Decadence as pregnancy is the nominalism that promises to overcome itself, giving birth to its other: the whole. As art, this promise is broken every time. At the same time, this means that the political whole is not a total work of art.

Adorno adjusts his position on Wagner in his 1963 lecture:

> I am not distancing myself from the book [*In Search of Wagner*] nor am I abandoning the conception. With regard to Wagner the situation has changed generally. Therefore, I would like to present – not as a revision of what I once thought, but as a way of taking into account what has newly come to our attention about Wagner – some divergences from the old text.[38]

Taken together, *In Search of Wagner* and 'Wagner's Relevance for Today' display Adorno's continued ambivalence towards the composer, not a sudden turn towards him:

> The position of consciousness toward Wagner that I experience as my own whenever I encounter him, and which is not only mine, is even more deserving of the appellation ambivalent [*ambivalent*] than the earlier position – an oscillation between attraction and repulsion.[39]

Wagner continues to provide lessons for modern music. The tendency to compose spatially, in 'blocks', is anticipated in Wagner's explosion of logical development, as is the allied prioritisation of colour in orchestration. Colour is no longer 'phantasmagoria', as it was in the monograph. Or, perhaps Adorno now acknowledges the ambivalence of phantasmagoria, *as* semblance?

The two poles of Adorno's ambivalence correspond to Acts I and II of *Siegfried* respectively. In Act I, Siegfried dominates the music, just as he dominates Mime. The music recapitulates Siegfried's authoritarian character ('Siegfried's brutal forging

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[36] Nietzsche, F. 'The Case of Wagner', p.170.
[37] Nietzsche, F. *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p.64.
[38] Adorno, T. W. 'Wagner's Relevance for Today', p.574.
[39] Ibid. p.587.

songs').[40] Extending Adorno's remarks, it can be said that, in Act II, the music masters Siegfried. Through his *experience* of the song of the wood-bird, Siegfried masters himself and frees Brünnhilde into her mastery of the master (*as* love). Siegfried finds himself outside of himself – that is, outside of his mythic representation, outside of bourgeois humanism as such – in the music, which stands here for a 'non-human' language. The wood-bird is not original nature once over. The proto-modern music of the 'forest murmurs' (which Adorno suggests should be performed on its own in the concert hall) is a post- natural-human(ist) language. *As* language, nevertheless, it signals an other humanity. Adorno's dedication of *In Search of Wagner*, to 'Gretel', cryptically, and apocalyptically, hints at this (critique of) anti-humanism: 'Horses are the survivors of the age of heroes'.

The 'adjustment' in Adorno's stance towards Wagner is prompted not only by the (incomplete) fall of Nazism but also by a perceived divergence between the culture industry that Wagner anticipated and the one that transpired. The parallel development of, for instance, Hollywood (upon which Wagner had no small influence) and the musical avant-garde, leads to a resituating of the other Wagner as closer to the latter than to the former. Hence, a composer of the avant-garde, Pierre Boulez, could conduct the centennial *Ring* in 1976 (in a production by Patrice Chéreau). Once again, Wagner is art *and* commodity. Adorno's ambivalence 'only points back to the Janus-like character of the work itself. Undoubtedly, every art of significance exhibits something like this, Wagner's especially.'[41] Art 'of significance' is modern, autonomous art. Autonomous art is 'Janus-like' because it is also a heteronomous commodity. 'Wagner's especially' – meaning, it seems, that Wagner is prototypical of modern art. Dissonant art is art 'since Baudelaire and *Tristan*', Adorno states in *Aesthetic Theory*.[42] And did not Baudelaire *want to be* Wagner?[43]

'Wagner's Relevance for Today' can be read back into *In Search of Wagner* in order to extend the thesis on decadence. Wagner's nominalism in music is equally, and

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[40] Bloch, E. 'Paradoxes and the pastoral in Wagner's music', p.151.
[41] Adorno, T. W. 'Wagner's Relevance for Today', p.587.
[42] Adorno, T. W. *Aesthetic Theory*, p.15.
[43] '[Wagner] is at the moment the truest representative of modernity... Wagner's opera is a *serious work*, demanding sustained attention; it is hardly necessary to point out how much this fact must tell against its chances in a country where the chief reasons for the success of classical tragedy lay in the opportunities which it offered for distraction'. Baudelaire, Charles. 'Richard Wagner and *Tannhäuser* in Paris', in *The Painter of Modern Life and other Essays*, trans. Jonathan Mayre (London: Phaidon, 1995), p.137; p.140. Cf. Lacoue-Labarthe, P. *Musica Ficta*, ch.1.

accordingly, a nominalism of egoism. This gives new meaning to an important passage in the monograph:

> By reflecting and displaying its own weakness, the ego differentiates itself infinitely [*das Ich differenziert sich unendlich*], but by the same token that weakness causes it to regress to a pre-ego stage.[44]

It was suggested in the previous chapter that Adorno conceives of bourgeois society as a false whole, in that it mis-takes its nominalist whole for the true one; false consciousness in-stead of self-consciousness. The artwork resists the false whole with a false singularity, or the singularity of semblance. False singularity is the self-consciousness of the false whole. The necessary ambivalence of 'every art of significance... Wagner's especially' is the possibility of this self-consciousness. The ambivalence of 'Wagner', as art, is the dialectical ambivalence of egotism and egoism (which is not at all to say that *all* ambivalence is dialectical). Ego-weakness is the former moment of dialectical ambivalence. If autonomous art demands autonomous judgement, then egoism is the *other* moment.

But what, precisely, is meant by egoism here? The egoism of Horkheimer's 'Egoism and Freedom Movements' is taken from Freud and Nietzsche. The *Genealogy* underpins this 'Anthropology of the Bourgeois Ego', an ego that misrepresents Nietzsche:

> The *Übermensch*, the most problematic concept with which the psychologist left the analytical realm Nietzsche had mastered, has been interpreted along the lines of the philistine bourgeois's wildest dreams, and has been confused with Nietzsche himself. The adventurous element seemed so appealing. Greatness, blood, and danger have always been cherished in paintings and monuments. But Nietzsche is the opposite of this inflated sense of power. His error lay in his lack of historical understanding of the present, which led him to bizarre hypotheses where clear theoretical knowledge was possible.[45]

Horkheimer attempts to fuse the *Genealogy* with a new historical materialism. As in the *Genealogy*, egoism is not interchangeable with but rather contradicts individualism, ego-*tism*:

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[44] Adorno, T. W. *In Search of Wagner*, p.34.

[45] Horkheimer, Max. 'Egoism and Freedom Movements: On the Anthropology of the Bourgeois Era', in *Between Philosophy and Social Science*, trans. Hunter Kramer & Torpey (Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1993), p.109.

> The bourgeois revolution did not lead the masses to the lasting state of joyful existence and the universal equality they longed for, but to the hard reality of an individualistic social order instead.[46]

For Nietzsche, the ego as essence is a 'pure, will-less, painless, timeless subject of knowledge... an eye which cannot be thought at all, an eye turned in no direction at all'. Whereas, egoism is '*only* a perspective seeing, *only* a perspective "knowing".'[47] The self-valorisation of the ego is reactive, in that it proceeds from suspicion – hatred – of the other. This 'eye', 'turned in no particular direction', is *nothing* of itself. Conversely, ego-*ism* proceeds from the original production of a perspective; a perspective that belongs to the production (of 'life'), not to the ego. Horkheimer calls this spontaneous production 'play'.

Horkheimer's Nietzschean conception of egoism finds its way into Adorno. Yet Adorno gives it a Kantian twist. Egoism is the original power of judgement, *Ürteils-kraft*. Ideology, in the forms of fascism and the culture industry, interrupts the power of judgement by passing judgement on behalf of and in place of egoism. The *structure* of willing is, on both sides, identical. The authoritarian will pursues subject-object identity, domination, and the passive will similarly (structurally) wills nothing – even though the outcome of this identity is qualitatively different for both sides.[48] This insight is in keeping with Adorno's (and Benjamin's) thesis on the nihilism of capitalism as whole. The will to identity is concomitant with (not merely determined by) the exchange process: 'The exchange-principle, the reduction of human labor to an abstract general concept of average labor-time, is primordially related to the identification-principle.'[49]

Modern art places a demand on the power of judgement. Adorno's Kantianism is philosophical and cultural-historical here. The weakening of egoism is measured against gains made for it during a supposed enlightenment (Enlightenment) moment. Narratives of decline, of decadence, must posit a height from which the decline set-in. Hence, the danger of nostalgia. Adorno knows that this height was always a *promise* of

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[46] Ibid. p.62.
[47] Nietzsche, F. *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p.92.
[48] In the Wagner monograph, Adorno prefers the terminology of 'ego', '*das Ich*', and 'egoism' over that of subject and subjectivity. Horkheimer, who had previously disregarded Kant as solipsistic, subsequently takes over the Kantian interpretation of egoism. The autonomous subject breaks out of its solipsistic shell: The 'idea of self-determination' is now universalised 'for the human race'. Horkheimer, M. 'Traditional and Critical Theory' in *Critical Theory*, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell et al. (New York: Herder & Herder, 1972), p.229.
[49] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.149-51.

maturity, not maturity itself. By contrast, as the category of play might suggest, Horkheimer's egoism remains, initially at least, nostalgic. Spontaneous egoism is supposed to have existed prior to the 'bourgeois epoch'. Not since Kant, but Hobbes, the intellectual bridge between the pre-bourgeois and bourgeois ego:

> As the dominance of bourgeois society grows more undiluted and its influence less restrained, people come to view one another with increasing hostility and indifference as individuals, families, economic groups, and classes.[50]

Increasing hostility presupposes a pre-bourgeois 'pleasure' in social relations – much like the community 'sentiment [*Gemüt*]' of Antonio Tönnies' *Community and Society* (1887). And unlike in Georg Simmel's contrasting metropolitan 'blasé-type', Horkheimer's modern ego does not, at this point, promise *any* kind of freedom (see chapter 4).

In this respect, Horkheimer formally repeats the initial archaism of the *Genealogy*. The aristocratic masters valued egoism, whereas the slaves devalued it through their hatred of the masters. Judeo-Christian modernity is thereafter an experience of decadence. Morality itself is decadent because the distinction between good and evil proceeds from a reactive evaluation of the good: 'it is only with a *decline* of aristocratic value-judgments that this whole antithesis between "egoistic" and "unegoistic" forces itself more and more on man's conscience'.[51] The reversal in values means that the slave morality parades as the master morality. Today – this is Nietzsche's turn *against* archaism – '*ressentiment*' defines the bourgeois rulers, and the slavish need of rulers. According to Horkheimer, 'As much as the whole world must tremble before [the leaders] in fear, they themselves display the image of fear of still higher and supreme beings'. Is this the inspiration behind Adorno's interpretation of Siegfried, as (the) *Führer*?[52]

Horkheimer's 'play' is modelled upon Hobbes' instinctual desires, alongside Nietzsche's vitalism. Having accepted the terms of Hobbes, Horkheimer now rejects the their suppression under Hobbes' own scientific rationality. This vitalist-naturalistic egoism remains unproductive within Horkheimer's overall historical narrative. Horkheimer does not act upon the fundamental insight of the *Genealogy*: the sickness of bourgeois nihilism does not call for a return to the healthy life of the Greeks, or

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[50] Horkheimer, M. 'Egoism and Freedom Movements', p.52.
[51] Nietzsche, F. *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p.13.
[52] Horkheimer, M. 'Egoism and Freedom Movements', p.69.

whoever, but rather for a 'self-overcoming [*Selbstaufhebung*]', as the *Über-mensch*.[53] Horkheimer accepts Nietzsche's diagnosis without accepting his 'bizarre' cure (but is evaluation possible without revaluation?). Adorno's reliance upon Horkheimer's essay would suggest that he too seeks to re-value the ego in terms of egoism. And Adorno's – modernist – post-Hegelianism paradoxically brings him closer to the 'free spirit' of the *Genealogy* than the 'Nietzschean' Horkheimer.

In the earlier monograph, Adorno writes that,

> the fault-line discernible in Wagner's work – his impotence in the face of the technical contradictions and the social conflicts underlying them, in short all the qualities that prompted his contemporaries to speak of 'decadence' – *is also the path of artistic progress.*[54]

'Decadence' is '*also*' the path of artistic progress. In 'differentiating *itself* infinitely', the ego acts, as egoism.[55] Egoism is here the power of differentiation. This is not thereby (solely) the 'regress to a pre-ego stage'. On the contrary, the act of infinite self-differentiation means the relinquishing of the existing ego in a new egoism – and not, therefore, the relinquishment of egoism as such that is characteristic of Feuerbach's love and Schopenhauer's nirvana. In what sense is this differentiation 'infinite'? Is it a 'bad infinity'? Is it the sublime?

Adorno writes in *Aesthetic Theory* that the experience of 'shudder' in art is not merely an affective 'experience [*Erlebnis*]'. 'This experience [*Erfahrung*] is contrary to the weakening of the I [*Schwächung des Ichs*] that the culture industry manipulates.'[56] There is a continuity with and a divergence from the Wagner studies here. First, the continuity: modern art mimics the weakening of the ego, 'manipulated by the culture industry', as mimesis. Art 'is modern art through its mimesis of the hardened and alienated.'[57] In Wagner, 'the ego differentiates itself infinitely'. In the 'shudder', the 'I perceives its own limitedness and finitude'. If the infinite is read as the non-finite then the two statements become compatible. This non-finitude nevertheless looks formal-

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[53] I have opted for Walter Kaufmann's more literal rendering of '*Selbstaufhebung*' as 'self-overcoming', rather than Carol Diethe's 'sublimating itself', partly because elsewhere Nietzsche speaks more explicitly of '*Sublimierung*' to indicate sublimation. Nietzsche, F. *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Kaufmann & Hollingdale (New York: Vintage, 1967), p.73. Cf. Kaufmann, Walter. *Nietzsche* (Princeton University Press, 1950), p.236.
[54] Adorno, T. W. *In Search of Wagner*, p.34. My emphasis.
[55] My emphasis.
[56] Adorno, T. W. *Aesthetic Theory*, p.245.
[57] Ibid. p.21.

transcendental in structure: the exceptional shudder always, infinitely, falls back into the status quo. The exception remains merely exceptional. In contrast to Kant's sublime, however, Adorno's shudder is historically mediated (though not historically subsumed?). Yet its *structure* is not, it seems, historical. Shudder, like mimesis, then resembles Horkheimer's play (there is perhaps a shared influence from Benjamin's reflections on mimesis). By contrast, the modern, 'post-Wagnerian' shudder – here is the divergence from the 'naturally' sublime shudder – is of a historically singular character. The relationship between the 'I that the culture industry manipulates' and the 'I that perceives its own limitedness and finitude' is 'more' dialectical in the Wagner monograph than in *Aesthetic Theory*, where the poles tend to remain antinomical. This means that the *possible*, new egoism – occasioned by the emergence of the culture industry, the cultural form of capitalism – is unique to that modernity. To characterise Wagner in terms of distraction, boredom and waiting – descriptions of the experience of modernity – is then to characterise specifically modern forms of distraction, boredom and waiting. The infinity to which Adorno refers names an originary historical negation, whether understood as strictly dialectical or as post-messianic. The negation is, in this sense, the 'non-' of the 'non-finitude'.

Horkheimer has Aristotle's *Poetics* in mind when he concludes his essay on egoism: 'Catharsis through dramatic plays, through play in general, presupposes a changed humanity.'[58] Horkheimer belatedly and confusedly concurs with the *Genealogy* that modernity is the sole pre-condition of its self-overcoming. The inversion of values turns life against itself. But a necessary consequence of the ascetic ideal, the self-discipline of this inversion, is the emergence of the modern will itself. For, 'In spite of… suffering' the ascetic ideals, *and* because of it,

> man was *saved*, he had a *meaning*, from now on he was no longer like a leaf in the breeze, the plaything of the absurd, of 'non-sense'; from now on he could *will* something, – no matter what, why and how he did it at first, the *will itself was saved*… a *will to nothingness*… is and remains a *will*! … And, to conclude by saying what I said at the beginning: man still prefers to *will nothingness*, than *not* will [Nichts *wollen*, *als* nicht *wollen*].[59]

No will to power without the will (as Hegel knew, the Greeks were *not* masters). The will must, says Nietzsche, be re-oriented *out of* nothing *to* power – not 'passive', but 'active nihilism'.

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[58] Horkheimer, M. 'Egoism and Freedom Movements', p.110.
[59] Nietzsche, F. *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p.128.

Though he finds Nietzsche's *Übermensch* 'problematic', Horkheimer proposes a historical materialist interpretation of it, in his notion of a 'changed humanity'. A changed humanity means a new egoism, not the old ego following new imperatives, as attributes to its essence (an 'eye turned in no particular direction'). This is arguably the ongoing challenge of Adorno and Horkheimer to the Marxist tradition – both humanist and structuralist, given the controversy over Marx's reliance upon Feuerbachian metaphysics. It is also their (ongoing) challenge to vitalism. Nietzsche's *Übermensch*, like the Volsung *blood*, is hardly universal *in its orientation.* It too is a spurious, and ultimately catastrophic universal.

Nietzsche nevertheless confronts the *structural* paradox proposed in the opposition: old and new humanity. This opposition cannot be understood by the old humanists. How can the overcoming of the old humanity proceed from the old humanity, from the old humanism? Nietzsche's mediation is not, observes Horkheimer, sufficiently historical. But Horkheimer and Adorno take from Nietzsche *and* Marx the thesis that a changed humanity means a changed comportment of humanity, to itself, as much as the actualisation of imperatives arising from, for instance, a pre-commitment to a human essence. The changed comportment is the possibility, not the redundancy of the commitment. Commitment is concomitant with the changed comportment.

Modern art demands a new comportment. Art distracts perspective seeing from the old comportment, an eye turned in no particular direction, in the attention of a new perspective – or rather, the 'perspectival'. The 'I' is 'liquidated'. Something like Benjamin's thesis on 'distraction [*Zerstreuung*]' can be seen in Adorno's near-contemporaneous 'theory of decadence', in spite of Adorno's cautious reception of 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' (1936). The 'contemplation' that *was* expected of art (its 'aura') is displaced by the distraction of mass art, specifically cinema. The cinema promises to politically 'mobilise' the masses. Benjamin's optimistic conception of the masses, and of mass art, leads him into an optimistic conception of popular political mobilisation (but what, precisely, is the *popular* here?). If Adorno is right about the 'source of Hitler's ideology' then the political mobilisation that the mass art of Wagnerism contributed to is not the one that Benjamin had in mind: 'communism'. The political judgement of the 'masses' is 'weakened' by and as distraction, thus handing power to an authoritarian ego. But in the second, suppressed moment of Adorno's analysis, the 'weakening' of the ego is equally the possibility of its transformation (which in no way is to say that fascism is the possibility of communism;

they are truly antithetical). Concentration and distraction are in that case mediated in, and as, the modern artwork.

For Benjamin, 'the mode of human sense perception [*Sinneswahrnehmung*] changes with humanity's entire mode of existence [*Daseinsweise*].'[60] The 'with' is equivocal here. What is its determining function? On the one hand, humanity's mode of existence determines its perception, as base determines superstructure. But Benjamin and Adorno suggest that the change in perception also determines the change in the mode of existence. The transformation of egoism is in that case something like Adorno's social alternative to Benjamin's mass art. For Benjamin's mediation of art and politics is one-sided, from a Hegelian perspective. The 'I' becomes 'We' without the 'We' becoming 'I'. And vice versa.[61]

Adorno bemoans 'the chimera of the pure, unhistorical, immediate human being' in Wagner's myth. He thus rejects both Wagner's attempt to realise sociality in art-religion and Schopenhauer's aesthetic of redemption, which goes beyond the *principium individuationis*. His metaphysics resonates with and does not directly contradict Feuerbach's sensuous humanism. Love, says the author of *Death and Immortality*, 'is a consuming fire.'[62] Feuerbach goes beyond Hegel's account of love as the immanently inter-subjective movement of spirit (an account that would in any case not have been known to Feuerbach).[63] According to Feuerbach's erotic humanism, the fire threatens to consume love itself, anticipating the fate of Brünnhilde.[64]

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[60] Benjamin, W. 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', in *Illuminations*, p.216.

[61] The 'absolute substance which is the unity of what Spirit is – this absolute substance which is the unity of different independent self-consciousnesses which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence: the 'I' that is 'We' and 'We' that is 'I'.' Hegel, G. W. F. *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p.110.

[62] Feuerbach, L. *Thoughts on Death and Immortality*, p.37.

[63] Hegel develops his concept of love as spirit through an interpretation of the Last Supper. Spirit is the task of humanity, left behind by the 'death of God' in the Ascension:

> the bread and the wine are not just an object, something for the intellect. The action of eating and drinking is not just a self-unification brought about through the destruction of food and drink, nor is it simply the mere tasting of food and drink. The spirit of Jesus, in which his disciples are one, has become a present object, a reality, for external feeling. Yet the love made objective, this subjective element becomes a *thing*, reverts once more to its nature, becomes subjective again in the eating. This return may perhaps in this respect be compared with the thought which in the written word becomes a thing and which recaptures its subjectivity out of an object, out of something lifeless, when we read.

G. W. F. Hegel. 'The Spirit of Christianity and its Fate', in *Early Theological Writings*, trans. T. M. Knox (University of Chicago Press, 1961), p.251.

[64] *Death and Immortality* is not yet the anthrotheology of *The Essence of Christianity*, in which the attributes of the Christian religion become the externalisations of

Adorno's 'liquefied' 'I' is no postulation of a universal love or will, but is rather '*Erfahrung*', understood after both Hegel's 'experience of consciousness' and Benjamin's post-idealist reformulations. The experience of art is, in *structurally* Hegelian terms (but not Hegel's terms), that of love. Given Adorno's problems with Hegelian metaphysics, with all metaphysics 'after Auschwitz', can he bestow universality upon the sociality that is promised 'in' modern art, or at least in the kind of 'subjectivity' that is promised in such art, which must of course exceed art? More broadly, what is Adorno's conception of spirit (since spirit is both the experience of consciousness and love)? Adorno's seeming avoidance of Feuerbach renders this question ever more pressing, to the extent that Marx's '*Gattungswesen*' partially constitutes an interpretation of the Feuerbachian inversion of Hegelian spirit (assuming that Adorno's philosophical materialism *is* Marxian). Of course, the affinity of Marx to Feuerbach is, at one level, itself formal. The content is completely transformed by Marx. Feuerbach's Idealist (or rather, Rationalist) deduction of the universality of thought neglects '*practical*, human-sensuous activity', the genuine human universality. Adorno follows Marx's critique of Feuerbach but understands it counter to Marx's interpretation of Hegel (again, Marx and the Young Hegelians were not familiar with the *Phenomenology*). 'What is meant' by the idea of natural-history, Adorno writes,

> is certainly not the anthropological concept of nature of Feuerbach, against which Marx aimed dialectical materialism, in the sense of a reprise of Hegel against the Left Hegelians.[65]

Feuerbach's formalism is nevertheless equally a problem in the early Marx. Aside from the question as to *which* sensuous human activity *ought* to be universal for a fulfilled humanity (in Feuerbach, the question is '*which* thought?'), an equally fundamental, related problem concerns the original positing of the universality itself. For it is not *only* 'unhistorical' humanism that Adorno objects to. Adorno counters this, following Marx, with a 'dialectical materialism': the attempted overcoming of naturalistic humanism with historical humanism. Rather, an additional (neo-)Kantian

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humanity. But the love of *Death and Immortality* is already the Christian love that, as 'Heart', forms one of the three attributes in *The Essence of Christianity*, constituting, 'in [humanity] his species, his humanity proper'. A further parallel to Schopenhauer appears when Feuerbach defines the 'Will' as 'feeling', taking the example of music. 'Who has not experienced the irresistible power of musical sounds? And what else is this power if not the power of feeling? Music is the language of feeling – a musical note is sonorous feeling or feeling communicating itself.'

[65] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.347-51.

adjective is connected to the 'unhistorical' in Adorno's criticism: '*geschichtslos-**reinen**, unmittelbaren Menschenwesens*'. In parallel to the problem of naturalism, Adorno identifies the problem of transcendental-formalism – of, that is, an abstract universal of the human that is not humanly posited; and not therefore posited critically, from experience. As in Kant, pure, *rein*, signifies the formal-transcendental ('pure reason', 'pure concept'). The unhistorical and the formal-transcendental converge. Following Hegel's critique of Kant, this purity remains without mediated content: the historical experience 'of' consciousness – including what self-consciousness is not (yet). Adorno is aware of this problem, as his reprisal of Hegel would suggest. But this reprisal equally throws Adorno back onto the metaphysical problem of positing and grounding (whether the absolute Idea or spirit). Adorno's idea of natural-history is not free from his own implicit charge against existing humanism.

What, then, *is* the ground of an original positing of universality? It was suggested in the previous chapter that Hegel effectively attempts to determine (world-) spirit by way of a historical dialectic of human re-cognition (which can be understood as all activity, not merely the activity of cognition in a narrow sense). This marks Hegel's universality out from both the anthropological universality of Feuerbach and from the transcendental-subjective universality of Kant. It remains, in the former case, unclear as to how claims of value could be derived – without, of course, being grounded in theology. Can philosophical anthropology posit values, without anthrotheology? Can what humanity *has been* determine what it *ought to be*? Surely not, if is to be a 'changed humanity'.

Adorno does not lurch from the problem of positing to non-positing; to a sceptical, anti-humanist positivism. Hence, Adorno conceives of spirit as internally divided, between what society is and what it is not (yet). The hope for virtuous universality, for society as content, is the question or problem of what Adorno will call 'metaphysical experience', experience of what is missing from that content ('Something's Missing'). Hope is precarious after the crisis of metaphysics, which explicitly includes metaphysical humanism. Reflecting upon this, Adorno conceives of an expression of waiting in vain. The meaning of this expression can be further understood with respect to the foregoing account of music and distraction, in relation to the will and egoism, given Adorno's emphasis upon the musical character of the expression of waiting in vain. Distraction and waiting in vain are seemingly connected

via boredom. Adorno thus writes of the 'Wagnerian *longueurs*'.[66] Egoism and egotism are kinds of (non-) willing. The transformation of the comportment of willing can be understood as the possibility of a philosophy of waiting after messianism; that is, of the awaited: humanity proper.

Hegel's *Aufhebung*, taken over by Marx, is ontological with respect to history and humanity as a whole. History progresses according to an original positing, in the ruse of reason and in the modes of production respectively – until the last (which, for Marx, is the first).[67] Adorno's Nietzschean critique of humanism includes a critique of the positing that promises (this) progress. This is because Adorno locates the problem of immediacy, and thus positing, in the problem of the will itself. Scientific, positive historical materialism becomes affirmative by comporting itself to the future in the mode of expectation. This arises from its faith in an incessant, logical-historical movement towards a posited-positive outcome (scientific socialism then *is* utopian, in the pejorative sense). This political comportment turns out to be structurally identical with the principle of identity that dominates current modernity. Adorno knows that the will to identity culminates in *real* passive nihilism: 'Auschwitz confirms the philosopheme of pure identity in death.'[68] Again, Adorno does not seek to negate the will. To do so would be an act of the will itself. It would be to abstractly negate modernity from out of modernity (the will *is* modern). Rather, Adorno hints at a qualitatively changed willing in terms of a 'musical' auto-differentiation that is itself thoroughly modern, or rather modernist (and there is no post-modernism without modernism!). This changed human comportment is the 'progressive moment', and is hence not pessimistic or reactive. Willing as an expression of waiting in vain is not, thereby, quietism.

A significant problem remains, concerning the qualitative meaning of this new, 'active' waiting-comportment. Everything seems to rest upon an experiential dimension of modern art – and thereby an ontological claim about 'shudder', 'mimesis' and 'expression'. But even if the waiting-comportment exceeds art in the narrow sense – as

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[66] Adorno, T. W. *In Search of Wagner*, p.27.

[67] 'The bourgeois mode of production is the last antagonistic form of the social process of production… the productive forces within bourgeois society create also the material conditions for a solution of this antagonism.' Marx, K. *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, trans. S. W. Ryazanskaya (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1971), p.21. There is not room for a discussion of Marx's historical dialectic in this thesis. But, to generalise the foregoing critique: it is the necessity, not the possibility, of dialectical sublation that must be questioned – in order to make its necessity possible.

[68] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.354-358.

is suggested – why should there be any promise to such waiting? Why should the expression of waiting in vain not be an all-too-human vanity? Why should it be directed 'towards' utopia, as an actual, historical possibility; and not, for that matter, 'towards' dystopia? There is a problem of 'joining' the waiting to the a-waited – systematically, coherently – such that waiting is in some way 'constitutive of' the awaited, without becoming representing-expectation. This is the messianic problem; the problem of the messianic.

Heidegger offers a critique of the metaphysical dualism of waiting and awaited. It is an ontological critique of metaphysics itself – but this does not mean that Heidegger does without history, metaphysics or modernity. On the contrary. Heidegger's ontology is not solely ancient or scholastic ontology. Heidegger's revised understanding of waiting, in relation to the problem of the modern will, can be shown to emerge out of his historical-philosophical interpretation of Nietzsche *and* Wagner.

Part II. Heidegger and Wagner

In 'The Will to Power as Art', Heidegger explicitly formulates a 'history of metaphysics'. In spite of the 'historizing' of *Being and Time*, that work remained primarily concerned with the existential *structure* of Dasein – including its structural historicity. Karl Löwith witnessed Heidegger's subsequent translation of 'One's Ownmost Individual Dasein' into 'the German Dasein'. Adorno cites Löwith in his critique of Heidegger's concept of historicity. But Löwith simultaneously excludes the possibility of a historical and collective determination of Dasein *other than* the 'German Dasein'. As Löwith explains, it was the doctrine of 'one's ownmost' that rendered Heidegger's 'private existentialism' useless to the Nazi ideologues. Löwith is paradoxically inattentive to existential solipsism as being a *factor* in Heidegger's support for National Socialism (see chapter 5). The history of metaphysics in the *Nietzsche* lectures can nevertheless initially be understood as a continuation of the earlier 'task of destroying the history of ontology'.[69] This task quickly comes up against the difficulty of the destruction of metaphysics from out of metaphysics. How can Platonic metaphysics overcome itself – without, in the case of Nietzsche, merely reversing and thus re-installing it?

Heidegger's remarks on history are 'stylistically' indebted to Hegel. The 'Six Basic Developments in the History of Aesthetics' cite Hegel's *Aesthetics* lectures.

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[69] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, p.41.

Heidegger draws upon the etymology of the aesthetic itself. Aesthetics is a question of 'sense', as opposed to the 'supersensuous', which is posited in opposition to sense. Classicist aesthetics is concerned with taste. Romantic aesthetics is concerned with feeling. As was shown in the previous chapter, ideas of music are never very far away from these developments in the history of aesthetics. Heidegger takes modern subjectivity to be fundamentally aesthetic. Nietzsche had already suggested that aestheticism becomes an ascetic ideal; the negation of life rather than its enhancement. Heidegger will suggest that Nietzsche's concept of 'life' is equally, in the final instance, aesthetically over-determined. Nietzsche perpetuates the scission, and the de-cision, between the sensuous and the supersensuous, by valorising the former over the latter. Conversely, Platonic Idealism, in all of its diverse forms, valorises the latter over the former. 'Nietzsche's philosophy, according to his own testimony, is inverted Platonism.'[70]

Heidegger seeks to extend Nietzsche beyond Platonism (beyond Nietzsche) by pursuing a twofold strategy. Either he rejects Nietzsche's vitalistic and biological concepts ('[t]o deliver art over to physiology seems tantamount to reducing art to the functional level of the gastric juices') or he radicalises them such that they are no longer strictly vitalistic. Tied to the critique of vitalism is a critique of the will. Nietzsche continues to conceive of the will as affective, and thus primarily sensuous – as opposed to, but equally as *willing* the supersensuous. Nietzsche only becomes aware of these problems in his last coherent writings.

Heidegger finds a cue for a non-vitalist reinterpretation of the will to power in Nietzsche's aborted plan 'Toward a Psychology of Art'. Nietzsche had intended to enquire into the nature of 'rapture [*Rausch*]', which Heidegger now sharply differentiates from 'affect' (where Nietzsche tends to confuse the two). Rapture distinguishes 'passion' from mere feeling.[71] It is here that a certain re-emphasis or re-definition of *Being and Time*'s 'resoluteness' is attempted. '*Entschlossenheit*' is no ontic resolution, but is rather the openness, *Er-schlossenheit*, to the possibility of resolution: world-disclosure.

In 'The Will to Power as Art', Heidegger initially seeks to complete Nietzsche's break with Wagner on Nietzsche's behalf. 'Wagner' names a decision about art *as* aesthetic.[72] Heidegger's philosophical history of art is both a history of the aesthetic and

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[70] Heidegger, M. *Nietzsche*, vol.1, p.200.
[71] Ibid. p.94.
[72] Ibid. vol.1, p.78.

a history of aesthetics. Art and its theoretical reflection go together. In accordance with the orientation of Western metaphysics, the aesthetic becomes the object of the subject. Aesthetics is the subject's external reflection upon an aesthetic object. Heidegger stresses the need for reflection on art, but claims that, historically, aesthetics 'slips markedly, even exclusively, into the relation of man's state of feeling, *aesthesis*.'[73] This is structurally reminiscent of Hegel's end of art, as Heidegger himself acknowledges:

> At the historical moment when aesthetics achieves its greatest possible height, breadth, and rigour of form, great art comes to an end. The achievement of aesthetics derives its greatness from the fact that it recognises and gives utterance to the end of great art as such. The final and greatest aesthetics in the Western tradition is that of Hegel.[74]

Hegel is both inside and outside of the 'Six Basic Developments'. Hegel marks the apogee of aesthetics, and is thus implicated in the slippage. But Hegel is also exempt from the slippage, being the thinker to have bestowed the end with philosophical pathos. Aesthetics is the occasion for the end of great art, but aesthetics is capable of greatness, as the expression of art's end. All aesthetics other than that of Hegel is a 'logic of sensuousness'.[75]

As was said, there are two connected concerns in Heidegger's narrative on aesthetics. The first is initially sympathetic with Nietzsche's account of the will. Determined metaphysically, the will is the will *to* something, re-presented before it – even, or especially, if that something is *nothing*. This is the representational-idealist structure of aesthetic contemplation, and it is *paradigmatic* of modern subjectivity – subjectivism – more generally. The metaphysical will *is* will *and* representation (as we shall see, Schopenhauer and Wagner will occupy a certain height of metaphysics). Heidegger's second concern marks him out from Nietzsche, whose valorisation of the sensuous must be to the detriment of 'being as a whole':[76]

> Feeling, as feeling oneself to be, is precisely the way we are corporeally. Bodily being does not mean that the soul is burdened by a hulk we call the body. In feeling oneself to be, the body is already contained in advance in that self, in such a way that the body in its bodily states permeates the self... We do not "have" a body; rather, we "are" bodily.[77]

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[73] Ibid. p.83.
[74] Ibid. p.84.
[75] Ibid. p.83.
[76] Ibid. p.92.
[77] Ibid. pp.98-9.

Narratives of embodied Dasein, such as this one, often react to the so-called mind-body dualism in pursuit of an unhistorical monism. The *Stimmung* of Dasein, its being-bodily, is, however, a dissonant historicity – not an unhistorical harmony (see chapter 1). What marks the *Nietzsche* lectures out from *Being and Time* is their account of a historical idealisation of the sensuous that comes to determine the historical self-understanding *of* Da-sein.

In the third essay of the *Genealogy*, Nietzsche introduces Wagner as exemplar of the 'ascetic ideal'. The ascetic ideal embraces affectivity, either as consolation or as narcotic. Nietzsche refers to the marriage scene of *Die Meistersinger*:

> What does it mean if an artist like Richard Wagner pays homage to chastity in his old age? I accept that he has always done this in a certain sense; but only in the very end in an ascetic sense. What does this change of 'sense' mean, this radical alteration of 'sense'? – because it was such a change, Wagner made a complete turnabout and became his exact opposite... For there is not, necessarily, an antithesis between chastity and sensuality; every good marriage, every real affair of the heart transcends this antithesis.[78]

Nietzsche locates the 'turnabout' of Wagner in his last music-drama, *Parsifal* (completed in 1882) – though their parting of ways was a long time in the making, from the 1870s. The attack is not confined to Wagner's libretti, even though Nietzsche's attack precedes his having properly *listened* to *Parsifal*. The later Nietzsche now hears in Wagner's hypnotic 'tone' the will to redemption through sensational 'effects'. Wagner is the 'actor'. The 'unending melodies', 'sick' and 'feminine', oppose art in the 'grand style'. Nietzsche compares *Carmen* favourably to the German's compositions.[79] At least Bizet is honest about sensuality. Wagner, by contrast, is in bad faith. Sensuality reactively compensates self-denial. 'So what do ascetic ideals mean?', Nietzsche asks. 'In the case of an artist, we have concluded: *nothing at all*!... or so many things that it is tantamount to nothing!'[80]

Nietzsche attributes Wagner's aesthetic of redemption to Schopenhauer's aesthetics of music, which Wagner had studied from the 1860s onwards:

> All at once [Wagner] grasped that with Schopenhauer's theory and innovation *more* could be done *in majorem musicae gloriam*, – in fact, with the *sovereignty* of music as Schopenhauer understood it: music set apart from all the other arts, the inherently independent art, *not* providing

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[78] Ibid. p.73.
[79] Nietzsche, F. 'The Case of Wagner', *passim.*
[80] Nietzsche, F. *On the Genealogy of Morality*, p.76.

> reflections of the phenomenal world like the other arts, but instead, speaking the language *of the* will itself straight out of the 'abyss', as the latter's most unique, original, direct revelation.[81]

Nietzsche's assessment of his old 'educator' is based upon Book Three of *The World as Will and Representation* (1818/1844):

> Music is thus in no sense, like the other arts, the image of ideas, but the image of the *will itself*, which also takes objective shape in ideas; and for this very reason the effect of music is far more powerful and penetrates far more deeply than the other arts; for they communicate only shadows, whereas it communicates the essence.[82]

As an image of no image, music is an image of the will itself – the thing-in-itself beyond all things as the ground of all things; the image of all images (see chapter 3). Schopenhauer is for Nietzsche and Heidegger a passive nihilist because the highest aim of the will, from the standpoint of a life that is meaningless, is nothing. Nietzsche attempts to overcome his former Schopenhauerian pessimism (the '*amor fati*') with the 'will to power', the 'countermovement to nihilism'.

Importantly, Heidegger looks for a confirmation of Nietzsche's polemic in the theoretical writings of Wagner. Heidegger is sufficiently interested in the case of Wagner, and by extension the case of music, to go beyond Nietzsche's own research. There is nevertheless doubt as to Heidegger's knowledge of Wagner's music. Heidegger does not need to listen to Wagner, for his music-dramas are the mere instantiations of theoretical intentions that are all-too-easily understood:

> the nineteenth century once more dares to attempt the "collective artwork". That effort is associated with the name of Richard Wagner. It is no accident that his effort does not limit itself to the creation of works that might serve such an end. His is accompanied and undergirded by reflections on the principles of such works, and by corresponding treatises.[83]

Wagner's 'reflections' exemplify the attempt to objectify art from the subject of a science of art. Heidegger accuses Wagner of willing his art into existence, as a closed form of expectation, not experimentation. Heidegger speaks of 'a will as a going after',

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[81] Ibid. p.77.
[82] Schopenhauer, Arthur. *The World as Will and Representation*, trans. E. F. J. Payne, (New York: Dover, 1969), vol.1, p.257.
[83] Heidegger, M. *Nietzsche*, vol.1, p.85.

in which 'we are directed towards a thing by way of representation.'[84] Because the music-drama is willed re-presentationally, Wagner's art is not the will to power as art; not art at all.

Heidegger interprets the will to power as art, against affective willing and against representing willing, as a 'resolute openness to oneself... always a willing out beyond oneself'. Is not this ec-static 'willing out' the (egoist) 'willing out' of love? Affect is a short-lived feeling, says Heidegger. Whereas, passion 'restores our essential being'. Love is a name for this passion. And yet, love is not the only passion that Heidegger names here: 'hate and love not only last longer, they bring perdurance and permanence for the first time to our existence.'[85] Can a 'willing out beyond oneself' be hatred? In his *Freiheitschrift* – on which Heidegger lectured in this same year, 1936 – Schelling suggests that evil, as the dark ground, is a precondition of love. But in the *Ages of the World*, egoism is defined as contraction and love as an expansion – in Heidegger's terms, perhaps, a 'willing out beyond oneself'. Heidegger's conflation of the passions of love and hatred might then point to an *experiential block* on his part over the meaning of resolute openness (and thus, waiting). It is nevertheless through this concept of resolute openness that Heidegger confronts metaphysical willing philosophically. The passive-dominating will is the dark secret of metaphysics. The willing-representing subject becomes the comportment of 'modern technology' (a comportment, as opposed to a totality of technological things or information). Modern technology, a fulfilment of metaphysical willing, becomes for the post-war Heidegger, the 'danger' of 'enframing [*Gestell*]'. Enframing is the 'destining' of metaphysical willing; 'man's ordering attitude'.[86]

Music and Language

According to Heidegger, what is intended in the total work of art is a stimulation of the senses in their totality: a 'pure affective state'. Wagner's drama,

> possesses its importance and essential character, not in poetic originality, i.e., not in the well-wrought truth of the linguistic work, but to things pertaining to the stage, theatrical arrangements and gala productions. Architecture serves merely for theatre construction, painting provides the

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[84] Ibid. p.39.
[85] Ibid. p.49.
[86] Heidegger, M. 'The Question Concerning Technology', trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), p.326.

> backdrops, sculpture portrays the gestures of actors. Literary creation and language remain without the essential and decisive shaping force of genuine knowledge. What is wanted is the domination of art as music, and thereby the domination of the pure state of feeling – the tumult and delirium of the senses, tremendous contraction, the felicitous distress that swoons in enjoyment, absorption in the "bottomless sea of harmonies," the plunge into frenzy and disintegration into sheer feeling as redemptive.[87]

Wagner's dilettantism lies not in his attempt to unify the arts as such, but in his subjugation of this unity to music and not poetry – which, as *poesis*, would not be a subjugation. For Adorno, matters stand the other way around, even though the question is equally about 'music and language'. Wagner supposed – with *and* against Schopenhauer – that music remains too absolute by itself. Music must incorporate the other arts, non-music, in order to fulfil its essence. The *Leitmotiv*, associated with a character or event, recalls or anticipates characters and events that are *not present*, on the stage. As Boulez noted, the *Leitmotiv* produces a certain 'malleability in time'. 'Debussy's *mot* about *Leitmotiv*s being signposts was altogether too facile.'[88] This time should be understood *along with* the repetition of the *Leitmotiv*, according to the duration of the music-drama as a whole (the 'Wagnerian *longueurs*').

Heidegger's conjunction of 'the domination of art as music, and *thereby* the domination of the pure state of feeling' denotes a series of equivalences: 'Wagner', 'music' and 'pure state of feeling'. Music is 'thereby', in its essence, affective. Music is the valorisation of the sensuous according to the supersensuous. Music is the art of nihilism *par excellence*:

> Whenever Nietzsche deals with art in the essential and definitive sense, he always refers to art in the grand style. Against this backdrop, his innermost antipathy to Wagner comes to light most sharply, above all because his conception of the grand style includes at the same time a fundamental decision, *not only about Wagner's music, but about the essence of music as such.*[89]

It is thus, for Heidegger, music as such, not only the music of Wagner, that occupies the height of subjective-aesthetic metaphysics. The will to nothing of Schopenhauer paradoxically coincides, in terms of Heidegger's later thought, with the will to

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[87] Ibid. p.85-6. My emphasis.
[88] Boulez, Pierre. *Orientations*, ed. Jean-Jacque Nattiez, trans. Martin Cooper (London: Faber & Faber, 1986), pp.265-6.
[89] Heidegger, M. *Nietzsche*, p.129. My emphasis.

domination of modern technology. As in Adorno, there is a *coinciding* passive and dominating willing (that can co-exist in the same individual or group).

But does Nietzsche actually make a 'fundamental decision' about 'the essence of music as such'? We read that 'The Case of Wagner' was 'inspired... by gratitude'. Indeed, the two postscripts and epilogue are symptomatic of Nietzsche's 'difficulty' over his divorce from Wagner.[90] Moreover, Wagner is held responsible for having '*made music sick*'. But Nietzsche does not equate Wagner with the sole possibility of music. 'What we can still experience at best are exceptions. From the *rule* that corruption is on top, that corruption is fatalistic, no god can save music.'[91]

Nietzsche thus makes no such 'fundamental decision' about music. This has important consequences for the meaning of Heidegger's lectures. Heidegger cites some *Will to Power* fragments in order to attempt to substantiate Nietzsche's final renunciation of music: 'The poet allows the drive for knowledge *to play*; the musician lets it take a rest.' But, once again, it is by no means clear that the later Nietzsche treats this 'rest' solely pejoratively. In *The Gay Science* (1882), Nietzsche writes of the 'slow periods' of artists:

> This is how all artists and people of 'works' feel, the motherly type: at every chapter of their lives – which is always marked by a work – they always think they've reached their goal; they would always patiently take death with the feeling 'we are ripe for it'. This is not the expression of weariness – rather that of a certain autumnal sunniness and mildness that the work itself, the fact the work has become ripe, always leaves behind in its creator. Then the pace of life slows down and becomes thick and flows like honey – to the point of a long *fermata*, of the faith in *the* long *fermata*.[92]

The 'long *fermata*', the musical pause, is 'not an expression of weariness'. It is the time of waiting for further possibilities of creation. Not only waiting *for* creation: the fermata is constitutive *of* creation. The later Nietzsche held Goethe's least appreciated work, the *Venetian Epigrams*, in the highest regard (partly on account of their censorship by Schiller, preacher of the German 'moral sermon', heir to Wagner).[93] Goethe's twenty-seventh epigram names the mother of the muses as, not Mnemosyne, but 'Boredom'.[94]

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[90] Nietzsche, F. 'The Case of Wagner', p.192.
[91] Ibid. p.188-9.
[92] Nietzsche, F. *The Gay Science*, trans. Josefine Nauckhoff (Cambridge University Press, 2001), Book V, §376, pp. 240-1.
[93] Nietzsche, F. 'The Case of Wagner', pp.161-2.
[94] It is tempting to think that this epigram inspired 'The Storyteller': '*Memory* creates the chain of tradition which passes a happening on from generation to generation. It is

Like many a thinker before and after him, Heidegger has an idea of music that is not informed by an experience of music. It is true that Heidegger shares Adorno's critique of Classicist aesthetics. Adorno too observes a slippage between taste and feeling, Classicism and Romanticism.[95] But Adorno, unlike Heidegger, recognises dissonant, modernist music. In the 1930s, Heidegger is unable or unwilling to recognise the music that had been under way for well over two decades (both in the German speaking world, and over the border from Freiburg). He will nevertheless (later) recognise several German Expressionist poets. Neither does Heidegger afford a consideration of musical settings of (this) poetry. In an essay on Stephan George ('The Word', 1958), Heidegger writes,

> If we fail to understand the lofty meaning of song as Saying, it becomes the retroactive setting to music of what is spoken and written.[96]

The Second Viennese School, Bartók, Ravel and Stravinsky were all drawn to the 'retroactive setting of music' during the first third of the twentieth-century. The rejection of Wagnerian bombast, the affirmation of sparseness and objectivity, leads to a foregrounding of the voice *in* music *and* text (as in Webern's op.14 Trakl settings). Schoenberg thus writes in *The Blue Rider Almanac* (1912) that the text is the vehicle for the voice, not vice versa. As a continuation from Wagner, the text now provides music with a durational structure amidst the disintegration of musical logics (notwithstanding Stravinsky's Neoclassicism). Schoenberg and his students effectively take up Wagner's example of non-strophic, through-composed 'song' – in works such as *Erwartung*.

For Heidegger, music exemplifies everything that poetry is not. The limitation of Wagner's music-drama does not primarily concern the poverty of Wagner's poetry. Rather, it concerns the reduction of *poesis* to *mousike* – though Heidegger would have done well to consult his beloved Presocratics where the latter is concerned. Music is the impossibility of 'literary creation', which Heidegger tellingly refers to in the contemporaneous 'Origin of the Work of Art' (1936) as '*Gestell*'. Variations on *stellen* are to be found throughout the *Nietzsche* lectures, prompted by Nietzsche's 'grand

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the Muse-derived [*das Musische*] element of the epic art in a broader sense and accompanies its varieties. In the first place among these is the one practiced by the storyteller'. And every storyteller needs a listener: 'If sleep is the apogee of physical relaxation, boredom is the apogee of mental relaxation. Boredom is the dream bird that hatches the egg of experience'. Benjamin, W. *Illuminations*, p.97; p.91.

[95] Cf. Adorno, T. W. *In Search of Wagner*, pp.86-7.

[96] Heidegger, M. 'Words', in *On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter D. Hertz (London: Harper Collins, 1971), p .148.

style'. For instance: '*der* ***gestalteten*** *Wahrheit des Sprachwerkes*'. 'The Origin of the Work of Art' corroborates with the verdict on the relative standing of poetry and music given in the *Nietzsche* lectures: 'If the essence of art is poetry, then architecture, the visual arts and music must all be referred back to poesy.'[97] Heidegger proposes an affinity between style and the figure(s) of poetic language – in an avowedly virile manner (to style: to erect).[98] But given Heidegger's subsequent and opposing redeployment of '*Gestell*', enframing, and given his opposing redeployment of the 'will to power', does Heidegger *also* redeploy, reassess, music and 'thereby' *the musical*?

Twisting Free as Musical Waiting

Like Adorno, Heidegger conceives of music as language *negatively*. It is their evaluation of this negativity that is – on the surface, at least – divergent. For the Heidegger of the 1930s, music is not so much 'discourse [*Rede*]' as 'idle talk [*Gerede*]'. These are concepts in *Being and Time*. The 'public understanding' and 'average intelligibility' of 'the They [*das Mann*]' is the 'They-self' of everyday, inauthentic Dasein (not-its-own, *Un-eigentlich*). The 'They-self' is the 'most everyday and most stubborn "Reality" of *Dasein*'; a Reality that is articulated in idle talk.[99] Heidegger states that idle talk 'is not... a "disparaging" signification'. But he cannot conceal the implicit *evaluation*, given that discourse discloses the world of Dasein itself, to itself.

The 'They' seems to draw upon two sources. 'They' are the crowd – *Being and Time* having been composed in a time of socio-economic transformation (in some of the urban parts of Germany, from which the province offered only *retreat*). The anxiety about crowds in the 1920s is not unique to Heidegger (Benjamin, Simmel, Kracauer, Canetti), who had, for a time, been impressed by Georg Simmel's writings. There is an implicit recognition of the authoritarianism of the crowd: 'the dictatorship of the They'. But there is equally no recognition of the possibilities of the crowd (not until 1933?). In spite of its claim to neutrality, 'the They' is both a critique of authoritarianism and is an anti-modern reaction to a burgeoning modernity and its metropolitan culture. Heidegger

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[97] Heidegger, M. 'The Origin of the Work of Art', in *Off the Beaten Track*, trans. Julian Young & Kenneth Hayes (Cambridge University Press, 2002), p.45.

[98] 'No figure, no *Gestalt*, in truth, can arise or detach itself from an art that refuses even in its principles the very element of figuration, of *Gestaltung*: language or speech, *die Sprache*, which is in its essence secret, as the contemporary lectures on *The Origin of the Work of Art* recall, *die Sage* – that is to say, in its fullest sense, *mythos*.' Lacoue-Labarthe, P. *Musica Ficta*, p.102.

[99] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, p.214.

learns from Nietzsche that Wagner is the decadent manipulator of the metropolitan masses.[100] Wagner, '*the actor should not seduce those who are authentic.*'[101]

Heidegger's portrait of Wagner resonates with the earlier account of inauthenticity:

> While the particular *Dasein* drifts along towards an ever-increasing groundlessness as it floats, the uncanniness of this floating remains hidden from it under the protecting shelter.[102]
>
> the... absorption in the "bottomless sea of harmonies," the plunge into frenzy and disintegration into sheer feeling as redemptive.[103]

Idle talk is connected to 'curiosity' and 'concern': 'Care becomes concern with the possibilities of seeing the 'world' merely as it *looks* while one tarries and takes a rest... curiosity is concerned with the constant possibility of *distraction* [Zerstreuung]'; and 'ambiguity [*Zwiedeutigkeit*]'.[104] As musical, Dasein cannot be authentic.

According to Heidegger, Nietzsche finally attempts to 'twist free' of Platonic metaphysics by way of a historical self-understanding. In *Twilight of The Idols* (1888), Nietzsche summarises 'How the True World Finally Became a Fable: the History of an Error':

> The title... says that here a history is to be recounted in the course of which the supersensuous, posited by Plato as true being, not only is reduced from the higher to the lower rank but also collapses into the unreal and nugatory. Nietzsche divides the history into six parts, which can be readily recognised as the most important epochs of Western thought, and which lead directly to the doorstop of Nietzsche's philosophy proper.[105]

The 'six parts' name the history of metaphysics itself (Plato, Platonism, Kant, German Idealism, Schopenhauer and Positivism). They are six comportments towards the 'True World'; evaluations of the sensuous and supersensuous (recalling Benjamin's '*Sinneswahrnehmung*'; that which 'sense takes to be true' historically). All parts thereby share the 'above and below' structure that Nietzsche seeks to twist free of –

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[100] 'Let anyone walk through a city: everywhere he will hear how instruments are ravished in a solemn rage – interspersed with a savage howling. What is going on? – The youths are worshipping Wagner'. Nietzsche, F. 'The Case of Wagner', p.185.
[101] Ibid. p.180.
[102] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, p.214.
[103] Heidegger, M. *Nietzsche*, vol.1, pp.85-6. My emphasis.
[104] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, pp.216-217.
[105] Heidegger, M. *Nietzsche*, vol.1, p.202.

rather than *will*. In the sixth and last part, Nietzsche suggests that (his) Positivism, including atheism, has abolished the supersensuous only to deny the consequences of its nihilism:

> The true world we abolished: which world was left? the apparent one perhaps? … But no! *along with the true world we have also abolished the apparent one!*[106]

The abolition of the supersensuous world leads to radical uncertainty about the reality of sensuous appearance. Appearance becomes appearance *of nothing*, since *it* is abolished along with the supersensuous.

Heidegger understands Nietzsche's attempt to overcome passive nihilism as the will to power of the *Übermensch*: 'the overturning of Platonism and the ultimate twist out of it imply a metamorphosis of man.'[107] And it is here that Heidegger reintroduces his interpretation of the will to power as art. Art in the grand style is a metamorphosis of sense, *Sinn*. With art, the sensuous and the supersensuous, the real world and the apparent one, do not perpetually oppose one another, in the 'above and below' manner. Heidegger suggests that Nietzsche's perspectivism should be understood ontologically and not pantheistically (or naturalistically). Being 'is in itself perspectival-perceptual, and that means, in the sense now delineated, "sensuous".'[108] This allows for a new interpretation of the sensuous, which is not simply opposed to the supersensuous, and hence need not be 'abolished' along with it. Instead of appearance, or the apparent: 'semblance [*Schein*]'. As with Adorno, *Schein* evades the opposition of appearance and true reality by way of a temporalising of its concept. When 'Nietzsche uses the word semblance [*Schein*] it is usually ambiguous. He knows it too.'[109] *Schein* is *merely* appearance *only* 'when what becomes manifest in one perspective petrifies and is taken to be the sole definitive appearance'. If Being is perspectival then Being is becoming.

Art is not one perspective among others. It presents the perspectival as such, in the midst of which, according to 'The Origin of the Work of Art', a new perspective or world becomes possible, for the first time. Hence, the artwork neither transcends world-perspectives, as it does in Schopenhauer's aesthetics, nor does it show the real world as such, as it does in Wagner's mythology (according to Heidegger). Instead: 'Art induces reality.' Reality, truth, is the fixed. Art, the 'shining of the perspectival', must then be in

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[106] Ibid. p.207.
[107] Ibid. p.208.
[108] Ibid. p.213.
[109] Ibid. p.215.

'discordance [*Zweispalt*]' with the truth. The 'unity of their belonging together is granted by the *one* reality, perspectival shining.'[110] This discordance (dissonance?) has not yet been understood or experienced. The twisting free of Platonism would be this experience: '"*Übermensch*" is the man who grounds Being anew – in the rigor of knowledge and in the grand style of creation.'[111]

Heidegger thus brings out the historical dimension in Nietzsche:

> The more clearly and simply a decisive enquiry traces the history of Western thought back to its few essential stages, the more that history's power to reach forward, seize, and commit grows. This is especially the case where it is a matter of overcoming such history... The greater a revolution is to be, the more profoundly must it plunge into its history.[112]

Heidegger refers to 'essential stages [*wesentlichen Schritte*]' here. Does not Heidegger combine Hegel's *Aesthetics* with Nietzsche's six-part history of Platonism, into the 'Six Basic Developments in the History of Aesthetics'? Of course, 'stage' is not to be understood in a Hegelian sense, as the one-sided manifestation of the absolute spirit or Idea. 'Western thought', *including* that of Hegel, has perpetuated the error of Platonic idealism. It has not learned from its error. And yet, in a crucial sense, *it was not ready to do so*. Its lateness, its decadence, was always too early.

The affinity to Hegel does not, however, concern the concept of stage, but rather height – and the associated notion of destiny. This is taken from Nietzsche also (compare: '*Selbst-aufhebung*'): 'Midday; moment of the shortest shadow; end of the longest error; highpoint of humanity; INCIPIT ZARATHUSTRA.' The twisting free of Platonism is thus a singular event – what Heidegger will later call '*Ereignis*' – rather than a series of '*Aufhebungen*'.[113] Twisting free is a twisting free of the 'above and below' logic of *Aufhebung* itself:

> At the end of Platonism stands a decision concerning the transformation of man. That is how the phrase 'highpoint of humanity [*Höhepunkt der Menschheit*]' is to be understood, as the peak of decision, namely, decision as to with the end of Platonism man as he has been hitherto is to come to an end, whether he is to become that kind of man Nietzsche characterised as the 'last man', or whether that type of man can be overcome and the 'overman' can begin... By the word '*Übermensch*' Nietzsche does not mean

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[110] Ibid. p.217.
[111] Ibid. p.220.
[112] Ibid. p.203.
[113] Heidegger, M. 'The Turning', in *The Question Concerning Technology*, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), p.45.

> some miraculous, fantastic being, but the man who surpasses [*hinauskommt*] former man.[114]

The highpoint of humanity is, then, the *last* 'essential stage', and is the occasion for the possibility of a *first* – according to Michel Haar, and in contrast to Hegel, 'a totally different, unprecedented, absolutely new commencement.'[115]

In fact, the 'penultimate' and 'last' stages run into each other in Nietzsche's history of an error, to the extent that Nietzsche himself turns from the brink of unreflective positivism, at its brink. In Heidegger's account, Nietzsche breaks with Wagner, as Schopenhauer – the 'penultimate' stage – in order to become Nietzsche 'proper'. Nietzsche turns to an affirmation of life by way of a negation of its negation. This turn is entangled with his relationship to Wagner. Hence, as Adorno latently knows, the decadent is not only the last but is also the first. Wagner, at the 'highpoint' of metaphysical 'humanity' is, perhaps, to be 'surpassed' in this sense – particularly if it is the case that a certain Hegelian logic comes to inform Heidegger's otherwise Nietzschean 'history of metaphysics'. *Auf-hebung* is also a rising up, a height, which includes that which it cancels. But does this mark a return to the 'above and below'? Can Heidegger do without Hegel?

Heidegger misses Nietzsche's ambiguous (and, anti-German) decadence, only to take it over implicitly and emphatically in his sensitivity towards Nietzsche's overall understanding of the ambiguities of metaphysics. To say that the 'highpoint of humanity' is to be surpassed is, it seems, to imply its 'fulfilment' – the term that Heidegger uses in 'European Nihilism'. Heidegger *acknowledges* music to the extent that *its* nihilism is to be experienced in its fulfilment. Heidegger must incorporate *both* sides of Nietzsche's 'ambiguous' nihilism in order for *his* interpretation, and his original contribution, to remain coherent. If the height of metaphysics is musical then its being surpassed, its twisting free, is also musical, and in a different manner to

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[114] Heidegger, M. *Nietzsche*, vol.1, p.208.

[115] Comparing the philosophies of history in Hegel and Heidegger, Haar concludes,

> For Heidegger it is a question of thinking history as "the dialogue of the dusk with the dawn." But then is not eschatology the equivalent of absolute knowledge insofar as each epoch finally finds its sense with respect to the totality of the process? Yet this point of proximity is also, paradoxically it seems, the point of greatest remove inasmuch as the Heideggerian totality rests on the abyss of the ungrounded, and inasmuch as the Greek dawn is not the only commencement possible. Besides the Greek dawn there is indeed a "new dawn" that offers the possibility of an end of history that is radically different from that of Hegel insofar as for Heidegger it is not a recommencement but a totally different, unprecedented, absolutely new commencement.

Haar, Michel. *The Song of the Earth*, trans. Reginald Lilly (Indiana University Press, 1987), p.68.

Nietzsche. As was said, Heidegger will subsequently conceive of the height, the fulfilment of metaphysics in terms of modern technology. And 'modern technology' must, states Heidegger, be '*aufgehoben* in the Hegelian sense'.[116] 'Musical' modernity must then similarly be *included and cancelled.* This means, for Heidegger as for Adorno, that there is a *necessary* moment of decadence, distraction and ambiguity in the twisting *free*. The *manner* of the surpassing-twisting-free is, with and against Heidegger, 'musical'.

A 'musical turn' in Heidegger might even be sensed in 'The Will to Power as Art' (albeit in those Romantic anti-capitalist terms that Adorno attributes to Wagner):

> such arousal of frenzied feeling and unchaining of "affects" could be taken as a rescue of "life," especially in view of the growing impoverishment and deterioration of existence occasioned by industry, technology, and finance, in connection with the enervation and depletion of the constructive forces of knowledge and tradition, to say nothing of the lack of every establishment of goals for human existence. Rising on swells of feeling would have to substitute for a solidly grounded and articulated position in the midst of beings, the kind of thing that only great thought and poetry can create.[117]

Music 'would have to... substitute' for poetry. The necessity of this substitution is seemingly reinforced by a later letter in which Heidegger praises a performance of two works by Stravinsky: *Perséphone* (text by André Gide) and *Symphony of Psalms*: 'They are music in the highest sense of the word: works sent from the muses.'[118] Heidegger's letter evidences, at the very least, a recognition that modern music is not Wagner alone, after Wagner (Stravinsky the anti-Wagnerian). From the art of passive nihilism to music in the highest sense of the word, Heidegger's re-evaluation of 'modern' music *seems* complete. What are the consequences of this for Heidegger's understanding of the problem of willing, and of waiting?

As was suggested, Heidegger's contribution to the problem of the will is located beyond the *Nietzsche* lectures. 'The Will to Power as Art' is devoted to the problem of the will as well as the problem of art. But the latter is disproportionately developed over the former as the lectures proceed. The twisting free of metaphysics is not the sole

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[116] Heidegger, M. 'Only a God Can Save Us', p.44.
[117] Heidegger, M. *Nietzsche*, vol.1, p.88.
[118] Heidegger, M. *Denkerfahrungen* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Klostermann, 1983), p.113. Heidegger's letter is nevertheless grist to Adorno's mill. Stravinsky and Heidegger are the reactionary modernist antipodes, in art and philosophy, to the progressives, Schönberg and – Adorno. The two named works come form Stravinsky's Neoclassical period. In fact, the *Symphony of Psalms* marks an attempted disintegration of Neoclassicism by way of montage construction.

concern of art, in any narrow sense. Twisting free is a question about willing as such – including, we must presume, political willing. The historical 'twisting free' that is to bring about the 'changed humanity' would seem to *require* representing willing: the new polis must be, in some regard, represented so that it can be willed and constructed. At the same time, representing willing is part of the problem of the existing humanity and the existing humanism. 'Twisting free' must then overcome the oppositions of willing and non-willing, active and passive (nihilism), expectation and waiting in vain. Heidegger develops a conception of willing – as also waiting – that attempts to overcome these metaphysical dualisms. And it all began, to some extent, with Wagner.

The turn away from the will to power in 'European Nihilism' paves the way for both the 'Letter on Humanism' (1946) and the conversation between the teacher, scientist and scholar (1944-5), published in the *Discourse on Thinking* (1959). In this latter text, '*Gelassenheit*' becomes the name for a willing-non-willing. The reader of these later works could be forgiven for thinking that Heidegger lapses into a new kind of resigned, Schopenhauerian metaphysics – and that this explains a possible 'musical' turn. In the conversation, 'non-willing' means 'willingly to renounce willing'.[119] This 'non-willing' will haunt Heidegger's *Gelassenheit* – necessarily so (see chapter 5). But an obvious difference to Schopenhauer opens up when we consider that it *is also* a kind of finite willing. Heidegger's Being is not Schopenhauer's Will. *Gelassenheit* is not a releasement *from* Being but is, conversely, the '*releasement toward things*', as the '*openness to the mystery*' – *of* Being.[120] And Heidegger's Being is ec-static, not static. For, why is there Being and not nothing? Heidegger can claim that, since it is the concern of Being, *Gelassenheit* is not resigned pessimism. Equally against the vitalist Nietzsche, *Gelassenheit* is not representing-willing. Because this new kind of comportment is necessarily temporal, and because the meaning of Being is time, Heidegger will attempt to conceive of *Gelassenheit* in terms of waiting:

> *Teacher*: Waiting, all right; but never awaiting, for awaiting already links itself with re-presenting and what is re-presented.
> *Scholar*: Waiting, however, lets go of that; or rather I should say that waiting lets re-presenting entirely alone. It really has no object.
> *Scientist*: Yet if we wait we always wait for something.
> *Scholar*: Certainly, but as soon as we re-present to ourselves and fix upon that for which we wait, we really wait no longer.
> *Teacher*: In waiting we leave open what we are waiting for.

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[119] Heidegger, Martin. *Discourse on Thinking*, trans. John M. Anderson and E. Hans Freund, Harper & Row (1969) p.59
[120] Ibid. pp.54-5.

Scholar: Why?
Teacher: Because waiting releases itself into openness…
Scholar: … into the expanse of distance…
Teacher: … in whose nearness it finds the abiding in which it remains.
Scientist: But remaining is a returning.
Scholar: Openness itself would be that for which we could do nothing but wait.
Scientist: But openness itself is that-which-regions…
Teacher: … into which we are released by way of waiting, when we think.
Scientist: Then thinking would be coming-into-the-nearness of distance.[121]

Open waiting is not an open waiting for nothing. In order to argue this, Heidegger must paradoxically 'spatialise' waiting, 'finitely' – *as* the temporalisation of 'space'. Hence: '… into the expanse of distance…', and 'Then thinking would be coming-into-the-nearness of distance.' Heidegger distinguishes between an expecting a-waiting, waiting *for*, and a waiting *upon*. That upon which the comportment of *Gelassenheit* waits is the approprating event of Being. *Gelassenheit* does not will the beyond because there is no beyond *for* it. The distance of regioning is not beyond. The waiting of *Gelassenheit* is not, it seems, the waiting in vain of the infinite task (where the horizon of waiting is always infinitely distant). Moreover, Heidegger suggests that, since it is the concern of Being as a whole rather than traditional (dualistic) metaphysics, *Gelassenheit* is a kind of willing that does not perpetuate the representing willing of a subject that seeks to dominate, to 'enframe', an object: 'world'.

Heidegger's *Gelassenheit* and Adorno's expression of waiting in vain each constitute, in difference ways, a response to the problem of the metaphysical will; a will that comes to characterise a particular, dystopian modernity. As a response, they each await another – utopian? – possiblity-necessity. Heidegger's concept is *philosophically* 'more' radical in the sense that it seeks an ontological twisting free of metaphysics. The spectre of quietism remains, however, not only in Heidegger's language of 'meditative thinking', but also in the absence of an explicit utopian-political orientation. In his 'Letter on Humanism', Heidegger complains that existing humanism does not 'realize the proper dignity of man'; 'does not set the *humanitas* of man high enough'.[122] This height takes on a quasi-utopian meaning. But Heidegger does not propose any determinate *way towards* this highpoint (when he does, it is either ineffective or reactionary). We are not ready for such an orientation, not yet on the right way, such is our forgetfulness of Being: 'we can at most awaken the readiness of expectation'. Adorno's expression is more radical, and more promising *politically*, because he knows

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[121] Ibid. p.68.
[122] Heidegger, M. 'Letter on Humanism', in *Basic Writings*, pp.233-4.

that the (broadly) historical materialist task remains, in spite of its problems, the only one worth waiting upon, and therefore worthy of being practiced today. Could these two 'waitings' be combined – as a combination of the philosophically and politically radical moments? This has been suggested, on the basis of a musical modernism.

3

The Dialectical Image of Musical Experience

Adorno's essay 'On the Fetish-Character in Music and the Regression of Listening' (1938) has been categorised, in its Anglophone reception, as either sociologically-inflected musicology or as culture-industry critique.[1] The essay can, however, be read as an eminently *philosophical* reflection upon the temporal experience of modernity. This formative text will, in this chapter, serve to introduce something approaching a (hitherto neglected) philosophy of time in Adorno's writings on music; one that can elucidate the meaning of 'waiting in vain', as 'music alone' can 'express'. Since it is largely hidden amongst his music aesthetics, this philosophy of time is somewhat fragmentary, in both productive and unproductive ways. It is here that Heidegger's more explicitly philosophical account of time and metaphysics can be brought into a productive dialogue with those reflections.

In contrast to Heidegger, Adorno's understanding of the time of modernity is informed by the historical materialist tradition – in particular, Marx's account of the commodity form. The 'fetish-character' essay interprets 'The Fetishism of the Commodity and its Secret' section of *Capital*. For Marx, the fetish names the 'strange' form of the commodity. The commodity does not essentially consist in its matter. Neither does the commodity directly manifest the concrete labour of its producers. The problematic abstraction of exchange from use value is at the same time an abstraction from the conditions of its production. Hence, 'abstract labour'. The commodity is the bearer of 'congealed labour'. Marx's materialism considers the contradiction between the appearance of the commodity and the social conditions of its existence. The commodity is 'nothing but the definite social relation between men themselves which assumes here, for them, the phantasmagorical form of a relation between things.'[2] The materiality of the commodity is everywhere and nowhere (in it). This ensuing contradiction gives rise to an experience ('for them', for us) of 'phantasmagoria'.

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[1] This is reflected in the fact that the essay is available to the English-speaking reader in two alternative collections: *The Culture Industry* and *Essays on Music* (see bibliography).

[2] Marx, K. *Capital*, trans. Ben Fowkes (London: Penguin, 1976), vol.1, p.165. Translation amended.

'Fetish' and 'phantasmagoria' connote illusion and magic. Adorno emphasises that the fetish character not only names the estrangement of social labour in the commodity, but equally the compulsion to enter into its promise. The commodity promises enchantment; release from the estrangement that it in fact reproduces. This desire, or fixation, recalls Freud's essay on fetishism, though Adorno is reluctant to acknowledge this model ('the concept of fetish character cannot be psychologically derived').[3] Adorno's understanding of the fetish character is seemingly informed rather by the identity philosophies of German Idealism. For Adorno conceives of identification in terms of identity and non-identity. This might be to conflate a process with a result. But identification is regarded here not as identity itself, but as the will to identity. The commodity fetish structures or manipulates the will through an illusory subject-object identity: 'just in this way [the fetish] becomes "property".'[4] The allusions to Hegel, whom Adorno read extensively in the late 1930s, can be drawn out of 'The Fetish-Character', in order to uncover its *post*-Hegelian, philosophical-materialist orientation.

The 'fetish character of music produces its own camouflage through the identification of the listener with the fetish.'[5] The fetish is identification. But this identification is subjected to a second, anterior identification that conceals the fetish *character* of the fetish. The commodity fetish is in this sense viciously circular. Identity appears, each and every time, as non-identity, and thus, enchantment. At the end of the essay, Adorno speaks of his hope for musical listening to 'leave the road of the always-identical' and to align itself with Hegel's idea of 'progress in the consciousness of freedom'.[6] Adorno's account of musical experience is nevertheless more informed by the Preface to the *Phenomenology* than it is by Hegel's lectures on history. The fetish aims at the identity of consciousness and its object. But the contradiction that this identity must yield to difference, what the identity is not, is pre-empted in commodity music. For Hegel,

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[3] Adorno states, not entirely accurately, that 'Marx defines the fetish-character of the commodity as the veneration of the thing made by oneself which, as exchange-value, simultaneously alienates itself from producer to consumer.' Adorno, T. W. 'On the Fetish Character in Music and the Regression of Listening', in *Essays on Music*, pp.295-296. The 'veneration' that Adorno attributes to Marx seems to come closer to Freud's contention that the fetishist 'reveres his fetish'. Freud, S.'Fetishism' (1927) in *The Future of an Illusion, Civilization and its Discontents and Other Works*, trans. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1964), p.157.

[4] Adorno, T. W. 'On the Fetish Character in Music', p.298.

[5] Ibid. p.305.

[6] Ibid. p.314.

> *Inasmuch as the new true object issues from it*, this *dialectical* movement which consciousness exercises on itself and which affects both its knowledge and its object, is precisely what is called *experience* [*Erfahrung*].[7]

The subsequent importance of this passage to Adorno is clear from 'The Experiential Content of Hegel's Philosophy' (1958).[8] What Adorno takes from Hegel's concept of experience is its dialectical becoming, as pitted against stasis. But he refutes its purported synthesis.

One of the parallels between Heidegger and Adorno concerns their critique of *Lebensphilosophie*. Behind this affinity lies an opposition between stasis and becoming; and a concern with the problem of time. The primary theme of the philosophies of life, the *Erlebnis*, is neither inter-subjectively nor historically constituted, according to Adorno. The 'I' of the *Erlebnis* is the unhappy consciousness. This is suggested in Adorno's distinction between *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung*. Simmel had taken the artist to be exemplary of the 'adventure'.[9] Adorno is outwardly dismissive of both Simmel and of Benjamin's appropriation of him.[10] Benjamin had sought to transform the *Erlebnis* into a messianic-political '*Chockerlebnis*' – in the name of *Erfahrung*.[11] The *Chockerlebnis* breaks the law of traditional experience. But the law, as *Erfahrung*, is in a state of exception. It has 'fallen in value'.[12] The *Chockerlebnis* takes exception to the exception. This account of experience, from 'The Storyteller', can be compared to Benjamin's later thesis on historical exceptionality: 'the tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the state of emergency in which we live is not the exception but the rule.'[13] Discussing 'The Storyteller', Agamben uses the term 'expropriated experience', emphasising that

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[7] Hegel, G. W. F. *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p.55.
[8] Adorno denies, against Heidegger, that *Erfahrung* is 'ontological' in Hegel. Nevertheless, Adorno 'will be dealing here with some models of intellectual experience as it motivates Hegel's philosophy… and makes up its truth content.' *Hegel: Three Studies*, trans. Shierry Weber Nicholsen (Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1999), p.53. Cf. p.56.
[9] Simmel, Georg. 'The Adventurer', in *On Individuality and Social Forms*, ed. Donald Levine (The
University of Chicago Press, 1971), p.189.
[10] Adorno, T. W. to Walter Benjamin, November 10th, 1938, in *Aesthetics and Politics: The Key Texts of the Classic Debate Within German Marxism* (London: Verso, 1977), p.129.
[11] Benjamin, W. 'On Some Motifs in Baudelaire' in *Illuminations*, p.190.
[12] Benjamin, W. 'The Storyteller', p.83.
[13] Benjamin, W. 'Theses on the Philosophy of History', in *Illuminations*, p.248.

Erfahrung is itself appropriation.[14] This terminology also warns against nostalgia: *Erfahrung is* expropriated. The *Chockerlebnis* is the mimetic appropriation of expropriated *Erfahrung*; the appropriation of that which has paradoxically not yet been.

In the 'Fetish Character' essay, a contrast is drawn between stasis and becoming through the pairing of forgetting and memory:

> Just as every advertisement is composed of the inconspicuous familiar and the unfamiliar conspicuous, so the song remains salutarily forgotten in the half-dusk of its familiarity, suddenly to become painfully over-clear through recollection, as if in the beam of a spotlight.[15]

The reciprocal can be contrasted with the dialectical here. Forgetting and sudden recall substitute for the 'cancelling' and 'preserving' sublation that is, for Hegel, 'remembrance [*Erinnerung*]'.[16] For Benjamin too, 'remembrance [*Gedächtnis*]' is produced in the conveying of historical experience. History is (its) memory, written down by storytellers.[17] Benjamin's concept of *Erfahrung* differs, and even opposes, that of Hegel the 'progressive': 'Overcoming the concept of "progress" and overcoming the concept of "period of decline" are two sides of one and the same thing.'[18] This is of course complicated by Benjamin's Goethean reflections on experience. A concept of becoming is at stake in both bodies of thought – a series of becomings in Hegel and a singular, revolutionary becoming in Benjamin (though perhaps in Hegel too there is a becoming of all becomings). Adorno takes up *both* of these ideas, as determinate critiques of the stasis that is called reification.

Reification is a function of the commodity form, in turn part of a broader history. Exchange value appears *as* use value, *as if* new. But because of its determination in the exchange process, this is not new at the level of history. It has not

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[14] Agamben, G. *Infancy and History: Essays on the Destruction of Experience*, trans. Liz Heron (London: Verso, 1993), p.13.
[15] Adorno, T. W. 'On the Fetish Character', p.305.
[16] '*Sublation* [*Aufhebung*] exhibits its true twofold meaning which we have seen in the negative: it is at once a *cancelling* and a *preserving*.' Whereas sublation characterises each moment or stage of the phenomenology of spirit, *Erinnerung* only appears at its end (as 'Absolute Knowing'). 'In the immediacy of this new existence the spirit has to start afresh to bring itself to maturity as if, for it, all that preceded were lost and it had heard nothing from the experience of the earlier Spirits. But recollection [*Erinnerung*], the *inwardizing*, of that experience, has preserved it and is the inner being, and in fact the higher form of the substance'. Hegel, G. W. F. *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p.68. Translation amended.
[17] Benjamin, W. 'The Storyteller', p.97.
[18] Benjamin, W. *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland & Kevin McLaughlin (Harvard University Press, 1999), p.460.

become new. The relations of production reproduced in the commodity remain the same old ones. Adorno takes the commodity of music to be strangely privileged in this process:

> If the commodity in general combines exchange-value and use-value, then pure use-value, whose illusion the cultural goods must preserve in completely capitalist society, must be replaced by pure exchange-value, which precisely in its capacity as exchange-value deceptively takes over the function of use-value. The specific fetish character of music lies in [this] quid pro quo.

Commodity music *exemplifies* the substitution of exchange value for use value – Marx's 'quid pro quo' denoting an exact substitution; a 'transubstantiation' (Cacciari).[19]

How does Adorno make this claim for, or rather against, commodity music? The 'feelings [*die Affekte*] which go to the exchange value create the appearance of immediacy at the same time as the absence of a relation to the object.'[20] The affectivity of music is at the same time the production of its novelty. Novelty is immediate. Or, what amounts to the same thing, immediacy is novel. The feeling is prior to mediation. Adorno seems to propose a dualistic account of experience here, in his suggestion that feeling is not understood and the understanding is not felt. Yet Adorno's point is surely that the commodity form *imposes* this dualism upon experience, from within it.

Commodity music is contrasted with what Adorno will call 'serious music'; elsewhere, 'modern music'. But here is the peculiarity of Adorno's construction:

> the diverse spheres of music must be thought of together... The unity of the two spheres of music is that of an unresolved contradiction.[21]

This statement stands-out, amidst Adorno's continued preoccupation with the *value* of modern music – the 'pure' art.[22] How can music be pure commodity and pure art *at once*? The paradoxical autonomy of the artwork leads to an exaggerated formula in *Aesthetic Theory*: 'The absolute artwork converges with the absolute commodity.'[23] But

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[19] Cacciari, Massimo. *Architecture and Nihilism*, trans. Stephen Sartarelli (Yale University Press, 1993), p.6.
[20] Adorno, T. W. 'On the Fetish Character of Music', p.296.
[21] Ibid. pp.392-3.
[22] 'Perhaps the strict and pure concept of art is applicable only to music, while great poetry or great painting – precisely the greatest – necessarily brings with it an element of subject-matter transcending aesthtic confines, undissolved in the autonomy of form'. Adorno, T. W. *Minima Moralia*, p.223.
[23] Adorno, T. W. *Aesthetic Theory*, p.21.

Adorno's thinking of these absolutes in music hints at a particular account of modernity from the standpoint of the problem of time.

Adorno notes that the notion of music as the art of feeling appears in philosophy as early as Plato's *Republic*.[24] But, as in the case of Heidegger's initial assessment of music, there is something unsatisfactory about Adorno's equating of music with affectivity. Music's affectivity should rather be understood according to its imagistic and spatial characteristics, both intrinsically and extrinsically. And it is through these associations that Adorno's philosophy of time can be articulated. The privileging of music as affective corresponds to a temporal privileging. Specifically, both 'spheres' of music involve the image in ways that bring Adorno's concept of experience into a new relationship with both Benjamin and Heidegger.

The Image and the Imageless

Adorno's most explicit consideration of the relationship between music and the image appears to have been prompted by a work of music: Schoenberg's *Moses and Aron*, which was premiered at the 1951 *Fereienkurse für Neue Musik*, Darmstadt. *Moses* addresses, in *word and music*, the meaning of the *image* in the biblical story:

> The Jewish prohibition on making images which forms the centre of the text also defines the approach of the music. Another chorus from Opus 27 begins, 'Thou shalt make no graven image'. Music is the imageless art and was excluded from that prohibition. That is no doubt the key to the relationship between Judaism and music. But at the historical stage of *musica ficta, stile rappresentativo* and of expressive music which makes sensuous something other than itself, music had become interwoven with the pictorial arts throughout Europe... Music learned to imitate.[25]

The *stile rappresentativo* emerged out of debates within the Florentine Camerata over how the ancient tragic chorus could be imitated in the 'new music' – the problem being that no ancient models (scores) existed in any parallel manner to the visual and literary arts.[26] Modern music is accordingly: *musica ficta*.[27] A response to the quandary of

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[24] Adorno, T. W. 'On the Fetish Character', p.289; Cf. Plato, *Republic*, p.116.
[25] Adorno, T. W. 'Sacred Fragment: Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron*' in *Quasi una Fantasia*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (London: Verso, 1992), p.230.
[26] For a flavour of these debates see: Palisca, Claude V. 'The Artusi-Monteverdi Controversy', in eds. Denis Arnold & Nigel Fortune, *The Monteverdi Companion* (London: Norton, 1972).
[27] Cf. Lacoue-Labarthe, P. *Musica Ficta*, xvi-xvii.

imitation emerged in the guise of Monteverdi's *seconda prattica*, a new musical language of monody and dissonance that sought to re-present feeling in music. Tragic pathos was reconfigured as baroque affectivity.

Adorno aligns the attempt of music to represent with the word and not the image. Much of the compositional theory (the *seconda prattica* and Caccini's *nuove musiche*) was indeed motivated by an interest in lyrical articulation, a mimesis of antique declamation. The proliferation of songs during this period is symptomatic of this.[28] The *stile rappresentativo* is nevertheless a representation of dramatic situations, and is thus the concern of word *and* image. It is remembered not so much for its madrigals as for inauguration of opera – with Monteverdi's *Orfeo* (1607). Adorno recognises this attempt to 'imitate'. But music is not fully 'interwoven' into the 'pictorial arts'. Music, 'itself', 'is' (not *was*) the 'imageless art'.

What, then, is the relationship between Adorno's evaluation of modern music and his thinking of it as fundamentally imageless? In what way does he thereby valorise the imageless? Adorno takes the ideal of the image, as represented in the dominant Platonic-idealist tradition, to signify synthesis. The ideal image is, or would be, the radical expropriation of *Erfahrung*, characterised in terms of becoming. Synthesis and identity are ends exclusive of becoming (whether or not this applies to Aristotelian metaphysics will be addressed in chapter 5). The temporal meaning of the ideal image, the image as ideal, is stasis. The prototypical ideas are eternal. In the *Nietzsche* lectures, Heidegger recalls the affinity of *idea* and *eidos*. Platonic metaphysics concretises this affinity in a variety of manifestations. Heidegger translates the Greek of Plato (whom he distinguishes from Platonism) in his own way: 'The *ideai*... are what is apprehended when we look at things to see how they look, to see what they give themselves out to be, to see their what-being (*to ti estin*).' Given that the idea is supersensuous, things must be seen,

> not with the sensory eye of the body, but with the eye of the soul... Sight... must measure itself against the supersensuous, the Idea; it must somehow bring forward what is not sensuously visible for a face-to-face encounter: it must put forward or represent.[29]

Heidegger will later go on to claim that 'world' itself comes to be viewed as an image: 'Understood in an essential way, "world picture" does not mean "picture of the world"

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[28] Fortune, N. 'Monteverdi and the *secconda prattica*', in *The Monteverdi Companion*, p.183. There is of course a relationship to the image here – the rise of monody paralleling linear figuration in baroque painting.

[29] Heidegger, M. *Nietzsche*, vol.1, p.151.

but rather "the world grasped as picture".'[30] The determination of 'world' as 'totality of beings' collapses the ontological difference, of Being and beings. There is nothing to 'be before' where the totality has already and in advance been determined to its end.[31]

In one of his two essays on music and painting, Adorno writes, 'in an image everything is simultaneous.' Adorno's claim invites the question as to whether and how a real image can be simultaneous. Simultaneity means 'at the same time' ['*Gleich-zeitig*'] and is therefore not temporal. Simultaneity is the impossibility of experience if experience is fundamentally temporal (as temporalising):

> In the context of his chapter on schematism, Kant observes that even the pure act of thinking involves traversing the temporal series as a necessary condition of its possibility, and not only of its empirical realisation. The more emphatically a painting presents itself, the more time is stored up in it.

Adorno's initial claim resists this attempted readjustment. Simultaneity is emphatically simultaneous. But Adorno is surely making a similar move to the one made in the 'Fetish Character'. As with identity, *as* identity, the ideal of the image, its simultaneous synthesis, cannot be dismissed as a mere impossibility. Rather, it has a 'regulative' significance, in the sense of Nietzsche's critique of idealism. Its totality ('everything is simultaneous') is its real possibility, as something that is willed. Following this line of thought (where aesthetics is concerned) art that is worthy of its name determinately negates its image-character. 'Those pictures seem the most successful in which what is absolutely simultaneous seems like a passage of time that is holding its breath.'[32] Hence, 'The Old Testament prohibition on images has an aesthetic as well as a

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[30] Heidegger, M. 'The Age of the World Picture' in *Off the Beaten Track*, p.67.

[31] The deconstruction of presence is anticipated in the *Kantbuch*. Heidegger states that the concept of the understanding is the 'regulative unity' (not *regulating* unity) of a 'range of possibilities'. Heidegger does not want to do away with logic – he wants to loosen the grip, *Griff*, of the concept, *Begriff*. The dualism of intuition and understanding arises from a need to determine the concept as non-finite – as Kant puts it, 'never [to] be encountered in an intuition' (intuition being finite for Kant). The form-content problem is the finitude problem; in Kant's terms, antinomy. But the schema refers *both* to the regulative unity *and* to the horizon of possibility; the 'intuiting look'. Hence, 'beyond the representation of [the] regulative unity of the rule, the concept is *nothing*. What logic refers to as a concept is grounded in the schema.' Heidegger cites Kant. The concept 'always refers *immediately* to the schema.' The subsumed object, by way of the schema-image, would equally be *nothing*. Kant, I. *Critique of Pure Reason*. A137, B176, p.271. Heidegger, M. *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 5th edition, trans. Robert Taft (Indiana University Press, 1997), p.69. My emphasis of Heidegger. Heidegger's emphasis of Kant.

[32] Adorno, T. W. 'On Some Relationships Between Music and Painting', trans. Susan H. Gillespie, in *The Musical Quarterly* 79, Spring (Oxford University Press, 1995), p.69. Translation amended.

theological dimension.'[33] In *Negative Dialectics*, Adorno's critique of the image is more explicit:

> The materialistic longing, to comprehend the thing, wishes the opposite; the full object could only be thought devoid of images. Such imagelessness [*Bilderlosigkeit*] converges with the theological ban on the graven image. Materialism secularized it, by not permitting utopia to be positively pictured; that is the content of its negativity.[34]

The depiction, representation, of utopia brings an end to the *task* of depicting utopia, as its objective presentation, 'the full object'. The abyssal absence (not *non-presence*) of depictions guarantees this utopian task of presentation.[35] Adorno's image critique here follows Marx's attack upon utopianism. It is equally motivated by his debates with Benjamin.

The image is a central concern of Benjamin's writings, from the allegorical images of the *Trauerspiel* to the dialectical images of *The Arcades Project*. Benjamin often conceives of the singular temporality of capitalist modernity by way of the temporality of the image, which in turn attains *its* meaning by way of *its* modernity. Judging from the 1947 study *Composing for the Films*, Adorno follows Benjamin's diagnosis but not his 'remedy': the dialectical image. In the 'bourgeois rational and, ultimately, highly industrialised order', Adorno writes, 'the eye... has become accustomed to conceiving reality as made up of separate things, commodities, objects that can be modified by practical activity.' By contrast,

> listening, as compared to seeing is "archaic"; it has not kept pace with technological progress. One might say that to react with the ear, which is fundamentally a passive organ in contrast to the swift, actively selective eye, is in a sense not in keeping with the present advanced industrial age and its cultural anthropology.[36]

Ironically, these remarks have a precedent in the citation of Simmel in Benjamin's essay on Baudelaire.[37] What does it mean to pit the ear against the eye in this manner – to

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[33] Adorno, T. W. *Aesthetic Theory*, p.67.
[34] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.204-207.
[35] Cf. Adorno, T. W. 'The Experiential Content of Hegel's Philosophy', in *Hegel: Three Studies*.
[36] Adorno, T. W & Eisler, Hans. *Composing for the Films*, (London: Continuum, 1994), pp.20-21. The chapter from which this citation is taken was written by Adorno.
[37] 'The person who is able to see but unable to hear is much more... troubled than the person who is able to hear but unable to see. Here is something... characteristic of the big city. The interpersonal relationships of people in big cities are characterised by a

propose a non-synchrony of the senses? Do not the senses co-exist in the same body at the same time?

Prefiguring Guy Debord's *The Society of the Spectacle*, Adorno suggests here that the commodity privileges the image. The concepts of simultaneity and stasis are once again invoked. A 'reality as made up of separate things' is a reality of things side-by-side one-another *in* (idealised) space. How does the image 'privilege' this simultaneity? This is not fully explained in the work on film music. A response can nevertheless be proposed on the basis of the distinction between the new and novelty.

Commodification, the re-production of novelty, is a pre-eminently temporal phenomenon; the concern of the temporal. Novelty is not merely the old. Novelty is a repetition of the same; the pursuit, perhaps, of what Simmel terms an 'intensification of nervous life.'[38] The absolute commodity, adjusting Adorno's maxim on art, converges with the absolute image, in simultaneity. For Debord,

> Consumable pseudo-cyclical time is the time of the spectacle: in the narrow sense, as the time appropriate to the consumption of images, and, in the broadest sense, as the image of the consumption of time.[39]

Comparable reflections can be found in *Minima Moralia*. The power of the ideal image is the powerlessness of conceptual abstraction. In the 'real abstraction' of 'people to each other and to things', abstraction becomes a product, not a production (abstract, not abstraction). Following Kant, the image is the already schematised, already subsumed concept. The real image excludes the quasi-intellectual schema-image. Adorno conceives of a new, mythic iconography: 'advertisements, newspaper stereotypes [and] toys'.[40] An apocalyptic parallel is possible on the basis of Benjamin's characterisation of capitalist modernity as 'the time of Hell', the anti-Eden of already named things.[41] Adorno concludes that the imagistic is paradigmatic of the consciousness of modernity, or at least the dialectic of enlightenment, including its philosophy:

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markedly greater emphasis on the use of the eyes than on that of the ears.' Quoted in, Benjamin, W. 'On Some Motifs in Baudelaire' in *Illuminations*, p.187.

[38] Simmel, G. 'The Metropolis and Mental Life', in *On Individuality and Social Forms*, p.325. Translation amended.

[39] Debord, Guy. *The Society of the Spectacle*. trans. Donald Nicholson–Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1995), p.112.

[40] Adorno, T. W. *Minima Moralia*, p.140.

[41] Benjamin, W. *The Arcades Project*, p.843.

> The objective tendency of the Enlightenment, to wipe out the power of images over man, is not matched by any subjective progress on the part of enlightened thinking towards freedom from images. While the assault on images irresistibly demolishes, after metaphysical Ideas, those concepts once understood as rational and genuinely attained by thought, the thinking unleashed by the Enlightenment and immunised against thinking is now becoming a second figurativeness [*Bildlichkeit*], though without images or spontaneity.[42]

Kant is seemingly unmasked here as another mythologist, thus contradicting the enlightenment that he 'inaugurated'.[43] A critique of the *eidos* in Kant must proceed *via* Kant.

Rhythm, Schematism and Temporalisation

The schematism chapter of the *Critique of Pure Reason* addresses the fundamental problem of how the contents of intuition, appearances (or 'representations'), are mediated with the formal concepts of the understanding (through the 'pure concepts', the categories). An account of how objects are logically subsumed under concepts, in judgement, is required in order to substantiate the transcendental deduction of apperception. This is because the synthetic unity of apperception (the subject) requires the synthetic unity of representations (the object). The schematism chapter attempts to elaborate the workings of the 'productive imagination', which occupies the *middle* synthesis in the threefold synthesis of the first edition.[44]

Kant initially proceeds according to the Platonic paradigm of the image: 'For the imagination [*Einbildungskraft*] is to bring the manifold of intuition into an image [*Bild*].'[45] This is consistent with the 'eidetic' paradigm of the *Critique* as a whole (*Erscheinung*, *Anschauung*, etc.). Kant's original move – his twofold critique of Empiricism and Rationalism – is to ask how the image is produced, and not simply

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[42] Adorno, T. W. *Minima Moralia*, p.140.
[43] Adorno acknowledges the Platonism of Kant's *Critique* in his 1959 lectures, focusing upon the ideas rather than the image. See Adorno, T. W. *Kant's* Critique of Pure Reason, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), p.24.
[44] 'The first thing that must be given to us *a priori* for the cognition of all objects is the manifold of pure intuition; the synthesis of this manifold by means of the imagination is the second thing, but it still does not yet yield cognition. The concepts that give this pure synthesis unity, and that consist solely in the representation of this necessary synthetic unity, are the third thing necessary for cognition of an object that comes before us, and they depend on the understanding.' Kant, I. *Critique of Pure Reason*. A78-79/B104, p.211.
[45] Ibid. A120, p. 239.

received, or intuited. There must be a 'third thing' that mediates intuition and conceptual image:

> This mediating representation must be pure (without anything empirical) and yet intellectual on the one hand and sensible on the other. Such a representation is the transcendental schema.[46]

Adorno's 1959 lecture on the chapter reproduces Kant's conclusions in an unproblematic manner: 'time is the factor that is both common to thought and intuition.' Adorno repeats the problems associated with Kant's mediation. Time, along with space, is a 'pure form' of intuition, 'in which nothing is to be encountered that belongs to sensation.'[47] But how can 'pure' time *mediate*? Neither does Adorno discuss the image. The chapter is read as an example of confronting contradictions.[48] But as Heidegger saw matters, in his *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* (1929), it is precisely the meaning of time, *as* the 'meaning of Being', that is at stake in this chapter, 'the central core of the whole voluminous' *Critique*.[49]

For Kant, the schema presents the definiteness of an image for a concept. It is image-like. At the same time, 'the schema is clearly distinguishable from the image'. The schema is a product of the schematism. Schematism is nothing without the schema. Equally, the schema is nothing without the image. A problem with Kant's mediation concerns the hierarchical dependency upon the image, which the schema was intended to avoid. Whence comes the image? Kant reveals the gravity of this problem in his textual contortions:

> This schematism of our understanding with regard to appearances and their mere form is a hidden art in the depths of the human soul, whose true operations we can divine from nature and lay unveiled before our eyes only with difficulty. We can say only this much: the image is a product of the empirical faculty of imagination, the schema of sensible concepts (such as figures in space) is a product and as it were a monogram of pure *a priori* imagination, through which and in accordance with which the images first become possible, but which must be connected with the concept, to which they are in themselves never fully congruent, always only by means of the schema that they designate.[50]

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[46] Ibid. A138/B177, p.272.
[47] Ibid. A20/B34, p.156.
[48] Adorno, T. W. *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, pp.133-4. Adorno promised a more detailed lecture on the schematism chapter, which was never given.
[49] Heidegger, M. *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, p.63.
[50] Kant, I. *Critique of Pure Reason*, A141-2/B180-1, pp.273-4.

Heidegger cites this passage in the introduction to *Being and Time*. Kant is 'the first and only person who has gone any stretch of the way towards investigating the dimension of Temporality'.[51]

The interest of the early Romantics in an idea of music can be understood as a response to problems identified by Kant, including those concerning the schematism. Following the Romantics, Andrew Bowie considers the schematism to be musical. He has two characteristics in mind. (1) Its ambiguous meaning-production. The schema is neither chaotic nor finally subsumed; *an* image. This is the discursive nature *of* schematism – hence, for Schelling, 'the whole mechanism of language will rest upon' it.[52] (2) The synthetic role of time in schematism, as in music. Schematism is 'musical rhythm'.[53] Adorno similarly defines schematism as 'traversing the temporal series.' But these definitions touch upon the fraught meaning of time in Kant's chapter. It is no more evident, as Heidegger observes, than in Kant's remark that 'the pure image of all magnitudes (*quantorum*) for outer sense is space; for all objects of the senses in general, it is time.'[54] Time itself is a 'pure image'. This can be understood in radically different ways.

Kant defines the schemata as 'nothing but *a priori* time-determinations in accordance with rules'.[55] Time is immanent to the schema because time is *both* the 'formal condition of the manifold of inner sense' *and* is 'contained in every empirical representation of the manifold.'[56] But this immanence could signify either 'determination *in* time' or 'determination *of* time'. This fundamental ambiguity is reflected in Kant's elucidation of the role of time with respect to four of the categories, the last of which ('magnitude') concerns 'the sum total of time in regard to all possible objects.'[57] The 'pure image' of time is, it seems, the subsumption of 'all possible objects', under one overarching Concept – as one Object and one Subject. But this positive, absolute synthesis is antithetical to Kant's negative-critical project as a whole, even if such a Concept were to be understood as regulative (and yet: Kant's 'ideal' of

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[51] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*. p.45.
[52] Schelling, F. W. J. *System of Transcendental Idealism*, trans. Peter Heath (University Press of Virginia, 1993), p137.
[53] Bowie, A. *Aesthetics and Subjectivity*, p.38. Bowie develops the parallel between music and schematism in his essay, 'Adorno, Heidegger, and the Meaning of Music', in, ed. Tom Huhn, *The Cambridge Companion to Adorno* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp.262-263.
[54] Kant, I. *Critique of Pure Reason*, A142/B182, p.274.
[55] Ibid. A135/B184, p.276.
[56] Ibid. A138-9/B177-8, p.272.
[57] Ibid. A145/B184-185, p.276.

reason). Reason seeks a totality of conditions in vain because the task of discovering the totality adds another condition to the totality. The unconditioned cannot be made apparent: 'this unconditioned is always contained in the absolute totality of the series if one represents it in imagination. Yet this absolute complete synthesis is once again only an idea.'[58] If Kant's 'pure image' of time is an image *of* the unconditioned, then it must be an inconceivable image – apropos, perhaps, of *Moses and Aron*:

> Only one, infinite, thou omnipresent one,
> unperceived and inconceivable God![59]

Hölderlin, aware of Kant's example of the Jewish prohibition, in the 'Analytic of the Sublime', names Kant as 'the Moses of our nation' (a Protestant identification of Jewish identity, of course).[60]

When Kant refers to 'all possible objects', he means objectivity *in general*; the transcendental conditions for the possibility of objects *as such*, not an actual or empirical totality. But how can there be *one* image (time) of objects *in general*? In what sense can the transcendental structure be an image *of itself*? A possible interpretation of the 'pure image' arises from Kant's definition of time in the Transcendental Aesthetic:

> time cannot be a determination of outer appearances; it belongs neither to a shape or a position, etc., but on the contrary determines the relation of representations in our inner state. And just because this inner intuition yields no shape we attempt to remedy this lack through analogies, and represent the temporal sequence through a line progressing to infinity, in which the manifold constitutes a series that is of only one dimension, and infer from the properties of this line to all the properties of time, with the sole difference that the parts of the former are simultaneous but those of the latter always exist successively.[61]

Could the 'line' constitute a pure image of time, the form of all possible forms *on which* (its) determinations are, in a sense, 'punctuated'?

Kant's line, the series of conditions, follows in a traditional, Aristotelian understanding of linear time. Or rather, Kant renders metaphysical Aristotle's physics,

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[58] Ibid. A416/B444, p.464.
[59] '*Einziger, ewiger, allgegenwärtiger unsichbarer und unvorstellbarer Gott!*' The first line of *Moses and Aron*, delivered by Moses.
[60] Cited in: Lacoue-Labarthe, P, *Musica Ficta*, p.137. 'Perhaps there is no more sublime passage in the Jewish Law than the commandment: Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven or on earth, or under the earth, etc.' Kant, I. *Critique of Judgement*, p.127.
[61] Kant, I. *Critique of Pure Reason*, A33/B49-50, p.163.

just as he renders Aristotle's categories transcendental. This tradition is already seen in Leibniz's 'order of successions'. Kant's time series, the 'repeated addition of units to each other', faces the same criticisms made of the Rationalist paradigm of conditionality. Kant acknowledges, in his Thesis to the First Antinomy, that the infinite time line leads into its opposite: simultaneity. All points of the infinite line are equally infinitely distant from the beginning as from the end.[62] This is destructive for Kant, if it is true that the Antinomy ultimately sides with infinity.

For Heidegger, the understanding of time as a series of points on a line, of intra-temporal points *in* time, is ultimately the determination of time as space, not time at all. It is the 'ordinary [*vulgär*] conception of time'. Kant's 'pure image' of time is nevertheless fundamental to Heidegger's *alternative* reading of the schematism chapter. Heidegger focuses upon the role of the schema in the above-mentioned category of magnitude, to which Kant attributes 'the generation of time itself.'[63] Kant's 'pure image' is, against Kant's intentions, not formal-transcendental. Having interpreted intuition [*Anschauung*] as the 'pure look [*Anblick*]' of the 'horizon' – the anticipatory horizon of possibility – Heidegger now states that intuition refers to the 'schema-image' with respect to the 'pure image' of time.[64] The varied but interrelated terminology of 'image' in the *Critique* acknowledges a unifying ground (the ground that unifies but is not united) of the 'sources of knowledge': intuition and understanding.[65] Heidegger's 'pure image' is finitely disclosing, the 'look' and not the Platonic *eidos*. As the horizon of possibility of the productive imagination, time is finite in a *disclosing* manner. Its limitation (the horizon is 'finite') is not to be understood pejoratively. In the terms of *Being and Time*, which the *Kantbuch* was intended to 'clarify', the schematism of the productive imagination is the 'temporalising' of possibility (see chapter 5).[66]

The subsequent Heidegger of 'the turning' will locate this originary temporalising, in new philosophical language, in the work of art (but *not* music). The origin of the work of art means that the work of art is originary. 'To be a work means: to set up a world'.[67] The 'resoluteness' of *Being and Time*, the 'authentic' possibility of

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[62] Ibid. A428/B456, p.470.
[63] Ibid. A145/B184, p.275.
[64] Heidegger, M. *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*. p.63; p.73.
[65] The 'image' [*Bild*] of 'imagination' [*Einbildungskraft*] is taken in three senses: as the 'look' [*Anblick*], the specific image of a being 'at hand', and as a 'likeness' (a 'photograph' or a 'death mask'). The 'pure look' defines intuition [*Anschauung*]. It is 'the horizon of the letting-stand against [*Gegenstehenlassen*].' Ibid. pp.63-64.
[66] Preface to the Fourth Edition, ibid. xvii.
[67] Heidegger, M. 'The Origin of the Work of Art', p.22.

the temporalisation of possibility, is exemplified in the work of art – which, as enigmatic, is best placed to bring the 'enigma of Being' into nearness. The work of art gives historical, 'thingly' substance to Heidegger's solipsistic existentialism. At the same time, this valorisation of the work of art leaves Heidegger open to the charge of blocking concrete possibilities outside of art. Or, the concrete possibility that Heidegger takes art to temporalise is already temporalised ideologically (nationalism).

It is widely claimed, across a variety of philosophical aesthetics, that the time of the artwork is an unfamiliar time – where familiar time is variously named, and confused, as vulgar temporality, chronometric time, *temps espace*, and so on. The autonomous artwork is, either in actuality or as semblance, supposed to signal authentically lived time, *temps durée*, etc. The peculiarity of modern *music*, as art, is that it seems irredeemably chronometric, and to that extent always 'inauthentic' (Heidegger's initial evaluation of this medium). Every artwork endures *in* time, intratemporally. Perhaps, then, we may speak of a musical tendency of modern art that is most obvious in modern music.

Schelling's philosophy of music resonates with the schematism chapter of his *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1801).[68] As with Hegel, spirit, of which art is a unique manifestation, is the finite determining of the infinite:

> The necessary form of music is succession, for time is the universal form of the informing of the infinite into the finite and to that extent is intuited as form, abstracted from the real.[69]

Schelling was familiar with August Schlegel's lectures, *Schöne Literatur und Kunst* and *Vorlesungen über Philosophische Kunstlehre* (1798). Schlegel defines music as 'rhythm, modulation and harmony'.[70] The historical lag of actual music (in Vienna) behind its idea (in Jena) is evident from Schelling's Schlegelian consideration of rhythm. Musical rhythm is said to incorporate two 'levels'. The first is measure: 'An image of this might be equally large, equally separated points'. The second is '*tact*' (a category that had gained currency with Beethoven), which Schelling defines (whether against or unaware of Beethoven) as the alternation between strong and weak beats.[71]

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[68] Schelling, F. W. J. *System of Transcendental Idealism*, pp.134-139.
[69] Schelling, F. W. J. *The Philosophy of Art*, p.109.
[70] Schlegel, A. W. *Vorlesungen über Philosophische Kunstlehre* (Leipzig: Theodor Weicher, 1911), pp. 224-227. Cf. translator's introduction to Schelling, F. W. J. *The Philosophy of Art*, xxvii; Frank, Manfred. *Das Problem 'Zeit' in der Deutchen Romantik* (Munich: Winker Verlag, 1972), p.382.
[71] Schelling, F. W. J. *The Philosophy of Art*, pp.110-111.

But with Beethoven, the two levels cannot be conflated. Indeed, the emancipation of rhythm from measure comes to *define* modern, autonomous music. Neoplatonic *rhythmos* migrates from the number to the name, but it retains the memory of its number, which it cannot forget so long as it is music. The revolution in rhythm is not to be found in the classicism of Haydn (Schelling's sole example) but in Beethoven, already into his middle-period by 1800. Rhythm is no longer the elaboration upon Baroque and Classical dance forms (the minuet, for instance). Adorno notes the following in his unfinished project, *Beethoven*: 'By work, time is killed *in earnest*... Extremely important: to be taken further – Beethoven's *rhythm* and tonality.'[72]

This is also the period of the invention of the metronome, a rationalisation of the chronometric in music. Beethoven's enthusiasm for metronome tempo markings should be understood as his attempted *definition* of rhythm, articulated though the unfolding musical material as a whole, rather than as the valorisation of measure for its own sake. Schelling tends to posit measure and rhythm dualistically, as nature and spirit. Music is the harmonious unity of the ideal and real 'series'; in Kantian terms, the unity of the transcendental and the empirical.

The musicological concept of rhythm remains disputed.[73] And much of the confusion concerns the question of the relative autonomy of rhythm from measure. The dispute is symptomatic of the contradiction that is modern music itself. Rhythm can be defined as musical time, but musical time is positively interrupted by chronometric time. It is the vulgar temporality of music that has drawn philosophers of time to its example. Adorno, whose philosophy of music remains exceptionally un-vulgar, cites the concept of rhythm sparsely, no doubt because it connotes for him an archaic reaction into the mythic (Stravinsky); into the mythic-rationalist *rhythmos*. Adorno nevertheless alludes to a *productive* rhythm in his fragmentary works: 'On the theory of Beethoven and the symphony, Schelling's concept of rhythm in the *Philosophy of Art*'.[74]

Adorno characterises the peculiarity of musical time in his own way, but it follows the general notion of a contradiction of times, in Schelling and beyond:

> The self-evident fact, that music is a temporal art, that it unfolds in time, means, in the dual sense, that time is not self-evident for it, that it has time

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[72] Adorno, T. W. *Beethoven: The Philosophy of Music*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), p.8.
[73] 'What is rhythm? The answer, I am afraid, is, so far, just – a word: a word without generally accepted meaning... The confusion is terrifying indeed'. Sachs, Curt. *Rhythm and Tempo* (New York: Dent, 1953), p.12.
[74] Adorno, T. W. *Beethoven: The Philosophy of Music*, p.117.

> as its problem. It must create temporal relationships among its constituent parts, justify their temporal relationship, synthesise them through time.

Modern music is 'in time' and (yet) is a synthesis 'through time':

> *Zeitkunst*, the temporal art, is equivalent to the objectification of time. This applies to the individual elements, or musical content, to the extent that they come together in a context by means of the organisation of their sequence, rather than dissolving as they pass away; and to the temporal dimension itself, which aims, potentially, at its own sublation [*Aufgehoben*], based on the strength of the unity of what occurs within it, following the example of certain movements of the truly symphonic Beethoven. [75]

Typically, Adorno renders music's relationship to time as dialectical. And yet, even dialectics struggles to grasp this extra-musical problem.

As art, modern music calls for aesthetic judgement. Such judgement is, according to Kant, without a concept. This means: conceptual (logical) without being subsumed under *one* concept.[76] Adorno coins the term 'logicity'.[77] In the third *Critique*, Kant cites the schematism chapter of the first *Critique* as an account of the subsumption of determinate and not reflective judgements.[78] But if, given Heidegger's 'violent' reading of Kant, schematism is productively, and hence originally indeterminate *in* its determining judgement, then modern music, as art, temporalises.[79] We may stop short, today, of claiming that the modern artwork positively 'historises', in the prophetic sense of Heidegger's Hölderlin.

The work of modern music aims at a 'sublation' of time according to Adorno. What time does musical time sublate? Music 'must act upon time, not lose itself to it; must stem itself against the *empty flood.*' Is not the empty flood another time-series, another representation of time as movement and accumulation of points *in* time? Adorno's formulation is Bergsonian, to the extent that the sublating time of music must negate a 'quasi-spatial time':

> The objective time factor in all parameters and the living experiential time of the phenomenon are by no means identical... In the controversy on this

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[75] Adorno, T.W. 'On Some Relationships between Music and Painting', p.66.
[76] 'The cognitive powers brought into play by this representation are here engaged in a free play, since *no definite concept* restricts them to a particular rule of cognition'. Kant, I. *Critique of Judgement*, p.58. My emphasis.
[77] Adorno, T. W. *Aesthetic Theory*, p.136.
[78] Kant, I. *Critique of Judgement*, p.59.
[79] 'Readers have taken constant offence at the violence of my interpretations. Their allegation of violence can indeed be supported by this text... Thinkers learn from their shortcomings to be more preserving.' Heidegger, M. Preface to the Second Edition, xx.

> point the concept of time is used equivocally [in the recent debate]. It covers both *temps espace* and *temps durée*, physically measurable, quasi-spatial time and experiential time. Bergson's insight into their incompatibility cannot be erased.[80]

In *Time and Free Will* (1889), Bergson takes music, 'notes of the tune... rhythm', to exemplify 'true duration'. By contrast, spatial time is the representation of a 'series' of 'states of consciousness' before (that) consciousness, in an 'image'. Representation thus distinguishes spatial time from experienced duration, time's presentation (tellingly, Adorno calls the latter '*experiential* time').[81] Bergson takes music to subvert the re-presentation of time, since it is close to time's presentation (the presentation of Kant's 'inner sense').

Yet, as has been suggested, the genesis of modern music is entwined with chronometric, 'spatial' time (in the sense that points in time are represented as side-by-side each other in space). Bergson unwittingly reminds us that, as much as music opposes intra-temporality, modern music must also contain it. Hence, Heidegger concurs with Bergson that spatial time is the problem, but claims, against Bergson, that *temps durée* is in the final instance another *temps espace*.[82] Heidegger's criticism is recognisable: for Bergson, the notes of the tune are analogous to the series of 'states of consciousness', as points in the consciousness time-series. The same observation can be made of Husserl's musical analogy, in his lectures *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time* (of course, Heidegger did not object, having co-edited the lectures himself, in 1928).[83] Bergson's 'vulgar' conception of time is more than a mere conception however. In Heidegger's own terms, everyday temporality is a

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[80] Adorno, T. W. 'Vers une musique informelle' in, *Quasi una Fantasia*, p. 312.

[81] Bergson, Henri. *Key Writings*, ed. Keith Ansell-Pearson (London & New York: Continuum, 2002), p.60.

[82] 'We call the temporal attribute of entities within-the-world "*within-time-ness*" [die *Innerzeitkeit*]. The kind of 'time' which is first found ontically in within-time-ness, becomes the basis on which the ordinary conception of time takes form. But time, as within-time-ness, arises from an essential kind of temporalizing of primordial temporality. The fact that this is its source, tells us that the time 'in which' what is present-at-hand arises and passes away, is a genuine phenomenon of time; it is not an externalisation of a 'qualitative time' into space, as Bergson's Interpretation of time – which is ontologically quite indefinite and inadequate – would have us believe.' Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, p.333.

[83] Hussurl considers the 'tone' as the being the 'temporal object' of immediate consciousness, the preceding tones the having-been objects, and the expected tones the anticipated objects. Music (the *melody*) is the analogy for time itself. And as in Bergson, the 'tone' is the analogy for the 'now' that is *in* time. Husserl, Edmund. *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, trans. John Barnett Brough (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1990). See, for instance, pp.24-25.

temporalisation, albeit the one already temporalised, by 'the They'. Heidegger confronts, but also reacts against this time of modernity, a time that is moreover represented in the intellectual figure of a Bergson.

But the advantage of Heidegger over Bergson is twofold, here at least. Firstly, Heidegger opens up an understanding of possible temporalisations according to, and within, a 'systematic', not avowedly dualistic, philosophy of time (nor a monistic one, as is found in the later work of Bergson). The possibility of temporalisation is once again a possibility of Dasein *as* facticity. Dasein is already thrown into its historical time. Temporality is not subjectively produced; neither ideally nor psychologically. Heidegger instead makes a claim for (fundamental) ontology, according to which the question of Being is the possibility of possibility: Dasein's self-temporalisation. Secondly, the conjunction of temporalisation with the horizon of possibility promises to overcome the spatial re-presentation of time, which, *as* re-presentation, threatens to collapse ec-static Dasein into presence. Heidegger calls this 'inauthentic' because to be Dasein *is* to be '*Fragwürdig*': worthy of the question of ec-static Being.

The example of music in Bergson nevertheless provides the basis for a critique of Heidegger. Bergson returns the charge of dualism, for he problematises the *decisive* structure in Heidegger: authenticity or inauthenticity; resoluteness or everydayness – poetry or music. This criticism is not to relativise authenticity into an ahistorical, invariant category – to decide, that is, for indecision. Rather, the possibility of authenticity and of temporalisation is the possibility of all futural temporalisation. If the time of capitalism is regulated by the cyclical time of the image then temporalisation is the possibility – *as* the seeming impossibility – of a break-out from the mythic cycle into history. In utopian-political terms, this is the possibility of conceiving 'the totality as something that could be completely different'.

Music is modern by virtue of its vulgarity. Is music's 'own sublation' thereby possible? Can music cancel *and* preserve *its* time, the time that it already *is*? Adorno suggests that the late work of Beethoven anticipates this problem. The 'intensive type' of Beethoven's Classical period is the expression of musical time through symphonic unfolding. This is the temporality, the rhythm, of the French Revolution; of the *Eroica*: 'By work, time is killed *in earnest*'. Time is, as it were, prematurely, hastily fulfilled. In Beethoven's late-middle period, however, the 'extensive type' emerges. This time is characterised as the sublation of the former types, eventually culminating in the late period. 'The actual organising principle of the extensive form is', admits Adorno, 'still very obscure to me':

> The extensive form contains a certain moment of renunciation, an abandonment of the balance of opposites to be found in paradox, so that the fractures already emerge, although they do not yet become, as in the late style, ciphers; rather, they contribute to contingency in the sense that greater weight is given to the moment of abstract time than to the construction of the constitution of form. But this temporal moment is itself thematic, perhaps as in the novel, and is the main subject: not an 'idea' which fills time... Abdication before time, and the *shaping* of this abdication, make up the substance of the extensive type.[84]

The later work of Beethoven shapes 'abstract time', the shapeless time of the 'empty flood'. This is the extensive type. Can Adorno's conception of 'empty time' be clarified any further?

In *Negative Dialectics*, Adorno suggests that by conceiving of schematism as logical time determination Kant paved the way for Hegel's identification of time, history and logic: 'Hegel, Kant's critic, was Kant's executor'. Adorno could have cited the *Philosophy of Nature*, in which Hegel places time solely on the side of spirit: 'it is not *in* time that everything comes to be and passes away, rather time itself is the *becoming*, this coming-to-be and passing away'.[85] Hegel negates Kant's mechanistic antinomies only to expose a new contradiction between absolute Idealist time and the time of the natural sciences. Hegel radicalises Kant's 'objects in general' into a unitary Idea, whose task and essence is the inwardisation of the Object from the standpoint of an absolute Subject (standing both at the beginning and at the end of historical time). The *Bilderverbot* thus extends, suggests Adorno, to Hegel. Hegel's 'version of dialectics',

> becomes ontologized, turning from a subjective form into a structure of being pure and simple, itself something eternal. Hegel's speculations, which equate the absolute idea of the totality to the transience of everything finite, are founded on such. His attempt to deduce time, as it were, and to eternalize it as something which does not tolerate anything outside itself, is appropriate to this conception just as much as to absolute idealism, which can so little resign itself to the separation of time and logic than Kant could to that of the intuition and understanding.

This 'detemporalisation of time [*Entzeitlichung der Zeit*]' is eminently Platonic.[86] Adorno reiterates Feuerbach's verdict that 'Hegelian philosophy must necessarily result

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[84] Adorno, T. W. *Beethoven*, p.90.
[85] Hegel, G. W. F. *Philosophy of Nature*, p.35. Cf. *Phenomenology of Spirit*: '*History*, is a *conscious*, self-*mediating* process – Spirit emptied out into Time', p.492.
[86] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.324-328.

in the immobility of time.'[87] Adorno cites Bergson as the strongest intellectual protest to date (alongside Proust) against bourgeois detemporalisation. Bergson (not Husserl and certainly not Heidegger) is Adorno's philosophical alternative to Kant and Hegel. Adorno entertains and even relies upon what he calls Bergson's 'crass dichotomy'. In re-presenting *both* times (in both spatial and imagistic terms, including movement. the movement of some-thing in space) Adorno faces the objection that multiple spaces cannot occupy the same space at the same time. It is thus a spatial and not a temporal contradiction that now confronts Adorno. Adorno's earlier notion of the 'two spheres' of music can nevertheless offer, along with Heidegger's critique of metaphysical time, a more promising response to this contradiction.

What Passes for Musical Time?

Adorno's claim that modern music is imageless contains an assumption that music takes place in an imageless environment. He tends to conflate musical form with the abstract (the 'pure' and 'imageless' art). But the abstract is the opposite of abstraction. As imageless, without *one* image, modern music *is* concerned with the image, negatively – and has been so since at least the *stile rappresentativo*. The possibility of representation in music is surely premised upon its ambiguously imagistic character. This is attested to by the prominence of fantasy in music and its discourse. Wackenroder's musical aesthetics, for instance, follows Tieck's aesthetics of painting:

> Sometimes music appears to me like a phoenix, which lightly and boldly raises itself for its own pleasure, floats upwards triumphantly for its own gratification, and pleases gods and men for the flapping of its wings… what a magnificent fullness of images![88]

In his 'Beethoven's Instrumental Music', Hoffmann sees '[b]urning flashes of light shoot through the deep night… we become aware of giant shadows that surge back and forth, driving us into narrower and narrower confines until they destroy us'.[89] This (early) musical Romanticism reveals a constitutive, not accidental role of the imagistic in music. Whereas, Adorno's essay 'On the Contemporary Relationship of Philosophy

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[87] Feuerbach, L. *The Fiery Brook*, trans. Zawar Hanfi (Minnesota: Anchor, 1972), pp. 57-8.
[88] Wackenroder, W. H. 'The Marvels of the Musical Art' in, eds. Hermand, J. & Gilbert, M. *German Essays on Music* (New York: Continuum, 1994), p.36.
[89] Hoffmann, E. T. A. 'Beethoven's Instrumental Music', in ibid. pp.60-61.

and Music' (1953) refers to an 'enigmatic character' that is 'specific to music' and is 'emphasised by its distancing from the visually or conceptually determined world of objects'. Furthermore 'this character is almost urged upon us by music itself.'[90] In the visual arts, by contrast, the 'relationship to objects is merged with the content, even in the case of the associations of abstract painting.'[91] What does it mean to suggest that musical abstraction is *more* abstract than painterly abstraction, or other abstractions? Does not music's 'distancing' of the image imply the possibility of another moment of nearness to the image – as in the 'dialectical' case of music and language? Matters are more nuanced in Adorno's 1965 essay on music and painting:

> The old aim of secular music, that of the *divertissement* that distracts from boredom, testifies to [music acting upon time], a fact that lives on in the relationship to time of autonomous music.[92]

Adorno's remark can be radicalised here, so as to state that distraction makes possible music's claim to autonomy, for the first time (both historically and structurally), and that, insofar as distraction involves fantasy, music too is 'imagistic'.[93] Music is modern by virtue of its propensity for the image, not in spite of it. This was, for Wagner, the *privilege* of music.

Following tradition, Adorno takes music to be both the 'imageless art' and the 'art of time'. But what if modern music is imageless *insofar as* it is a quasi-imagistic 'rendering' of time, *through which* the image passes (*through*, in both senses of the word)? *Divertissement* passes the time, the empty time of boredom, but not in a vacuum. Images pass in and for modern music. It is already an abyssal 'image' into which images are drawn. Two aspects coincide here: the quasi-image of musical rhythm, discussed above, and the extra-musical image(s), introduced in this section. As Adorno says of language in music, 'signifying intentions flood into' it. In fact, Adorno comes to a similar conclusion where the *image* is concerned:

> The dispute over whether music can portray anything definite, or is only a play of sound-patterns in motion, no doubt misses the point. A far closer parallel is the dream, to the form of which, as Romanticism well knew, music is in many ways close... Images of the objective world appear in

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[90] Adorno, T. W. 'The Contemporary Relationship of Philosophy and Music' in *Essays on Music*. p.138.
[91] Ibid. p.139
[92] Adorno, T. W. 'On Some Relationships between Music and Painting', p.66.
[93] Perhaps the historical case study would be Mozart's divertimento in B-flat, the *Gran Partita*.

> music only in scattered, eccentric flashes, vanishing at once; but they are, in their transience, *of music's essence.*[94]

Adorno is reluctant to connect this dream world of music to the real world, in the manner of Bloch, perhaps. Adorno's shift of position on the image tracks his shifting evaluation of the dream, from hostility towards Benjamin's appropriation of Klages and Jung to the recording of his own dreams.[95] Adorno declares in the above note, unpublished in his lifetime: 'I believe the images flitting past to be *objective*, not merely subjective associations.'[96]

If the interdependence of music with the image is rationalised in commodity music, then the identification of the fetish character must be said to extend to the environment of musical listening. There is, necessarily, a space of fantasy. This is left largely untouched by Adorno. But insofar as the context of *both* 'spheres' of music is what Simmel called the 'Metropolis', this context is one that already privileges the image; is the privilege of the image. The environment is not accidental to the identification, given the (non-)temporal affinity of logical identity and the *eidos*. This context even constitutes the 'commodity-being' of music. Perhaps music's affectivity – which, according to Adorno, is responsible for its exemplary commodity character – concerns the need to *feel* that everything is in its place, in the 'non-dwelling' of the Metropolis (see chapter 4).

Commodity music goes beyond the *principium individuationis*; beyond the 'representation' of 'Ideas' (Schopenhauer). Early Romantic fantasy is absolutised in Schopenhauer's high Romanticism. Fantasy becomes bourgeois escapism. Schopenhauer is very much alive (Heidegger was careful to take him seriously). Perhaps commodity music presents an expropriated environment (expropriated experience *as* social expropriation) *as* appropriate; as a 'proper place'. It presents *Erlebnis* as *Erfahrung*, rather than transforming the one into the other. But these are not binary opposites. The 'two spheres' of music – or rather, of a musical experience of modernity – 'must be thought of together'. Modern music, like commodity music, speaks the language of fantasy. Where commodity music is receptive to the image, modern music seeks to appropriate this reception productively.

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[94] Adorno, T. W. *Beethoven*, pp.7-8.
[95] Cf. Adorno, T. W. *Dream Notes*, eds. Christoph Gödde & Jan Philipp Reemsta, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007).
[96] Adorno, T. W. *Beethoven*, pp.7-8.

Adorno's two essays on music and painting propose an explicit relationship between the 'art of time' and the 'art of space'. 'The pseudomorphosis [of music] toward painting... must be understood, today, as a stage in the process of convergence.'[97] The shared qualities of modern music and modern painting include simultaneity, abstraction, graphicness and *écriture*. The earlier essay begins with some historical correspondences – Wagner and Renoir, the Second Viennese School and the Blue Rider, Stravinsky and Picasso – emphasising a 'playful' relationship (also between Germany and France, the 'inner' and 'outer' intellectual cultures).[98] By 1965, Adorno has witnessed the rise of both 'new music' and painterly abstraction. The later text is dedicated to the collector and critic of Cubism, Daniel-Henry Kahnweile. Yet no painters are cited. Indeed, the 'convergence' is ambivalent for Adorno, who addresses the twofold possibilities of modern art *and* the end of art, temporalisation *and* reification. The two issues tend to be confused, but can be read together. If art is defined in terms of *Erfahrung*, then the possibility of modern music is the possibility of its becoming. How is music to become, amidst the disintegration of compositional paradigms of development? Modern music embraces its fragmentation so as to inscribe the becoming of musical experience anew. But this experiment, should fragmentation become atomistic, threatens to enforce the stasis that is already promised in the disintegration itself. Adorno's 'ambivalent' experience of Wagner is, in part, attributable to the composer's formative role in a tendency that will come to be definitive of modern music. *In Search of Wagner* cites the transformation scene of *Parsifal*:

> You see, my son, time here becomes space.[99]

But whereas this previously signified detemporalisation and reification, the post-war Adorno takes this 'spatialising' tendency to have productive possibilities:

> In the most recent music, which draws so near to painting and the graphic arts, the trend toward the static becomes quite marked – here, too, something is fully realized that Wagner had envisioned earlier... Colour itself became architectonic... a new kind of construction.[100]

However,

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[97] Adorno, T. W. 'On Some Relationships between Music and Painting', p.67.
[98] Adorno. T. W. '*Zum Verhältnis von Malerei und Musik heute*', *GS* 18, pp.140-142.
[99] Wagner, R. *Parsifal*, Act 1. Quoted in Adorno, T. W. *In Search of Wagner*, p.88.
[100] Adorno, T. W. 'Wagner's Relevance for Today' in *Essays on Music*, p.594.

> chromatic music always has an affinity to *identity*... one might go so far as to surmise that Wagner's compositional process prophesied the dawning horror of the transition from a society that had reached the apogee of its dynamism to one that had again turned rigid, become utterly reified: a new feudalism, to use Veblen's term.[101]

The problem of modern music thus articulates an extra-musical problem.

Adorno's musical aesthetics draws, at various junctures, upon Ernst Kurth's *Musikpsychologie* (1930). Kurth had sought to understand the relationship between the 'inner' and 'outer' aspects of musical listening. How does the compositional structure relate to the experience of spatial depth and collectivity traditionally associated with the performance of music? They are distinct yet intimately connected phenomena. The composition 'determines' in some way the spatiality of the musical experience. Adorno does not consider this spatiality in terms of architecture or the architectural. And yet, musical space,

> springs from the collective implications of all music, the character of something that embraces groups of human beings, which gradually carried over to the sound as such. The phenomenon can only be described in analogies, but can be perceived very distinctly.

Adorno finds this relationship obscure yet fundamental: 'the spatial quality *adheres to* the harmonic structure and the instrumental sound.'[102]

For Kurth, the question about space is equally a question about the image. Neither in his 1933 review of Kurth's book, nor in subsequent writings does Adorno acknowledge the important section on the '*Bewegungsbild*', the dynamic image.[103] Though music is no 'visual image', its 'dynamic sequence' gives rise to an '"image".' Music's 'after-image' (a term borrowed from eidetic psychology) pertains to the phenomena of high and low, line and rhythm. Counterpoint is at once harmonic and rhythmic. The musical work is no mere succession of atomised notes.[104] The emphasis of '*Gestalt* psychology' upon the whole makes *its* theoretical application to music highly appropriate.[105] It is this whole, even or especially as a negative whole, that *adheres* music to space.

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[101] Ibid. p.598.
[102] Adorno, T. W. 'The Contemporary Relationship of Philosophy and Music', in *Essays on Music*, p.150.
[103] Kurth, Ernst. *Musikpsychologie*, 2nd edition (Bern: Krompholz, 1947), pp.85-97. For Adorno's review, see *GS* 19, p.350.
[104] Ibid. pp.86-87.
[105] This marks a break with the considerations of music in Schopenhauer and the early Nietzsche. 'The two deities of art, Apollo and Dionysos, provide the starting-point for

The work of music is a '"simultaneous" dynamic image'. It is experienced as one, at once, in an 'instant [*Augenblick*]'. And yet, the work is temporal. Kurth conceives of a 'contradiction [*Widerspruch*] of the temporal and non-temporal unity.'[106] He aligns the *Augenblick* with the non-temporal. Despite his interest in inter-disciplinary education, it is unlikely that Kurth had read the recently published *Being and Time*. For Heidegger, the '*Augenblick*' is not the 'now' but 'an authentic Present [*Gegenwart*] or waiting-towards [*Gegen-wart*]' that 'permits us *to encounter for the first time* what can be "in a time".'[107] Equally contrary to Bergson's 'crass dichotomy', Kurth's '*Widerspruch*' *acknowledges* the contradiction of musical time.

The dynamic image is constitutive of the work of modern music. The simultaneity of this image is its (by no means *authentic*) *Augenblick*. Adorno's thesis on music and the 'graphic arts' can be read as a historical materialist radicalisation of Kurth. Music's tendency toward the image is inseparable from, though not identical to, the imagistic character of its emergence.[108] The modern musical work effectuates a quasi-simultaneous image. Adorno hears in the 'new music' a peculiar repetition, a mimesis, of the image. Its temporal character is no longer immanent to the intrinsic musical language (or, logic), but is instead imposed extrinsically:

> To this extent [the new music] obeys the romantic principle against which it is rebelling, by pursuing the spatialisation of time in a merely fictitious

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our recognition that there exists in the world of the Greeks an enormous opposition, both in origin and goals, between the Apolline art of the image-maker [*Bildner*] and the imageless art of music, which is that of Dionysos.' Nietzsche, F. *The Birth of Tragedy*, p.14. Both Adorno and Nietzsche call music the 'imageless art'. But whereas Adorno can say that the musical work has a singular form, Nietzsche cannot – he gives form to the arts of Apollo alone: poetry, the plastic arts and the dream image. For the early Nietzsche, music is confined to chaos.

[106] Kurth, E. *Musikpsychologie*, p.96.

[107] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, pp.387-88.

[108] This is not to say that the goal of modern music is its origin. It does not negate 'expendable conventions', in pursuit of its essential medium. In contradistinction to Clement Greenberg, Adorno suggests that the arts converge in a manner that cannot be assumed to be progressive. For Adorno, music has historically lagged behind painting, in that it sought to imitate it, catching up only in the twentieth century. It had been late since the *late renaissance* of the *stile rapprasentativo*. Greenberg argues, by contrast, that painting and literature took music, which matured *early*, for their model. 'Because of its 'absolute' nature, its remoteness from imitation... music had come to replace poetry as the paragon of art. It was the art which the other avant-garde arts envied most, and whose effects they tried hardest to imitate.' Greenberg, Clement. 'Towards a Newer Laocoon' in, eds. Charles Harrison & Paul Wood, *Art in Theory 1900-2000* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), p.565.

> [*fiktiv*] manner, treating time without consideration, as if it were space, with all the inconsistencies that characterise the magician's act.[109]

Non-temporalised music is not modern music. And yet, it is precisely here, in the most unlikely of places, that a certain resistance to detemporalisation is proposed. Adorno describes Schoenberg's *Moses* as '*musica ficta*... elevated to a different plane [*aufgehoben*].' The figurative image *has become* music: 'The pictorial aspect of music is now shifted on to the individual figures, as if the non-pictorial might result from their demise.'[110] This is the result of Schoenberg's 'constructivist' totality; a non-image absolute in music. It is not the chronometric measure that produces this anti-rhythm image, but rather the 'establishing [of] sound relationships vertically'; the neutralising of harmonic meaning in a relentless 'twelve-tone technique'. 'The simplest way to describe the general effect is to say that the music is dissonant from the first bar to the last, but that it does not sound dissonant for a single second.'[111] Its static rhythm is a function of the static tonality. *Against* Adorno's literal reading, in order to concur with him: Schoenberg's newly-found 'timbre' is not always 'integrated into the construction'. In the Burning Bush scene, for example, the murmuring voices do not produce a positive totality. There is both fragmentariness and becoming. As Adorno acknowledges, '[t]oday music rebels against conventional temporal order; in any case the treatment of musical time allows for widely diverging solutions.'[112]

We may therefore speak of a spatialising 'of time' that temporalises; a temporalising-becoming mimesis 'of' detemporalisation. The meaning or status of this mimesis is not arbitrary. It is to be understood, to some extent, in Adorno's sense of a dialectic of mimesis and rationality. Mimesis is the productively tragic recognition of a rational limit. The limit becomes the 'tragic' possibility of the mimesis (see chapter 4). Nono's 'Tragedy in Listening' expresses the time of waiting in vain.

The New Music and Luigi Nono

Adorno was well-aware that the 'spatialising' tendency in the new music might lead to detemporalisation, or rather non-temporalisation ('The Aging of the New Music'). This is the underlying issue of Adorno's proto-manifesto, 'Vers une musique informelle' (1960). Adorno applauds the experimental works of some of the younger composers,

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[109] Adorno, T. W. 'On Some Relationships between Music and Painting', p.67.
[110] Adorno, T. W. 'A Sacred Fragment' in *Quasi una Fantasia*, p.231-232.
[111] Ibid. p.237.
[112] Adorno, T. W. *Aesthetic Theory*, p.23.

only to fault them for a lack of historical self-consciousness. Whereas the 'new serialists' confuse the new with complexity, composers of the 'single note' forget history with their naturalistic-acoustic materialism. It is this 'acute antinomy' that an 'informal music' seeks to overcome.

Adorno is particularly interested in Stockhausen's works, '*Zeitmaße, Gruppen* and *Kontakte*', as well as his essay '...how time passes...' (1959):

> My first reaction to *Zeitmaße*, in which I relied exclusively on my ears, involved me in a strange interaction with his theory of a static music which arises from a universal dynamics as well as with his theory of cadences.[113]

Adorno goes on to dispute musical naturalism, in Cage rather than Stockhausen. In fact, Stockhausen's essay is no less naturalistic, responding as it does to the German catastrophe by neglecting historical consciousness altogether in favour of 'the nature of sound'. This nevertheless involves a *historical* reconstruction of the recent musical tradition in order to oppose it with a 'conception of musical time that is absolutely new'.[114]

Despite this naturalism, Adorno has sympathy with Stockhausen's thesis that musical rhythm has continued to follow the harmonic series of diatonic music long after that series became obsolete. The cadence stands metonymically for narrative, or linear becoming: 'In traditional listening the music unfolds from the parts to the whole, in tune with the flow of time itself.' Serialism attempted to overcome tonal harmony but remains enslaved to its rhythm. Stockhausen complains that, '[m]ost people who today write pitches in this system are not aware that they are giving form to time-proportions.'[115] Traditional rhythm lends itself to graphic notation – measure, time signature and tempo. Its musical time can be seen:

> up till now, one could see from the score the time-relationships composed in a piece of music, quite independently of its realisation in sound, and the "rightness" of a realisation in sound could be checked against the time-notation of the score.

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[113] Adorno, T. W. 'Vers uns musique informelle' in *Quasi una Fantasia*, p.271.
[114] Adorno, T. W. *Aesthetic Thoery*, p.29.
[115] Stockhausen, Karlheinz. '...how time passes...', in *Die Reihe*, eds. Herbert Eimert & Karlheinz Stockhausen (London: Theodore Pressner Company & Universal Edition, 1957–68), vol.3, p.11.

Stockhausen opposes this with a notion of improvisation: 'field-composition'.[116] But he remains tied to a quantitative determination of 'time-proportions'. Contrary to Adorno's defence, Stockhausen's musical time remains *measured* 'duration'.[117] This is perhaps revealed in the fact the Stockhausen negates one image, the score, only to introduce another, the field (and hence Adorno's observations about the convergence of music and painting).

Nono shared Adorno's concern about the absence of historical consciousness, in his lecture, 'History and the Present in the Music of Today' (1959) – the delivery of which was to mark his parting of ways with what he once considered the 'School of Darmstadt'.[118] Nono opposes the 'fiction of the tabula rasa' in Schillinger and Cage. It is obliquely directed at Stockhausen's 'year zero'.[119] Nono had by this time taken Stockhausen to have misinterpreted his cantata, *Il canto sospeso* (1957): 'It was said that I had gratuitously destroyed the texts, had wanted to render them harmless.' Stockhausen had identified in the expulsion of semantic content from Nono's settings of letters, written by anti-fascist resistance fighters facing execution or worse, the attempt to make the listener 'ashamed'. It was nevertheless (also) a mystical-naturalistic conception of language that was being pursued by Stockhausen.[120] For both Nono and Adorno, Stockhausen's abstract negation of language is an abstract negation of history.

In many respects, *Il canto sospeso* is prophetic of Adorno's 'informal music'. In its modernist historical consciousness, it recalls both Schoenberg and Webern, and in a post-modern vein, Renaissance polyphony. Nono's treatment of sonority counters this polyphony, which, as Kurth emphasised, aims at progressive-forward movement. The counter-movement, which can only be isolated theoretically, has an affinity to the contemporaneous experiments in Stockhausen. Here too there is a departure from the cadential paradigm.[121]

Nono thus addresses both extremes of Adorno's 'acute antinomy', in theory at least. But the cantata is not what Adorno had expected of an informal music. Adorno had Nono down as one of the new serialists. He did not foresee (or hear) Nono's

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[116] Ibid. p.37.
[117] '[Stockhausen] too refers to the antinomy of material and composed music... in the context of the problem of the relationship between physically measurable and authentically musical time.' I have not been able to verify this claim in Stockhausen's essay. Adorno, T. W. 'Vers uns musique informelle', p.288.
[118] Cited in: Flamm, C. Preface to the score of *Il canto sospeso* (Eulenburg, 1995), p.iii.
[119] Nono, Luigi. '*Geschichte und Gegenwart in der Musik von Heute*' in *Texte zu seiner Musik*, ed. Jürg Stenzl (Zurich: Atlantis, 1975), p.34.
[120] Cf. Stockhausen, K. 'Speech and Music', in *Die Reihe*, vol.6 (1959), p.49.
[121] Stenzl, Jürg. *Luigi Nono* (Hamburg: Rowohlt,1998), p.43.

autonomy from this grouping ('Nor can I accept the label "serial" without reservations'). But 'Vers une musique informelle' does not, cannot, prescribe how the antinomy must be overcome. This caution leads to the suggestion on Adorno's part of an impossible compromise – the consequence, perhaps, of its idealism: 'Informal music is a little like Kant's perpetual peace'.[122] By contrast, the *Canto sospeso* addresses the antinomy not as one of music-becoming-stasis, but rather as music-having-become-stasis. It is not so much a question of mediating two extremes but rather of addressing that which unifies the antimony itself: the 'tragic' nihilism of detemporalisation.

The first parts of *Il canto sospeso* navigate a course between *Moses*, late Webern and Luigi Dallapiccola. Part IV, an orchestral interlude that interrupts the melismatic text-settings of the adjacent movements, is composed of extremely long notes in the strings, punctuated by instrumental groupings. Forward movement is interrupted by the vertical arrangement ('*sospeso*' can mean both floating and interrupted):

> I wanted a horizontal melodic construction encompassing all registers; floating from sound to sound, from syllable to syllable: a line which sometimes consists of a succession of individual tones or pitches, and sometimes thickens into chords.[123]

Nono contradicts Stockhausen's interpretation of his work. Nono does not merely substitute the horizontal for the vertical; becoming for stasis; discourse for sound; history for nature. His handling of dynamics, for instance, effectuates a peculiar kind of becoming, the strings moving from *ppp* (240-246) to *fff* (260-262), returning to *ppp* (279-284). Equal pitch values pass across the different instrumental groupings, in a *new kind* of polyphonic writing.

This musical time could be described as compellingly slow. But the work is not *experienced* as slow. Tempo, which cannot be isolated from the other aspects of musical interpretation, is a matter of 'Right and Wrong', states Adorno.[124] Slowness of itself would perhaps constitute a reaction to Simmel's metropolitan 'intensification'. Nono's slowness is itself an intensification. Neither is the *Canto sospeso* a lament. The tone is one of resistance, not resignation: 'I go believing in a better life for you'. As to the question of becoming, there is no gradual unfolding in Nono. Is not this music then Stockhausen's 'static music'? No, for Nono's musical time is as far removed from

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[122] Adorno, T. W. 'Vers uns musique informelle', p.322. Translation amended.
[123] Quoted in, Flamm, C. *Il canto sospeso*, ix.
[124] Adorno, T. W. *Towards a Theory of Musical Reproduction*, trans. Wieland Hoban (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006). p.56.

Stockhausen as his silence is from Cage. Stockhausen defines his 'moment form' as follows:

> Each moment, whether a state or a process, is individual and self-regulated, and able to sustain an independent existence. The musical events do not take a fixed course between a determined beginning and an inevitable ending, and the moments are not merely consequents of what precedes them and antecedents of what follows; rather the concentration on the Now – on every Now – as if it were a vertical slice dominating over any historical conception of time and reaching into timelessness, which I call eternity: an eternity which does not begin at the end of time, but is attainable at every *moment*.[125]

Stockhausen's (meta-)physics of musical time leads him into a dualism of finite sound, the empirical 'Now', and the infinity that transcends it. By contrast, Nono's 'Now' is in the medium of the music; its rhythm. Nono does not conflate musical material with acoustical matter.[126] 'It is particularly in a work like *Il canto sospeso* that one can see the beginnings of the gap – now a gulf – between composers like Stockhausen and Nono.' According to Helmut Lachenmann, an untimely combination of constructivism and expressionism had invited the accusation of stasis, in both senses, in Nono's compositional development:

> Structural purification of a new, terse expressiveness which is almost archaic in quality, and thus liberated from its conventional reification – this was what Nono had "ground to a halt" in. Or, perhaps one should say... Nono in the late fifties had remained clinging to a rough, inhospitable landscape of naked signs from which others were striving to find their way to more homely surroundings – forwards, backwards or sideways... In those days Nono did not move further on – he went deeper.

Lachenmann does not refer to 'metaphysical' depth: 'With [Nono] the processes of structuring and differentiation were ultimately determined by their function of driving music into *space*.'[127]

Nono's student touches upon that which connects *Il canto sospeso* to the later work.[128] Against the notion of a decisive turn, away from the political, a certain

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[125] Stockhausen, K. 1961 concert note for *Kontakte*, in Wörner, Karl H. *Stockhausen: Life and Work*, trans. Bill Hopkins (University of California Press, 1973), pp.46-47.

[126] For this reason, it is misplaced to apply Jonathan Kramer's concept of 'vertical time' unreservedly to Nono. cf. Davidsmoon, S. 'Marking Time' in *Contemporary Music Review*, vol.18, part 1 (London: Taylor & Francis, 1999), p.85; Kramer, Jonathan D. *The Time of Music* (New York: Schirmer, 1988) pp.54-55.

[127] Lachenmann, Helmut. 'Touched by Nono', in *Contemporary Music Review*, vol.18, Part 1 (1999), pp.20-21. My emphasis.

radicalisation can be proposed (and hence a *continuity* from the politically committed works). His major late work, *Prometeo*, replays the earlier, fraught game with stasis and space, incorporating the experiments in sonority from the 1970s (for instance, the wind-swept landscape of *Como una ola di fuerza y luz*). What is new is that the play becomes emphatic – in a certain sense, a tragedy about listening.

The integration of material is the secret of the *fermata* in Nono's late work. The *fermata* is not ornamental, but is the rhythm itself; or rather, the performers' production of the musical time. *Fermata*, pause, comes from the Latin *firmare*, to stop. The *fermata* is a coming-to-a-standstill without coming to a standstill (compare: Nietzsche's 'long *fermata*'). This is not thereby an opposition of chronometric time to musical time. There is a distant metre to *Prometeo*, which of course employs traditional measure in the score. Adorno's single concrete suggestion for an informal music concerns a distancing of 'pulse', which 'could augment rhythmic flexibility to a degree as yet undreamed of.'[129] The necessity of the pulse, however distant, means that it is immanent to the anti-pulse, rhythm. The obscure relationship of chronometric time and musical time is exaggerated in Nono's late work, giving rise to 'a passage of time that is holding its breath'.

Cacciari compiled the libretto of *Prometeo* from fragments of Hesiod, Hölderlin, Benjamin (the 'Theses') and himself (a poem, *The Master of the Game*). It is a collaborative work. In a conversation reproduced for the 1984 premiere, Nono and Cacciari raise the issues of space and the image in relation to music. Music, Cacciari suggests, proposes a certain resistance to the image, amidst 'a civilization placed under the sign of the *ideïn*, of knowledge envisaged with *ideïn*'. Music has nevertheless remained subservient to representational paradigms. The unidirectional performance, centring attention upon stage and performer, aims at an identification of an image by means of music, not in spite of it (as true of 'classical' as of 'popular' music). *Prometeo* has no single group of soloists to focus upon; no narrative action but rather 'islands' forming an 'archipelago'. Faced with nothing other than Piano's minimal set, there is a compulsion towards the invitation of the music to listen rather than to look, and ultimately to 'believe'.

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[128] Stenzl, Jürg. 'The New Luigi Nono', in *Verso Prometeo* (Venice: Ricordi, 1984). Translated by Adeline Mannarini, based upon Thierry Baud's translation of the Italian for the *Festival d'Automne à Paris*, 1987, accessed at, www.festival-automne.com/public/ressourc/publicat/1987nono/sommaire.htm, on November 23, 2008.

[129] Adorno, T. W. 'Vers une musique informelle', p.322.

But this thought invites the same criticism that can be made of Adorno's remark in *Composing for the Films*. To pit listening against sight is to conceive of an autonomy of the individual senses. But music is already imagistic. To listen is to see, though not in an equivalent manner. Nono and Cacciari align listening to the abstract and sight to representation. As with Adorno, language is the privilege of music (albeit as stripped-down language). Only images are forbidden. Perhaps *Prometeo* constitutes a peculiar abstraction of its own. The fragmentary figurations of *Prometeo* – of the texts, the music, the text-music – are absorbed into its spatial singularity. Indeterminacy is determined where distraction is concentrated. This absorption, recalling Adorno's 'adherence' of inner to outer musical space, constitutes both an acknowledgement of the image and a promise to go beyond it.

Nono and Cacciari respond with a notion of sound that initially comes close to the naturalism of Stockhausen. Cacciari is aware that in considering how music might oppose the image, he must paradoxically think of it in terms of colour and, recalling Adorno, painting. Composers like Scriabin (who thought of music as colour) lapse into a 'symbolic system'. What, wonders Cacciari, would be non-symbolic, non-representational music? Cacciari steers his friend away from an overly empirical response, a 'natural' idea of sound-colour, towards two alternatives: 'silence' and 'multiple geometry'.[130] Nono is undoubtedly interested in these alternatives. Where the latter is concerned, *Prometeo* presents a 'mobile sound'; a 'multi-directional listening'. Nono believes that the spatial characteristics cannot be separated from the temporal ones (see chapter 4). But Cacciari takes this correspondence more literally than the composer. In a sense, *Prometeo* eludes Cacciari's theoretical grasp on this point. This might be explained biographically by the fact that Nono's musical time emerges out of the practical engagement with the Darmstadt debates discussed above, and not (primarily) out of a philosophy of time, such as Cacciari's.

In his essay on *Prometeo*, Cacciari refers to the 'tempo' of 'The Master of the Game' as, 'the a-rhythmic succession of the punctual', according to which,

> the past is nothing more than *having-been*... and the present is a space from which we throw ourselves 'all together' into the future; or, as Michelstaedter used to say, we 'enfuture' ourselves. On the other hand, the tempo of the Master is polyphonic; his dimensions are given simultaneously; the past of such a line, of such thought, of such speech, may be the future of any other. The present is not a space common to 'all', but

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[130] 'Conversation Between Luigi Nono and Massimo Cacciari with Michele Bertaggia', in *Verso Prometeo*.

> the irreplaceable instant, fugitive, clear and living, of the Unique. Like a New Angel, he chants the instant, but this instant, precisely, is unique and non-reproducible, and by the very fact of this uniqueness and of this unrepeatable quality, it never-ceases-to-be; it is *necessary*. To think necessity and creation simultaneously, snatching something from the instant – the fugitive nature of the instant – that which can break the 'movimentum', is infinite temporality, the 'development' from one being to another, as from death to death: this is what constitutes the unique quality of the Master of the Game, his 'weak messianic force'.[131]

Cacciari speaks of a productive contradiction here, between single, linear time – 'the succession of the punctual' – and plural, 'polyphonic' time; the contradiction being that both times can *occur* (in this '*dran*') at the same time, 'simultaneously'. The singular time is, structurally, *both* the historical time of the having-been *and* is the futural-messianic time. The having-been and the futural share a singularity, but what they are, singularly, is of necessity radically different. The possibility of this difference is marked in the plurality of times, different times that, in turn, refer back to a singular time, the unique time of the 'instant', such that the different times opens up a real possibility, not an ideal one (hence, not 'difference' for its own sake).

This is a recurrent theme of the roughly contemporaneous essays collected in Cacciari's *Zeit ohne Kronos* (1986), dedicated to Nono. And although Nono is not discussed, it is by way of a musical analogy that the meaning and problem of Cacciari's philosophy of time comes to the fore. William Hogarth's *The Bathos* and Goya's *Saturn* each portray the 'death of time', of 'Chronos'. It is not clear whether Chronos is natural, cosmological time (the god of agriculture) or socio-historically produced time (Saturn, the melancholy planet). Chronos is perhaps the naturalisation of social time. According to the tragic nihilism of Cacciari (led by Kossaleck, Michelstaedter and Benjamin), it is *in* the death of Chronos that the possibility of *another* time emerges, '*kairos*', since the death of Chronos cannot be the end of all time(s). That there is something and not nothing after the death of Chronos shows that another time is possible; in Heidegger's terms, that Chronos does not exhaust the meaning of Being. The straight pipe of time, held by the old man in Hogarth's engraving – 'the single arrow, passing in one direction' – undergoes a series of 'contortions [*Umgekehrungen*]', 'almost like a crab in the sense of the musical method!'. Cacciari's 'crab' refers to the retrograde canon, the *cancrizans* (which, on the score, resembles this aquatic creature). Serialists employed it as a means of producing duration out of the series. That such a means is described in terms of an image is not, in the light of Adorno's reflections, coincidental.

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[131] Cacciari, M. '*Verso Prometeo* / The Tragedy of Listening', in *Verso Prometeo.*

The 'crab' would surely have come to Cacciari from Nono, who had immersed himself in Renaissance tracts on polyphony around this time. But according to their conversation, Nono is primarily concerned with such precedents for understanding new possibilities of musical *space*. Cacciari translates Nono's spatial multiplicity into a temporal multiplicity, thus leading to the contradictions faced by Adorno and others. Cacciari writes: 'instantaneous times, stratifications of time that unfold simultaneously.'[132] The alternative times (to Chronos) are already given, quasi-spatially, *in* the 'polyphonic' tempo (though it is true that the crab is something of an analogy here). Cacciari follows in a tradition of subverting Chronos from within, in the instant, the anti-Chronos. This tradition traverses several forms of messianism. It is to the credit of Cacciari that he is conscious of the singularly modern nature of his appropriation – that *kairos* is not to be *rescued*. This appropriation nevertheless remains problematic, for two reasons.

Firstly, the instant might simply be the intra-temporal point *in* time, the time of Chronos once over. Adorno and Cacciari, following Benjamin, each pursue, in different ways, a 'dialectic of nihilism', according to which it is in the tragic acknowledgement of intra-temporal, spatial time – its divine mastery, as it were – that another time is made manifest (the exception to the exception). Secondly, as was the case with Stockhausen, the instant might be *out of time* altogether, resulting in a dualism of the temporal and the timeless. This dualism lacks the mediation necessary even to account for the transition, or transformation, from the one to the other. Benjamin arguably veers from one side to the other, in his dialectical image. Nevertheless, an *interpretation* of the dialectical image might provide the means for mediation, bringing us back to the 'two spheres' of the musical time of modernity.

For Adorno, the temporal meaning of the ideal image is stasis. For Benjamin, the 'image is dialectics at a standstill'. The 'genuine' dialectical image is a 'flash... suddenly emergent'.[133] In the 'Theses', Benjamin claims that the dialectical image 'flashes up at the instant [*Augenblick*] when it can be recognised and is never seen again.'[134] But unlike the instant, the image, understood in its relation to space, reminds us that detemporalisation endures, as the empty time of boredom; as alienation. It was suggested that Adorno has various ways of describing this time ('the empty flood', the 'extensive type'). And it is this sense of stasis that *Prometeo* mimetically responds to,

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[132] Cacciari, M. 'The Death of Time', in *Zeit ohne Chronos*, trans. Reinhard Kacianka (Klagenfurt: Ritter Verlag, 1986), p.25.
[133] Benjamin, W. *Arcades Project*, p.462.
[134] Benjamin, W. 'Theses on the Philosophy of History' in *Illuminations*, p.247.

whilst waiting upon another time (as Cacciari is right to suggest). *As* mimesis, *Prometeo* has its own time. Cacciari thinks of this time plurally, in the music – hence, not as transcendence into the timeless. Plurality is Cacciari's weapon against the bad infinity. But how plural is it? And is not quantitative plurality another bad infinity (*how* many)? In contrast to Cacciari, it is proposed that the time of *Prometeo* is the time of its *fermata*. The *Augenblick* inheres in the *fermata*. This *Augenblick* is to be understood in Benjamin's sense, to the extent that it recognises the crisis of mythic commodity time; but also in Heidegger's sense, in that another temporality is proposed in its temporalising. This 'enfuturing' exceeds the work. Possibility is not immanent in the work, as plural temporality. Neither is it transcendent, into the timeless.

Adorno had questioned Benjamin's Jungian-Platonic 'dream image' of the future, 'as Utopia'.[135] The question of *what* the dialectical image gives rise to is, in one sense, the problem of the 'Bergsonian' dualism. The 'ur-phenomenon' is not originary in the sense of Heidegger's 'temporalising'. Heidegger's *Augenblick* is the disclosing of possibility out of, and into, the facticity of history. By contrast, that which originates in Benjamin's *Augenblick* is 'the image of history in itself.'[136] For, in 'the dialectical image, what has been within a particular epoch is *always, simultaneously,* "what has been from time immemorial".'[137]

At this level of Benjamin's thought, the image is not teleologically progressive, in a Kantian or Hegelian sense. It is 'simultaneously' mythical. The 'immemorial' is eternal, but not as transcendent of the finite. Its infinity must instead be thought of in terms of the mythic repetition of a concrete singularity. This repetition is occasioned by, and gives rise to, history – as catastrophe and revolution, not teleology and progress. It is this *almost* impossible conjunction of mythic time and historical time that Benjamin tentatively formulates in the most ambitious 'convolute' of the *Arcades Project*: 'On the Theory of Knowledge, Theory of Progress'. Can a phenomenon be historically singular *and* immemorial? Perhaps it is the *Augenblick* itself, in excess of itself: 'What is "always the same thing" is not the event but the newness of the event, the shock with which it eventuates.'[138]

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[135] Adorno, T. W. to Walter Benjamin, August 2nd, 1935, in *Aesthetics and Politics*, p.111.
[136] Tiedemann, Rolf. 'Dialectics at a Standstill', in Benjamin, W. *The Arcades Project*, p.940.
[137] Benjamin, W. *Arcades Project*, p.464.
[138] Ibid, p.868.

Benjamin's 'imagistic' *Augenblick* is a vertical instant *in* historical time, and to this extent is chronometrically overdetermined. At the same time, the dialectical image is not determined chronometrically enough. Benjamin no longer acknowledges, as he did in the *Trauerspiel* study, that the chronometric *tends towards* the imagistic. Benjamin had proposed that the baroque 'slow procession' constitutes a 'choreographic' rendering of time, in time. This insight is not followed up in the *Arcades Project*. The *Trauerspiel* study is perhaps limited by the obsolescence of its object. Conversely, the elevation of the phenomena of nineteenth-century Paris to aesthetic contemplation yields to the methodological obsolescence predicted by Adorno. The advantage of Nono is that he can be criticised as art, in experience.

The foregoing account of the temporalities of modern music provides clues for the meaning of an expression of waiting in vain. Adorno's own musical examples of this expression are Berg's music-dramas. Nono departs from this paradigm of waiting, away from Adorno (Berg's student), in that the rhythm of the Second Viennese School is, as Stockhausen observed, premised upon a critique of verticality in harmony *and* cadence. It is those unresolved, dissonant chords of Berg that Adorno has in mind, when he speaks of an expression of waiting in vain.

In his 1929 essay on *Wozzeck*, Adorno suggests that Berg's music articulates Büchner's words in a tragic-ironic opposition to words, so as to bring out the contemporaneity of hope in these 'classic' fragments. The mimetic expression, the 'reflection [*Reflex*]' of this '*Trauerspiel*' is 'clouded in the light of tragic irony'. Perhaps Adorno's notion of a music that 'counts the minutes to death' already anticipates Nono's *fermata*.[139] For there is a necessarily tragic ironic moment in the mimesis of detemporalisation (see chapter 4). The 'Fetish Character' essay closes with a remark that pits stasis against becoming, but not as an antinomy; not as tragic pessimism:

> As little as regressive listening is a symptom of progress in the consciousness of freedom, it could suddenly turn around in art, in unity with society, should it ever leave the road of the always identical.[140]

There is an inner logic of mimetic repetition here. The 'turn around [*umzuspringen*]' happens 'suddenly', out of regressive (tragic?) listening. Something other than music is given rise to, 'in unity with' a society to come.

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[139] Adorno, T. W. *GS* 18, p.479.
[140] Adorno, T. W. 'On the Fetish Character', p.314.

4

Invincible in the Wasteland?
Music, Space and Utopia

The mimetic, 'spatial' temporalisation of *Prometeo* cannot be separated from its spatial environment. Where both 'spheres of music' are concerned, today, this environment is preeminently metropolitan. During the 1970s, Cacciari engaged with some of the classic theoretical reflections on the 'Metropolis' (which he capitalises for reasons discussed below). In this research, Cacciari conceives of an 'architecture of nihilism' as constituting the 'tragic' acknowledgement of and resistance to the capitalist 'project' of the Metropolis.[1] The category of the tragic is at stake in the temporal-musical mimesis discussed above, just as it is at stake in the spatial-architectural mimesis outlined below.

Cacciari was aware of a musical character 'in' the architectural – increasingly, perhaps, through his conversations and collaborations with Nono.[2] Yet Cacciari does not explicitly call upon his earlier research when writing about and for Nono. Nor does he draw upon a long-standing (though marginal) literature on 'music and space' – a literature that he and Nono contribute to. Nono's late work can nevertheless be understood as a new response to those problems raised by Cacciari, whose architectural paradigm remained largely contemporaneous with his classic theoretical reflections. By contrast, Nono reads and translates the musical avant-garde, as practice, into an artwork: *Prometeo*.

It is suggested in what follows that *Prometeo* asks a question of the meaning of place, in relation to that 'no-place' (or, 'non-place'), utopia. This was always part of its programme: Prometheus as both the tragedy of humanity and the possibility of overcoming the tragedy *through* humanity. The texts, compiled by Cacciari, refer to

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[1] This research is largely represented in English in *Architecture and Nihilism* trans. Stephen Sartarelli (Yale University Press, 1993).

[2] Cacciari writes of 'the shadowy possibility of consonance between music and monumental architecture.'But the affinity of music and architecture is dependant, here, upon an association of 'nothing' with 'silence', and 'being' with 'listening', recalling Heidegger's (phonocentric) call to thinking. Cacciari, M. 'Eupalinos or Architecture' (Review of Tafuri & Dal Co, *Architettura contemporana*) in *Oppositions*, (New York: MIT Press, 1980), no.21, p.111.

Benjamin's 'weak messianic force' as a name for this possibility. But the current interpretation departs from existing interpretations of *Prometeo*, including Cacciari's. In spite of the recognition of space as being a central to this work, no attempt has been made to situate this concern within the problematic of modernity. If the time of modernity impinges upon its space, and vice versa, then *Prometeo* can be said to allegorise this double impingement. An expression of waiting in vain, *Prometeo* proposes an immanent critique of Adorno's concept. A *productively* tragic-mimetic waiting would confront the 'vanity' of waiting in vain. The 'in vain', the infinitely deferred (bad) utopia, must not be taken for granted, since that would lead to a pessimistic decisionism just as dogmatic as the optimistic-humanist one (Cacciari speaks of 'the New Prometheus').

Cacciari's theoretical reflections on 'non-dwelling' come close to Adorno's critiques of origins – including the mythic home that would be utopia once over. Adorno attributes this archaism to Heidegger, of course, with some justification. But a great irony of 'Adorno and Heidegger' is that the latter systematically confronts the metaphysics that underpins the utopian concept of place, as the will to identity out of an absolutely posited difference (most obviously, as the reconciliation of nature and spirit or history). This metaphysical difference perpetuates a 'forgetting of Being'. Adorno participates in the metaphysical, ontotheological schema, in spite, it seems, of his idea of natural-history. For his part, Heidegger must rely upon a 'history of Being' (that does not acknowledge its ontotheological ruse). Both Heidegger and Cacciari risk a certain valorisation of waiting without the awaited – an open waiting that closes in on itself and which invites those regressive infinities associated with Adorno's own Kantian-Romantic inclinations. A revised idea of natural-history might nevertheless be directed against the latent pessimism of Cacciari's tragic negativity – if, that is, the Hegelian-Marxism of Adorno's promethean tragic is equally emphasised.

The structure of this chapter breaks down into four parts. The first reconstructs Cacciari's research into the Metropolis and tragic negativity in order to suggest that the question of negation is already implicated in the questions of place, dwelling and utopia. This will have resource to other philosophies of the tragic. Cacciari's Nietzschean tragic and Adorno's 'dialectical' tragic can each be viewed as productive forms of mimesis. Second, as something of an *intermezzo*, the marginal yet significant literature of music and space will be reconstructed in order to set-up an affinity between concepts of music and utopia. Thirdly, Adorno's concept of aesthetic autonomy will be read according to the preceding narratives in order to stress the spatial permutations of

art, in relation to the questions of place and utopia. This critique will be mounted from the standpoint of *Prometeo* – that which, finally, will be considered according to its particular spatio-temporality as an expression of a waiting in vain.

The Metropolis and Tragic Negativity

Cacciari's essay 'Metropolis' takes Simmel's 'The Metropolis and Mental Life' (1903) as its point of departure. The Metropolis is 'a determinant moment of modern existence'. The Metropolis differs decisively from the city. It is 'the phase, or the problem, of the rationalisation of all social relations, which follows that of the rationalisation of the relations of production.' These rationalisations cannot do without the Metropolis – 'there is an objective reason' for it, as the singular expression of economic, political and social space (hence its capitalisation).[3] 'Metropolis' does not merely signify a subjective consciousness of capitalist modernity. It names its spatially *and* socially concrete reality. A productive tension thus pervades Cacciari's concept of the Metropolis. On the one hand, it is the real (and late?) capitalist Metropolis.[4] On the other hand, the Metropolis is an ideal – the progressive yet impossible realisation of what Cacciari's colleague Manfredo Tafuri called the 'project' (in *Progetto e Utopie*, 1973). Cacciari follows, in part, Tafuri's critique of the ideological syntheses manifested in architectural projects of the Enlightenment (in France, England and the USA).[5] He does not, however, follow Tafuri's tendency to conflate the avant-garde with the project *tout court*.

Cacciari initially seeks to expose the ideological implications of Simmel. The end of the nineteenth-century gives rise to an ideal of *Aufklärung* in Germany – by way of a restoration of Kant and Goethe – which is bound to notions of individual cultivation, *Bildung* (this tendency is of course anticipated in England in J. S. Mill's liberalism). 'The Metropolis and Mental Life' is a thesis on the manner of individuation in the Metropolis: the 'intellectualisation [*Vergeistigung*]' of 'mental life [*Geistesleben*]'.

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[3] Cacciari, M. *Architecture and Nihilism*, p.4.

[4] The metropolis has of course undergone transformations both since its reflection in the classic theoretical texts and since the 1970s. Cacciari takes the transformation of the first third of the twentieth-century to be decisive on account of its contemporaneous reflection in both theory and ideology.

[5] Tafuri, Manfredo. *Architecture and Utopia: Design and Capitalist Development* (1973), trans. Barbara Luigia La Penta (MIT Press, 1976), ch.1.

According to Simmel, the 'intellect [*Verstand*]' is 'intensified' as a 'protective organ' against the stimulation of 'nervous life [*Nervenleben*]'.[6] Nervous stimulation threatens to 'uproot' the individual (the Kantian synthesis of the sensuous manifold is clear). The resulting 'reserve... assures the individual of a type and degree of personal freedom to which there is no analogy in other circumstances... the individual gains a freedom of movement'.[7] Cacciari highlights the 'synthesis' of Simmel's closing remark: 'it is not our task to complain or condone, but only to understand.'[8] For Cacciari, the synthesis and totality of the Metropolis, an aggregate of free individuals (of seemingly no particular class) 'recuperates the value of community... in order to reaffirm it in society.'[9]

This leads to the second aspect of Simmel's ideology. The Metropolis is, in reality, a perpetually becoming ideal. It simultaneously posits and proscribes its utopia, in bad faith (Cacciari has more recently proposed that 'perpetual peace is a bad utopia', indicating perhaps that he is now open to the possibility of a 'virtuous' utopia, that not all utopias are 'bad').[10] Following Nietzsche's blunt critique of Kantian metaphysics, Cacciari suggests that the ideal of the Metropolis is willed by, and as, the real Metropolis.[11]

For Simmel, the intellect is the productive schematism of 'continuous "innovation".' But as Cacciari observes, the life of the nerves and the intellect must stand in a reciprocal relationship, meaning that the intellect and not only intuition risks a passive receptivity: 'The *Nervenleben* is a *condition* of the intellect – an internal condition of its power, its dominion, completely integrated within it.' For the 'life of the nerves' is implicit and complicit in the reproduction of the commodity form and its attendant relations of production, including the spatial construction of the Metropolis.

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[6] Simmel, Georg. 'Metropolis and Mental Life', in *On Individuality and Social Forms*, ed. Donald Levine (The University of Chicago Press, 1971), pp.325-326.
[7] Ibid. p.332.
[8] Ibid. p.339.
[9] Cacciari, M. *Architecture and Nihilism*. p.12.
[10] Cacciari, M. '*la paz perpetua es una mala utopía*' (interview with Manuel Calderón), in *Minerva*, no.7 (Summer, 2008). Accessed at, www.circulobellasartes.com/ag_ediciones-minerva-LeerMinervaCompleto.php?art=229, on November 23, 2008.
[11] Matters are more complex than Cacciari gives credit here. Nietzsche attributes the ascetic ideal of 'intellectualisation [*Vergeistigung*]' to Kant, among other ascetic priests. But the language of *Vergeistigung* is equally an inflection of the values of *Aufklärung*, and in this respect, the critique of *Geist* is no advance on Marx's critiques of Hegel and Feuerbach. The omission of Hegel in Cacciari's early essays is notable given Hegel's attempt to overcome the Kantian, liberal (and legal) subject.

Cacciari is at one with Adorno here, who describes this reciprocal movement in terms of memory and forgetting (see chapter 3). For Simmel, this process 'dissolves individuality into the current of impressions and reintegrates these, precisely by virtue of their constitution, into the overall process of *Vergeistigung*.'[12] As the manifestation of the convergence between *Vergeistigung* and the exchange process, the Metropolis socialises (*and* naturalises) estranged relations of production (or, relations that re-produce alienation). The Metropolis re-presents itself as place; as the familiar home promised in its name ('metro-polis', 'mother-city'). The real-ideal synthesises the contradiction that individuation based upon exchange relations alone does not produce reconciliation but rather blocks it. The Metropolis is the phantasmagoria of home; 'the futility of the search for the *unicum*'.[13]

Cacciari's critique of the '*unicum*' can be understood according to a certain philosophical history. According to Cacciari's ambitious genealogy of modernity, philosophical idealism is a symptom of a broader (history of) metaphysics. Cacciari is initially careful not to subsume Kant (on whom he wrote his doctoral thesis), and Hegel, into the tendency of *Vergeistigung*, which remains a broadly *neo*-Kantian appropriation (recalling Rose's critique of Simmel). *Ver-geistigung* is, in this sense, part of a longer German tradition. Cacciari is aware of this tradition, through the figure of Schiller, whom he radically distinguishes from his contemporary, Goethe. Schiller represents not only the will to identity but also a determination of that will *as* infinite longing. This is a trope of much Romanticism.

Novalis famously declared that 'philosophy is really homesickness, an urge to be at home everywhere'.[14] In the light of Cacciari's thesis, Novalis simultaneously expresses the problem of modernity *and* its solution. Philosophy is always in danger of being a form of consolation, at least so long as philosophy is understood as an autonomous mode of reflective existence, a utopia of its own making. The 'urge to be at home everywhere' determines 'home' *as* 'everywhere' and nowhere (so long as it remains philosophical). If longing is infinite then utopia is placed beyond this world. The question of music holds a privileged position in this Romantic metaphysics.

For Cacciari, Simmel appropriates the Goethean counter-tradition, in spite of, or because of, his neo-Kantianism:

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[12] Cacciari, M. *Architecture and Nihilism*. p.5.
[13] Ibid, p.8.
[14] Quoted in, Heidegger, M. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, p.5.

> Simmel's most outstanding perception is his recognition of the most appropriate expression of such an ideology *in the form of negative thought.* If the blasé type fully reflects the structure of the Metropolis, it is not because he is fully consistent with it or because he is a mere reflection of it, but rather because he understands it from the perspective of his own inability to go beyond it, that is, from the perspective of his own negated individuality.

The 'blasé' is an abstraction from use value: 'the money economy and the domination of the intellect stand in the closest relationship to one another. They have in common a purely matter-of-fact attitude in the treatment of persons and things'.[15] As Cacciari puts it, 'The monetary economy formalises economic relations, just as the intellect formalises psychic relations and movements.'[16] The *Vergeistigung* of the Metropolis aims at a *unicum* of things without use values. The blasé-type is Robert Musil's *Man Without Qualities*. But 'negative thought' is the self-consciousness of this abstraction. And negative thought is tragic rather than dialectical. For it does not presume any gradual (and historical) progress. That would be to repeat the ideology of *Vergeistigung* itself. It is here that tragic negativity is contrasted with dialectical negativity. This is commonly understood as a mythic (or even, cosmological) notion of tragic repetition as versus the historical and humanist understanding of the tragic. This opposition is complicated for two reasons. Firstly, Cacciari's tragic negativity is already historical, or is at least a productive understanding of the tragic. Secondly, Adorno's post-Hegelian conception of negation comes close to – and must even coincide with – the tragic 'moment' of the dialectic itself.

What is Cacciari's concept of negation? In the essay 'On the German Sociology of the City at the Turn of the Century', Cacciari draws-out the negative thought of Simmel, whom he now situates in relation to Weber. Weber's critique of Tönnies' 'Community and Society' (1887) is read against the backdrop of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1882). Although Weber's 'The City' comes much later (1911-13), Cacciari draws upon Weber's Nietzscheanism (which must be summarised below, given that an account of this is largely absent from both Cacciari and from the Anglophone Weber literature).[17]

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[15] Cacciari, M. *Architecture and Nihilism*, p.9.
[16] Ibid. pp.6-8.
[17] Karl Löwith writes of this affinity. 'Weber's 'methodological' question as to the value of science is basically the same question that Nietzsche posed in regard to *philosophy* when he inquired after the meaning and value of 'truth' – for "what sense could *our* existence have, if not the sense that within us this urge towards truth has become conscious of itself *as a problem*?".' Löwith, K. *Max Weber and Karl Marx*

Weber had confronted the dominant metaphysical assumptions of the *Geisteswissenschäfte*; of, notably, the Heidelberg neo-Kantian historian, Friedrich Rickert.[18] A crisis in the cultural sciences arises from the question of their metaphysical grounding. For Rickert, a regulative horizon of truth can be assumed to validate and unify the science of history. But for an anti-metaphysician such as Weber, this assumption remains *merely* an assumption. Weber attributes an ensuing epistemic crisis to the withering of the theological presuppositions of that metaphysics.[19] 'Disenchantment' is the (post-religious) phenomenon arising from the contradiction that rationalisation, motivated by science, leads to the impotence of science.[20] Science is ideologically blinded to its impotence.

Weber's response is the attempted 'value free [*wertfrei*]' perspective. This does not mean a relinquishment of the problem of value (as in Simmel's 'it is not our task to complain or to condone'). Cacciari's imagined dialogue between Simmel and Weber proposes an *active* nihilism: 'it is precisely this tragic, value free character of the negative that most accurately expresses the form and function of the Metropolis'.[21] The value-free perspective has three moments. (1) A self-consciousness of the historical conditions of the cultural sciences.[22] (2) A 'Goethean' hypothesis of the 'ideal-type'. This is 'formed',

> by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasised viewpoints into a unified *analytical* construct. In its conceptual purity, this mental construct cannot be found anywhere in reality. It is a *utopia*.[23]

(1932), (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982), p.30. Löwith quotes here from the third essay of the *Genealogy*.

[18] Cf. Owen, David. *Maturity and Modernity* (London: Routledge, 1994), pp.84-89.

[19] For Weber, positive science, God's murderer, wrests the providence of truth away from God, whereas for Nietzsche this murder is responsible for the equally metaphysical 'will to truth' of positive science itself, that which 'never creates values'. Nietzsche, F. *On the Genealogy of Morals*, p.120.

[20] 'The fate of our times is characterised by rationalisation and intellectualization and, above all, by the "disenchantment of the world."' Weber, Max. 'Science as a Vocation' (1922) in, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (London: Routledge, 1991), p.155.

[21] Cacciari, M. *Architecture and Nihilism*. p.28.

[22] Weber, M. '"Objectivity" in Social Science' (1904), in *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*, trans. Edward A. Shils & Henry A. Finch (Glencoe Free Press, 1964), p.81; p.112.

[23] Ibid. p.90.

Weber's self-conscious disenchantment is exhibited in this tragic-ironic reference to 'utopia' (his ideal-types are not to be confused with Kant's regulative ideas). And yet, the ideal-type aims at knowledge, which is grounded in a *valuation* of enlightenment (hence, it is not entirely value free). The parallel to Nietzsche's *Genealogy* is clear. The ideal-type acknowledges a tendency, and in so doing challenges it, opposing it with another possibility – hence, revaluation through evaluation.[24] The ideal-type is a productive mimesis. The value-free perspective is the productive mimesis of scientific objectivity.

This tragic reversal in the meaning of utopia, which Weber merely hints at, is a reversal of the contemporaneous, Classicist interpretations of Goethe, in Dilthey, Simmel and Meinecke. These figures interpret the Goethean trope of contradiction (in *Elective Affinities*) as 'at once problem and solution, question and answer, lack and fulfilment... from the perspective of the Schillerian utopia' – recalling the dictum of Novalis. Conversely, Nietzsche and Weber recognise that 'in Goethe the tragedy is the impossible utopia of the artistic representation's total ascendancy over modern social relations'.[25] In Adorno's terms, modern art is semblance *as* dissonance.

(3) Weber foregrounds the 'commitment' and 'character' of the scientist, as a 'heroic' calling.[26] The three moments of the value free perspective all share the characteristic of *distance*. According to Löwith, 'What this doctrine demands is not the elimination of guiding "value ideas" and interests, but their objectification, so as to provide a basis for us to distance ourselves from them.'[27] This is the distance of the blasé-type, *as* Zarathustra. Distance is the freedom from and of value judgement. But not as negative, abstract freedom. The distancing gaze cannot lose sight of its object, just as the scientist cannot objectively relinquish the problem of value. Conversely, the distance of the gaze is produced in the re-valuation itself.[28] The concept of distancing

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[24] Weber invokes the Goethean image of the stream: 'if the professional thinker has an immediate obligation at all, it is to keep a cool head in the face of the ideals prevailing at the time... and if necessary, "to swim against the stream".' Weber, M. 'The Meaning of "Ethical Neutrality"' (1917) in *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*, p.47. Weber cites Goethe's 'floor of waves beneath me' (*Faust*, Act I, Scene II) in the earlier '"Objectivity"' essay: 'The light of the great cultural problems moves on. Then science too prepares to change its standpoint and its analytical apparatus and to view the streams of events from the heights of thought'. Ibid. p.112.

[25] Cacciari, M. *Architecture and Nihilism*, pp.70-71.

[26] Weber, M. *Economy and Society* (New York: Bedminster Press, 1968), p.1116.

[27] Löwith, K. *Max Weber and Karl Marx*, p.30.

[28] Nietzsche begins to outline his response to the crisis of values in *Human, All Too Human*. This marks a departure from *The Birth of Tragedy*, which remained confined to Schopenhauer's paradigm of tragic fate. The earlier understanding had led to a dualism

once again promises to overcome an antithesis of immanence and transcendence. It is no coincidence that Adorno has Weber in mind when he conceives of his dissonant nominalism. Though distancing is most obviously imagined spatially, it is equally a temporal concept: 'dissonantly musical' waiting as the historical possibility of nearness, the awaited.

Book Three of *Zarathustra* provides Cacciari with a literal instance of tragic negation in the Metropolis. Zarathustra finds himself outside of the '*Großstadt*'. A dwarf appears to him as 'the spirit of gravity'.

> Everything that rises must fall – you hurl a stone high into the air, and it will strike you – yet this pessimism, at bottom, is characterised by an ideal of perfect equilibrium. This pessimism regarding the direction of life's movements is only the equilibrium and the fulfilment of Schopenhauer's nirvana, which we later find in *Parsifal*. This pessimism is countered by the idea of the eternal return.[29]

Like the dwarf, the ape mistakes the 'eternal return' for equilibrium (he apes it). He urges Zarathustra to curse the Metropolis and return to the mountains: 'Rather spit on the city's gate and turn back.'[30] For Cacciari, this moment refers to the nostalgic return proposed by Tönnies, criticised in 'The City'. Zarathustra 'instead, gazes a long time upon the Metropolis, and remains silent.' His silence is tragic in that there is knowledge in excess, in the acknowledging gaze: 'the tragic vision illuminates the destiny of the Metropolis.'[31] Zarathustra concurs with the blasé-type – 'there is nothing to make better, nothing to make worse' – but ultimately promises to go beyond him. Zarathustra neither remains at the city gate, nor does he return home. He does not *resent*: 'Where one can no longer love, one should – *pass by!*'[32] Zarathustra's perspective encompasses two moments: 'repeating' (in the acknowledging gaze) and 'going beyond' (in the

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of 'setting man and fate over against one another as two separate things.' The task of the scientist, today, is to see fate from on high. The 'region… of torrential streams… cannot in any way be painted unless one is hovering above it in the air like a bird. Here the so-called bird's eye view is for once not an artistic caprice but the sole possibility.' The stream emerges before the gaze, in the gaze, as the 'sole possibility' of the stream's emergence. Hence, Nietzsche does not merely 'go against the stream' of fate, as in the more modest interventions of Weber (and Foucault?). Nietzsche wants to redirect the stream itself. Nietzsche, F. *Human, all too Human*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.325; p.343.

[29] Cacciari, M. *Architecture and Nihilism.* p.25.

[30] Ibid. p.26.

[31] Ibid. p.28.

[32] Nietzsche, F. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin, 1969), p.198.

excessive knowledge). Cacciari emphasises the historicity of Nietzsche's eternal return, over its cosmological or pessimistic interpretations.

The conceptual pairs of progress and repetition, revolution and catastrophe, history and fate, can be read into the contrasting interpretations of tragedy in modern philosophy – indeed, *as* the inception of modern philosophy itself.[33] Heroic resistance to the gods' power brings something of the gods' power – divinity – to the heroes, humanity. For Benjamin, therefore, the tragic death is 'an ironic immortality.'[34] Human knowledge encompasses a finite limit that is acknowledged and experienced in its repetition. Divine knowledge is repeated in this appropriation, an appropriation of the power of recurrence itself. It is the meaning of this liminal repetition that is disputed in the philosophies of the tragic. For, the tragic is not necessarily pessimistic. The principle thinkers to conceive of the tragic as productive, as a form of transformation, are conventionally opposed: Hegel and Nietzsche. According to the latter, the nihilism of Zarathustra demands an awareness that 'repeats... as going beyond.' The 'going beyond' is the transgression of the tragic cycle *from* the tragic cycle *alone*.

Tragedy is *equally* one of Hegel's first models for confronting the antinomies in the practical philosophies of Kant and Fichte. In his early essay *On the Scientific Ways of Treating Natural Law* (1802-3), Hegel displaces a negative concept of freedom, which situates the individual against abstract, universal law, with a positive, finite conception of freedom, as mediated in (or as) the 'absolute idea of ethical life [*Sittlichkeit*]'. According to Hegel,

> *Tragedy* consists in this, that ethical nature, in order not to become entangled with its inorganic nature, separates the latter from itself as a fate and opposes itself to it; and by acknowledging this fate in the struggle against it, ethical nature is reconciled with the divine being as the unity of both.

Greek tragedy is, in Hegel's Hellenocentric schema, the historical emergence of the *notion* of spirit, since spirit is the self-consciousness of the contradiction of finite and infinite *as* contradiction. Modernity is thereafter the determinate unfolding of spirit in its *actuality* (the Messiah comes gradually). In more structural terms, the dialectic must *encompass* the tragic – though it is surely going too far to say that, for Hegel, 'the tragic

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[33] The most important of these philosophical interpretations are critically compared in, Szondi, Peter. *An Essay on the Tragic*, trans. Paul Fleming (Stanford University Press, 2002). 'Since Aristotle, there has been a poetics of tragedy. Only since Schelling has there been a philosophy of the tragic.' p.1.

[34] Benjamin, W. '*Trauerspiel* and Tragedy', in *Collected Writings*, vol.1, p.56.

and the dialectic coincide'.[35] Hegel and Nietzsche share a productive understanding of the tragic, against Schopenhauer. There is a 'speculative' promise of going beyond, as the anti-tragic moment of the tragic.[36] From both ends of the nineteenth-century, these thinkers are motivated, as Löwith knew, by the *stasis* of bourgeois society (though Hegel became party to it!).[37]

Cacciari comes close to Benjamin's sketch for an interpretation of the later Nietzsche in the *Arcades Project*. Eternal recurrence is the time of novelty; of the commodity. Where Adorno tends to find only stasis and death in this repetition of the same, Benjamin finds a rupture of the new, as a new *Erfahrung*.[38] 'On eternal recurrence: "The great thought as a Medusa head: all the features of the world become motionless, a frozen death throe".'[39] Benjamin undoubtedly sees Nietzsche as a product of his age:

> The notion of eternal return appeared at a time when the bourgeoisie no longer dared count on the impending development of the system of production which they had set going.[40]

But if Benjamin were only interested in historicising Nietzsche, then he would surely not have included the following citation (*because* it has a catastrophic connotation): 'we have created the weightiest thought – now *let us create the being for whom it is light and pleasing*!'[41]

Why, in that case, does Cacciari go to Nietzsche and not to Benjamin's friend, Adorno? Cacciari did 'not intend to go into a discussion of the various "critical theories"'.[42] His early essay 'On the Genesis of Negative Thought' sought 'a rigorous

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[35] Szondi, Peter. *An Essay on the Tragic*, p.16.
[36] 'The true sense of [tragedy] is the... insight that what the hero atones for is not his own particular sins, but original sin, in other words, the guilt of existence itself.' Schopenhauer, A. *The World as Will and Representation*, vol.1, p.254.
[37] Löwith, K. *From Hegel to Nietzsche: The Revolution in Nineteenth-Century Thought*, trans. David E. Green (Columbia University Press, 1964), p.175.
[38] Löwith, K. *Nietzsche's Philosophy of the Eternal Recurrence of the Same* (1935), trans. J. Harvey Lomax (University of California Press, 1997). Benjamin appears to overlook the cosmological interpretation of eternal recurrence presented by Löwith, which, as cosmological, Löwith takes to be inconsistent with the 'will to power'.
[39] Benjamin, W. *Arcades Project*, p.115.
[40] Ibid. p.117.
[41] Ibid. p.116.
[42] Cacciari, M. *Architecture and Nihilism*, p.16. Tafuri observes the 'anti-Hegelian rediscovery of the negative' in Bloch and Marcuse. Why not Adorno? Tafuri, M. *Architecture and Utopia*, p.59.

systematisation of an anti-dialectical thought.'[43] Of course, Adorno shares Cacciari's aversion to synthesis. The anti-dialectics of negative thought is no doubt comparable to. though not identical to, the 'anti-system' of negative dialectics. This possibility can be pursued, to some extent, before coming across the old problem of positing (progress).

Adorno comes close to Cacciari's Nietzschean reflections, to the extent that he posits ideal-types as hypothetical extractions of 'tragic' historical tendencies. And like Cacciari, these ideals name certain limits that regulate the real – even though, and especially because, they cannot not themselves be realised. The '*totally* administered society', reification, is always imminent but never immanent (Adorno knows that the claim for final reification must contradict itself since the claim presumes a standpoint of non-reified subjectivity).[44] Adorno's 'absolute commodity' is, perhaps, one such ideal-type.[45] Hence, Cacciari's formulations closely resemble the 'Fetish Character' essay, in which music is taken to be in some sense an exemplary commodity:

> the whole system becomes clear: the *Nervenleben* corresponds to the continuous and relentlessly innovated transubstantiation of exchange value into use value – that is, it corresponds to the necessary instance in which exchange value becomes real value.[46]

Cacciari's 'transubstantiation' recalls the 'quid pro quo' of Marx and Adorno (a 'theological nicety'). Adorno and Cacciari each consider the real implications of this ideal, a limit that is experientially demarcated and raised to the level of self-consciousness in art – and (as) architecture.

For Adorno, 'mimesis' in art acknowledges and goes beyond a rational limit, manifested in the 'constructive' aspect of the work. 'Art is a stage in the process of what Max Weber called the disenchantment of the world, and it is entwined with rationalisation.'[47] Mimesis, like the tragic, is a productive repetition of the limit. Unlike in Cacciari however, mimesis and rationality are *themselves* dialectical limit-concepts,

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[43] Lombardo, P. Introduction to *Architecture and Nihilism*, xxv.
[44] The exceptional limit-concept in Adorno is, of course, 'Auschwitz'. It names a reality, not a hypothesis. At the same time, it is the most regulative of all of Adorno's 'limit-concepts'. As well as the real catastrophe, Auschwitz names another, potentially real event: the dissolution of the promise of enlightenment, and hence of utopia itself (see chapter 5).
[45] Their shared critique is that Benjamin's *Chockerlebnis* is not mediated – in art, including architecture. Cacciari, M. *Architecture and Nihilism*, p.18. See chapter 3, above, for Adorno's critique.
[46] Cacciari, M. *Architecture and Nihilism*. p.6.
[47] Adorno, T. W. *Aesthetic Theory*, p.54.

or categories: 'The dialectic of these elements is similar to dialectical logic, in that each pole realises itself in the other, and not in some middle ground.' Thus, 'construction gains expression through coldness'; that is, through its non-expressive limit.[48]

On the basis of the conceptual affinities between Adorno and Cacciari, and in the light of the philosophies of the tragic in Hegel and Nietzsche, Cacciari's 'negative thought' is not so 'anti-dialectical' as might be supposed. And Adorno's concept of negation seems far from being anti-tragic. Modern art, insofar as it is modern, must acknowledge and transgress limits. This is because, according to Adorno, the incessant rationality manifested in capitalist society renders most past forms of art obsolete once the rational limit that they challenged is fully developed. The acknowledgement of an advanced *ratio* appears in the mimetic repetition of the constructive limit, or limitation, in the most advanced art. Hence, Adorno considers the limits of music in 'Vers une musique informelle'. There is no possibility of going beyond limits without acknowledging them. As his proto-manifesto makes clear, there can be no assumption that such limits *will indeed* be overcome. For, 'It is self-evident that nothing concerning art is self-evident anymore'.[49] This is crucial for understanding Adorno's (negative) dialectic. From the – phenomenological – standpoint of consciousness, the dialectic faces a single limit, not a series of limits stretching into an expected future, since such limits only become acknowledged *as* limits *after* negating existing limits. There is, in this sense, no *presumption* of progress in Adorno's dialectic; no *Vergeistigung*.

Hegel has various ways of stating the progressive nature of spirit. The sociality of reason must be 'actual', not 'abstract'. That there has been progress – that there has been a series of determinate negations – reveals the series to be inherently progressive. Each historical shape of consciousness manifests a *true* moment in the unfolding of world-spirit. For Adorno, this quasi-inductive approach cannot – quite – hold, given the course of recent history (see chapter 5).

It was suggested in chapter 1 that this seeming disavowal of progress leads to the problem of positing. The problem of progress and (infinite) regress returns once again here. For *if* it is the case that, in rejecting a progressive dialectic, Adorno unwittingly embraces a neo-Kantian infinite task – without radicalising it, *à la* Cacciari – then this would lend a *passive* nihilistic meaning to his upholding of the *Bilderverbot*. That is to say, Adorno would thereby uphold the ban on *both* the representation *and* the presentation of utopia. He would idealise utopia as no-place ever, a 'never-place'.

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[48] Ibid. p.44.
[49] Ibid. p.1.

Adorno is partly saved from this fate by his idea of natural-history. Nevertheless, in a passage from *Dialectic of Enlightenment* Adorno and Horkheimer slip from the disavowal of concrete origins into a disavowal of concrete goals:

> The fact that – despite the fascist lies to the contrary – the concept of homeland [*Heimat*] is opposed to myth constitutes the innermost paradox of epic. Precipitated in the epic is the memory of an historical age on which nomadism gave way to settlement, the precondition of homeland. If the fixed order of property implicit in settlement is the source of human alienation, in which all homesickness and longing spring from a lost primal state, at the same time it is toward settlement and fixed property, on which alone the concept of homeland is based, that all longing and homesickness are directed. Novalis's definition according to which all philosophy is homesickness holds good only if this longing is not dissipated in the phantasm of a lost original state, but homeland, and nature itself, are pictured as something that have first to be wrested from myth.[50]

The origin – *Heimat* – is the goal. But Adorno and Horkheimer invite the reverse possibility: the goal is the origin, 'a lost primal state' from which 'longing spring[s]'. The concept of *Heimat* arises from the experience of its loss. But what is lost was itself *Heimatlos*: nomadism, which Adorno and Horkheimer tend to determine as exile.

A contradiction ('paradox') of *Heimat* and *Heimatlos* is sustained here. But this antinomy tends to synthesise its self-contradiction, in the most Kantian of ways, in its suggestion that *Heimat* is the unending longing of nomadism for settlement, settlement for nomadism, and so on, *ad infinitum.* Adorno wants to preserve a longing for home, as utopia. But it cannot be 'wrested from myth' because myth is itself the regressive, cyclical infinity of longing. Utopia is thereby Romantically idealised, as it is in Novalis. 'Nature' *remains* the unconditioned.[51] At the same time, Adorno and Horkheimer posit nature *as* that which must be reconciled with history, as history's alientated other. This (Judeo-Christian) schema is no more apparent than in Adorno's essay on Hölderlin:

> Within the sphere of Hölderlinian imagery, the domination of nature itself comes close to being the original sin; that is the measure of its complicity with Christianity... Philosophically, the anamnesis of suppressed nature, in which Hölderlin tries to separate the wild from the peaceful, is the consciousness of non-identity, which transcends the compulsory identity of the logos.[52]

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[50] Adorno, T. W. & Horkheimer, M. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, pp.60-61.
[51] 'We *look* everywhere for the Unconditional Absolute, and all we *find* are the conditions'. Novalis, 'Miscellaneous Remarks' (1797), in *Classic and Romantic German Aesthetics*, trans. Karl Ameriks (Cambridge University Press, 2003), p.203.
[52] Adorno, T W. 'Parataxis', in *Notes To Literature*, vol.2, p.141.

The moment of disavowal of utopia is arguably connected to the absence of a phenomenology (and politics) of space in Adorno. If utopia is no-place, ever, then it can be placed in the present as little as it can be placed in the past or the future. Cacciari does not oppose this position, and in many respects he repeats it. For Cacciari does not offer a positive utopia, here and now. Rather, following Nietzsche and Heidegger, he radicalises the problem, the negativity of *its* non-place, into the nihilism of *Vergeistigung* itself. It is here that an avowedly 'anti-dialectical' response becomes more promising than a 'dialectical' one. Cacciari suggests that there is a compulsion to consider the problem of space, since the existing social space is complicit with the passive nihilism generated by the project of capitalist modernity itself. The tragic acknowledgement of this nihilism, its nothingness, is the possibility of a new space, a new place.

The Non-Place of Non-Dwelling

Cacciari construes the problem of the Metropolis as a problem *for* architecture. His exemplary architect of nihilism is Adolf Loos. In *Aesthetic Theory*, by contrast, Loos (who makes up most of the few references to architecture) stands for functionality without mimesis. Architecture cannot be autonomous art:

> The purely constructed, strictly objective artwork, which ever since Adolf Loos has been the sworn enemy of everything artisanal, reverses into the artisanal by virtue of its mimesis of functional forms: Purposelessness without purpose becomes irony.[53]

Adorno subsequently adjusts his position on Loos.[54] But for Cacciari, purposeless without purpose is ironic *and* tragic. Loos exposes the structural limits of *Vergeistigung*. Instead of 'dialectics', his multiple 'dialects' eschew the traditional syntheses – of modern and traditional, industrial and craft – associated with the contemporaneous *Werkbund* and *Werkstätte* architectural movements. The former present the 'immediate use value' of handicraft as 'pure value corresponding to precise a priori forms, forms constituting artistic creativity.' Such forms purport to lie beyond exchange relations. The contradiction that their use value is in fact transubstantiated exchange value, and

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[53] Adorno, T. W. *Aesthetic Theory*, p.58.
[54] Cf. Adorno, T. W. 'Functionalism Today', in *Rethinking Architecture*, ed. Neil Leach (London: Routledge, 1997), pp.6-20.

that one language is many, is suppressed: 'Use value, in its capitalist sense, has no "autonomous" quality to manifest.'[55]

This claim to autonomy extends to, or from, the Metropolis itself. The Metropolis is placed according to a valorisation of its limit (its 'city-walls'). The limit is once again real and ideal. The Metropolis as place stands in contradiction with the exchange relations that reproduce it. This is because *universal space* is an *ideal* of the Metropolis. Its claim to place is made *through* an ideological valorisation of 'empty space'. This is already hinted at in Simmel:

> The calculating exactness of practical life which has resulted from a money economy corresponds to the ideal of natural science, namely that of transforming the world into an arithmetical problem and of fixing every one of its parts in a mathematical formula.[56]

Cacciari reads Simmel's arithmetic in terms of a 'geometric', no doubt as an allusion to the Rationalist systems. This shift of emphasis within the mathematical constitutes, at a specific level, a critique of Cartesian *space* – of space *as* Cartesian, as against the *spatial* – and, at a general level, a critique of the purportedly Rationalist (and, rationalised) foundations of modern social and political space.

The (Lockean) ideal equality of appropriable space – the '*tabula rasa*', as Cacciari puts it – is the ideal equality of individual, consumer freedom. The abstractness of negative freedom is in turn reflected in the abstractness of space; a space that cannot, it seems, be a social place at all. The Metropolis presents itself *as* a place, at the same time foreclosing the possibility of a different place *to come*. It is no surprise, therefore, that Cacciari is drawn both to Heidegger's critique of Cartesian space and to his later reflections upon the possibility of 'dwelling' amidst the 'homelessness of modern man'.[57]

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger observes that the '*res corporea*' of Descartes' *Principia Philosophae* is determined as '*substantia*': 'Substances become accessible in their "attributes", and every substance has some distinctive property from which the essence of the substantiality of that definite substance can be read off.' 'Which property', asks Heidegger, 'is this in the case of the *res corporea*?'

> Extension – namely, in length, breadth, and thickness – makes up the real Being of that corporeal substance which we call 'world'... Extension...

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[55] Cacciari, M. *Architecture and Nihilism*, p.103.
[56] Simmel, G. 'The Metropolis and Mental Life', p.237.
[57] Heidegger, M. 'Letter on Humanism', in *Basic Writings*, p.243.

> must already 'be' before any other ways in which Being is determined, so that these can 'be' what they are.[58]

Extension is the essence of substance, against which all other attributes are, precisely, accidents. A substance without attributes would remain substantial, because the *res corporea* is essentially *res extensa*. If the *res* is an extended thing, then how is its extension to be known? How is *its* truth, and thus truth *itself*, to be determined? 'That which is accessible in an entity through mathematics, makes up its Being'.[59] Heidegger does not question the reliability of mathematics, but rather the attempt to render its ontic findings as ontological.

Heidegger's phenomenological alternative to Cartesian space goes under the heading of 'The Spatiality of Being-in-the-world'. 'Being in space' might be defined as a 'position in "world-space".' Locations "in" space are relative to each other by measured extension. Heidegger proposes an alternative conception of distance here, as '*de-severance* [*Entfernung*] and *directionality*'.[60] 'Nearness' does not coincide with measured distance. Neither is it 'anti-realistic'. 'Things' are 'equipment', disclosed according to the ends to which they are 'assigned' and 'referred', by way of an expectation of (their) determinate possibilities (including 'letting-alone'). Calculating measurement would be one such possibility. But that remains a distinctive possibility of Dasein as *already de-severing*. Dasein, the '*Fragwürdig*', is 'scientific' in the broadest possible sense. Hence, the spatial is (in transcendental terms) the condition for the possibility of space; not vice versa. The determination of place as idealised space then renders place an ideal impossibility. Importantly, this ideal is regulative. It is not that place *is* space (today) but rather that the 'geometric' *project* forecloses the possibility of another, socially self-determined place. In terms of Heidegger, of course, it closes down possibility *as such*. The determination of Being as quantifiably extended substance leads to the nihilism of 'modern technology'.

The concepts of place, dwelling and home share connotations of the local, the community and the family (the familiar, *heim-lich*). Loos negates these connotations – in his homes. He gives voice to the contemporary impossibility of place; to the contradiction of space and place. Loos' homes are anti-homes. One of Cacciari's arguments about these homes concerns the relationship between interior and exterior:

> the bourgeois, philistine concept of the home – the concept of a totality of dwelling, of a reciprocal transparency between interior and exterior... is

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[58] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, p.125.
[59] Ibid. p.128.
[60] Ibid. p.138.

> logically false. The home is in reality a plurality of languages that cannot be reduced to unities by the deterministic logic of nineteenth century positivistic utopianism... The architect remains true to his calling as long as he gives maximum voice to these differences and lets them appear in full.[61]

This multiplicity exceeds the binary of interior and exterior, into the 'silence' beyond dialects. By treating the boundary of inner and outer abyssally, Loos *both* resists the 'natural' boundaries of the home, or Metropolis, *and* keeps open the possibility of a different dwelling. Possibility originates in nihilation. In his reading of Wittgenstein's '*oikos*' (built for his sister), Cacciari suggests that 'all that remains' after the determination of place as space is this silence of possibility. Such silence must be given voice; it must become eloquent (contra-Wittgenstein?). The negation of the Metropolis through an affirmation of an alternative utopia is the only impossibility, for Loos, since the 'metropolitan context... negates the interior values' of 'place'. The architecture of nihilism does not oppose the Metropolis with another place. It might at least open the possibility of thinking another place.

It is here that Cacciari repeats a problem in Heidegger *and* follows Heidegger's response to that problem – albeit with a polemical reversal. In *Being and Time*, the nothingness of '*Dasein's* impossibility', death, is that which phenomenologically stirs the question of Being (as not nothing). Heidegger's early, active nihilism can be characterised as a call to questioning. This gesture appears in Cacciari's account of the abstracted blasé-type. The emptiness of the man without qualities plummets him into the call for decision. Cacciari ironises Heideggerian 'authenticity [*Eigentlichkeit*]' by suggesting that *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften is* the *modern* possibility of authenticity. But the structure of nihilation and possibility remains, meaning that Cacciari is susceptible to some of the other objections to *Being and Time*. Possibility, questioning, is seemingly (of itself) without content here. Loos risks the abstract over the determinate negation by asking non-questions. There is nowhere to 'go beyond' to. There can be no going beyond *as such.*

Heidegger's self-confessed 'turning' involves the attempt to confront this problem of existential questioning for its own sake. The 'enigma [*Rätsel*] of Being' is not infinitely irresolvable. On the basis of his readings of Hölderlin (and in contrast to Adorno's Hölderlin) Heidegger suggests that 'we must try to bring the enigma as enigma closer to us' – in, that is, an unprecedented manner.[62] An instance of

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[61] Cacciari, M. *Architecture and Nihilism*, p.107.
[62] Heidegger, M. *Hölderlin's Hymn: "The Ister"*, pp.34-5.

Heidegger's turning can be found in 'Building Dwelling Thinking' (1951). Heidegger proposes another non-Cartesian concept of 'space [*Raum*]':

> A space is something that has been made room for, something that has been freed, namely, within a boundary, Greek *peras*. A boundary is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognised, the boundary is that from which something *begins its essential unfolding*. That is why the concept is that of *horismos* that is, horizon, the boundary... *Accordingly, spaces receive their essential being from places* [Orte] *and not from "space"*.[63]

Heidegger's 'boundary' is equivocal. On the one hand, a nostalgic, provincial conception of dwelling can be discerned – belonging to the locality, which for Heidegger is not just any locality. The 'clearing away [*Räumen*]' is a dispersing, yet the 'place' that it places is a 'gathering [*Versammeln*]'. 'Place always opens a region in which it gathers the things in their belonging together.'[64] That which does not belong, which is not gathered, or is not proper (the metropolis, no doubt) lies beyond the horizon of Heidegger's *Ortschaft*.[65]

On the other hand, 'boundary' signifies that space is bounded, not unbounded, as with the Cartesian *res* (whose extension cannot be limited by *any* qualities). Space is finite for the finite human being: 'To be a human being means to be on the earth as a mortal. It means to dwell.' Hence Heidegger connects dwelling to finitude. This is no longer the existentialism of 'Being-in-the-World', because dwelling is both a questioning and a response. Dwelling cannot, today, be brought about solely by building new buildings, or by returning to such buildings as the 'farmhouse' of Heidegger's Black Forest. There is a circular, or circling problem of dwelling, building and thinking according to Heidegger: 'Only if we are capable of dwelling, only then can we build.'[66] But the circle is not solely vicious. The *problem* of dwelling appears *in* the impossibility of dwelling. In terms of Cacciari's nihilism, the idealisation of place not only raises the question as to the meaning of place (this position would correspond to existentialism), it also hints at a response to the problem. What dwelling would be is present, presents itself, in the near absence of dwelling. It is in this sense that Cacciari

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[63] Heidegger, M. 'Building Dwelling Thinking', in *Basic Writings*, p.356.
[64] Heidegger, M. 'Art and Space', in *Rethinking Architecture*, p.123.
[65] Heidegger's declaration, 'Why We Remain in the Provinces', is given its due by Adorno in *The Jargon of Authenticity*, trans. Frederic Will & Knut Tarnowski (London: Routledge, 2003), pp.43-44.
[66] Heidegger, M. 'Building Dwelling Thinking', p.349.

speaks of 'non-dwelling' as 'the essential characteristic of life in the Metropolis'.[67] Cacciari (mostly) opposes Heidegger's preoccupation with dwelling as 'locale', but he equally radicalises Heidegger's unique awareness of the problem of dwelling as constitutive of the problem of modern nihilism itself. Hence, Heidegger's equal and opposite preoccupation with the '*unheimlich*', *as* '*unheimisch*' – that which is without place, the abyssal un-ground of Being in its concealment.[68] This constitutes Heidegger's ontological opposition to the 'onto-theo-logical' grounding of Being – whether as the Creation or as (in its secularised form) the absolute logical positing of identity and difference.[69]

Cacciari sympathises with Heidegger's critique of Cartesian space, as constituting the metaphysical ground of *Gestell*: 'cities then become, in exact accordance with their present image, a total... occupation-plundering of space.' Cacciari associates the 'spatial delimitation that one encounters in the history of the city' with 'a loss of place' or '*Ent-ortung*', de-placement. And yet, Cacciari has already noted, in his critique of Tönnies for instance, that the projection of the categories of place or home *into* the contemporary situation must be reactionary. That would be precisely the interpretation of decadence, as decline, that Cacciari opposes (in his essays on the 'posthumous people' of *fin-de-siècle* Vienna).

Cacciari is sensitive to this problem of nostalgia. How 'can one conceivably combat *Entortung* without making the Angel's gaze towards the past a mere act of nostalgia and consolation?'[70] The anti-utopia of Loos provides the clue, once again:

> Loos' architecture does not seek the rationalisation of "pure" places, but is aimed at showing the endless contradiction between the thought-out space of calculation, the equivalence of the exteriors, and the possibility of place, the hope of a place. The Loosian house preserves this hope, just as the gaze of Benjamin's Angel preserves the "glimmers" of the past. That which can be shown is not the "redemption" of place, but the dissonance existing between the equivalence of techno-scientific space and the characteristic of space as a game of a combination of places, where things are gathered and

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[67] Cacciari, M. 'Eupalinos or Architecture', p.97.

[68] 'We mean uncanny in the sense of that which is not at home – not homely in that which is homely. It is only for this reason that the un-homely [*das Un-heimische*] can, as a consequence, also be "uncanny" ["*unheimlich*"] in the sense of something that has an alienating or "frightening" effect that gives rise to anxiety.' Heidegger, Martin. *Hölderlin's Hymn: "The Ister"*, trans. William McNeill & Julia Davis (Indiana University Press, 1996), p.41.

[69] Cf. Heidegger, M. 'The Onto-theo-logical Constitution of Metaphysics', in *Identity and Difference*, pp.42-76.

[70] Cacciari, M. *Architecture and Nihilism*, p.169.

> dwell with man. This dissonance must be composed: even the extreme dissonances must be the object of composition.[71]

The composition of the contradiction, its dissonance, contains within it the 'hope of a place'. Cacciari's understanding of nihilism is not nostalgic here. The determination of place as space does not call for a return to local places (provinces). Rather, the progressive determination of *Vergeistigung* must be radicalised and ultimately overcome, in a manner akin to the 'twisting-free' of metaphysics encountered above. Insofar as non-dwelling is the possibility of dwelling, Cacciari's non-dwelling can be termed, against his stated intentions, 'dialectical'.

It then becomes clearer as to why Cacciari had drawn upon the 'cosmopolitan' implications of non-dwelling in Simmel. Following Benjamin's interpretation of Simmel, Cacciari suggests that the 'adventure [*Abenteuer*]' is not simply affirmative – *of* negative freedom – but is rather, in the light of Hölderlin and Nietzsche, the possibility of the *journey*. The *Erlebnis* is the possibility of *Erfahrung*. For Simmel, Cacciari *and* Nono, 'Venice' is an allegory for this possibility:

> That Venice has been and will be the *city of adventure* is just the most perceptible expression of the deepest destiny of its image: it cannot be a home for our soul, cannot be anything but adventure.[72]

For Nono, this adventure, the determinate negation of home, is exemplified in the acoustico-spatial experience of Venice:

> the sound of bells spreads in different directions: some add to each other, are transported over the waters along the channel. Other sounds vaporise almost completely, or mingle in various ways with the other signs of the lagoon and the city.[73]

This remark merely hints at the way in which the negation of home is related to music. For music is not sound alone. A literature of music and space will be briefly reconstructed here in order to understand the way in which Nono's *Prometeo* is a '*Tragedia dell'ascolto*'.

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[71] Ibid, p.172.
[72] Cited in: Cacciari, M. *Architecture and Nihilism*, lviii.
[73] 'Conversation Between Luigi Nono and Massimo Cacciari with Michele Bertaggia', in *Verso Prometeo*.

Music and Space

The tragic-symbolic consummation of the world in music was theorised by Schopenhauer and put into practice by the culture industry. What Safranski calls 'the current era's ubiquity of music', which 'knows no bounds' (see introduction) is akin to Cacciari's 'futile search for the *unicum*'. This is the paradox of the 'musical' adventure (and journey). On the one hand, the ubiquity of (commodity) music satisfies the need to be at home everywhere in the world. *This* 'homeless' world is ideologically turned into 'home'. On the other hand, the traversal of boundaries in multiple directions is the adventure of the blasé-type, the man without qualities, the wanderer – hence, the 'critique' of home itself. And music seems to hold a privileged position in this 'twisting' from the no-place to the non-place – on account of its spatial peculiarities.

Before Schopenhauer had suggested that music goes beyond world space into an infinite space beyond, his master, Kant, had already taken notice of music's transgression of boundaries:

> Music has a certain lack of urbanity to it. For owing chiefly to the character of its instruments, it scatters its influence abroad to an uncalled-for extent (through the neighbourhood), and thus, as it were, becomes obtrusive and deprives others, outside the musical circle, of their freedom... The case is almost on a par with the practice of regaling oneself with a perfume that exhales its odours far and wide.[74]

The spatial ambiguity of music, expressed in the question, 'where is this music?' has traditionally been acknowledged in terms of a polarity of 'inner' and 'outer'. Kant remarks on the outer aspect of music here. But the same Kant would have to say that the art of time is accordingly the art of the 'inner sense' (he did not, but Schelling did).[75] How can music be *both* inner and outer?

A distinction is made within the outer between musical space and the space of the performance. But this is ultimately another 'inner-outer'. Kurth appeals to Kant's outer sense: 'With the outer world-image [*Weltbild*] we are bound to the intuition of space (as *a priori* origination); something thereof is also conferred upon the inner world image of music.'[76] Music gives rise to a 'strongly felt' 'analogy' to the 'outer'.[77] Music

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[74] Kant, I. *Critique of Judgement*, p.196.
[75] 'Time is nothing other than the form of inner sense'. Kant, I. *Critique of Pure Reason*, A33/B49, p.163.
[76] Kurth, E. *Musikpsychologie*, p.118.
[77] Ibid. p.120.

is *as if* space. It is an 'abstract [*Undeutlich*]' and 'enigmatic [*Rätselreich*]... spatial presentation'.[78] But the space of the performance – the 'localisation' of the sound – 'has nothing to do' with the inner musical space. It is rather the 'opposite of the inner spatial presentation'.[79] This opposition will be returned to.

Hegel classifies the forms of art according to the *Erinnerung* of spirit. Art is an externalisation, *Entaüsserung*, commencing with the most outward, Symbolic art of architecture, and ending with most the inner, Romantic arts of painting, music and poetry. Hegel's philosophy of music can be read according to the 'architecture' of the *Aesthetics* as a whole. Just as 'music acquires an especially architectonic character', 'romantic architecture' displays the 'most contrasting eurhythmy'. Hence, 'although [music] stands in contrast to architecture, it still has an affinity with it.'[80] This is the affinity of the first and the last, as well as the outer and the inner. Hegel echoes Schelling's definition of architecture as 'music in space... frozen music' (a dictum popularised by Goethe as, 'muted music [*verstummten... Tonkunst*]').[81]

Like Hegel, Bloch associates the outer with the architectural and the inner with music. But the outer is, precisely *contra-* Hegelian Idealism, collective utopia. This Hegelian structure would have come to Bloch from Lukács, who turned the dictum of Novalis into a statement on modern subjectivity. The 'urge to be at home everywhere' demonstrates that,

> philosophy, as a form of life or as that which determines the form and supplies the content of literary creation, is always a symptom of the rift between "inside" and "outside", a sign of the essential difference between the self and the world, the incongruence of soul and deed.[82]

In Bloch's appropriation of Lukács, the 'musical' connotations of Novalis come to fruition. Bloch's intended title for *The Spirit of Utopia* was *Music and Apocalypse*.[83] According to Bloch's experimental synthesis of expressionism and constructivism, great

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[78] Ibid. p.128; p.119.
[79] Ibid. p.128.
[80] Hegel, G. W. F. *Aesthetics*, p.894; p.685; p.893.
[81] Schelling, F. W. J. *The Philosophy of Art*, p.165. 'A noble philosopher spoke of architecture as frozen music, and it must have warranted much shaking of the head. We believe this beautiful thought is no better introduced as when we call architecture *muted music* [*verstummten... Tonkunst*].' Goethe, J. W. Cited in: Leonhard L. Mackell, 'Goethes edler Philosoph', in Euphorion 11 (1904) ff.
[82] Lukács, Georg. *Theory of the Novel*, trans. Anna Bostock (London: Merlin Press, 1978), p.29.
[83] Cf. Scholem, G. *The Story of a Friendship*, p.97.

music is the inner anticipation of an outer collectivity. The 'ornament' is the inner expressed through the outer; an 'exteriorised interiority'. The movement of the 'I who I will be', recalling Hegel, is the movement towards the 'We'.[84] In Bach's Passions, Bloch hears,

> the fusion and balance of the lyrical and the structured in an essentially *architectonic*, Gothically architectonic harmony and counterpoint, which acts as the particular house, the so to speak spatially constitutive system of this lyricism.[85]

For Cacciari, following the anti-ornament of Loos and Webern, Bloch's '*Antizipation*' would be more Romantic *Sehnsucht*; longing *for* a projected utopia. Adorno's utopian anticipation is, by contrast, dissonant. An expression of waiting in vain does not anticipate the awaited in the sense of expectation. It is, however, clear that (in spite of his criticisms of Bloch's aesthetics of music) Adorno's aesthetic theory owes much to the *Spirit of Utopia* (by way of Benjamin, perhaps) – notably, in its dialectic of expression and construction; but *also* in the sense that the artwork has an inner, autonomous character *only* insofar as it is outer, *as* social (as 'spirit'). The artwork is a 'monad'. This inner-outer paradigm is in fact confronted and questioned in Nono's *Prometeo*.

Prometeo **and the Place of the Artwork**

For *Prometeo*, Nono employs a modern version of the *cori spezzati*. The singers, speakers, chorus, solo strings, solo winds, glasses, orchestral groups and live electronics are arranged spatially about the audience. A productive tension reigns in this work between the musical space and the space of the performance, which the former occupies. What is the nature of this occupation, and how is it productive? The editor of Nono's collected writings in French has suggested that, in these later works, 'the music composes the space'.[86] But how can such space be composed in an already composed space – in the case of the premier, the San Lorenzo.

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[84] The last chapter of *The Spirit of Utopia* is entitled: '*Karl Marx, Death, and the Apocalypse, Or, the Ways in This World by Which the Inward Can Become Outward and the Outward Like the Inward*'.
[85] Bloch, E. *The Spirit of Utopia*, p.55.
[86] Feneyrou, Laurent; cited in Pape, G. 'Nono and his Fellow Travellers', in *Luigi Nono: The Suspended Song*, p.60.

The spatial experience of *Prometeo* can initially be described in terms of Adorno's 'adherence to the harmonic structure'. Adorno is aware, in his additional 'or the instrumental sound', that a new space promises to emerge out of the disintegration of traditional harmony. In Wagner, 'colour itself became architectonic'. Nono does not valorise colour over structure, sound over music. The harmonic material of *Prometeo* is polarised between close intervals, including micro-intervals, and expansive ones (the 'Promethean' fifth being a constant), amidst similarly polarised pitch and dynamic ranges. Nono exploits a fundamental characteristic of music (described in great detail by Kurth): height and depth.[87] There is no *legato* rising and falling of voices however. Nono interrupts linear articulation and anticipates the problem of atomisation by way of an articulation through 'colour'. Nono calls this articulation 'the smallest transition'. It is supposed to counter the 'dramaturgy of contrasts' that characterised most bourgeois music, especially opera, as a mode of *representation.*[88] Similar figures are thus repeated in different instrumental grouping, such that the transition of texture and colour challenges the 'figurativeness' that Adorno attributed to Schoenberg's *Moses.* For Cacciari, 'to eliminate all figurative appearance... has been the greatest problem for Nono in the general conception (but perhaps also in the "musical thought") of his work.'[89] As was suggested, Nono does not so much eliminate figurativeness as radicalise-sublate it.

This attempted sublation (of *stile rappresentativo*) is explained by Nono and Cacciari in terms of the problematic affinity between representation and space:

> In parallel to the cemeteries, asylums and prisons, the theatres and concert halls are built... The concentration and homogenisation of space, the disappearance of the multi-spatial possibility of the musical event, is closely related to the obvious reduction of polyvocity, of the multivocal possibility of "directions" in listening. Inside these convoluted constraints, listening and the space of listening coincide; are apprehended together. All this during what one could perhaps call "the bourgeois era" of listening.

Cacciari traces the emergence of the institutional spaces of music in 'parallel' to these other institutions. The 'constraint' of music implies that unconstrained music, outside of or against this 'era', offers a potential for resistance, to a 'civilization placed under the sign of the *ideïn*'.[90]

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[87] Kurth, E. *Musikpsychologie*, pp.116-136.
[88] Cited in: Stenzl, J. *Luigi Nono*, p.112.
[89] Cacciari, M. '*Verso Prometeo* / A Tragedy of Listening'. in *Verso Prometeo.*
[90] 'Conversation Between Luigi Nono and Massimo Cacciari', in, ibid.

Nono and Cacciari suggest that the 'multi-spatiality' of music derives from its capacity to estrange what is listened to from the listening. This refers not only to the abstraction of music (which, as we have seen, is quite amenable to representation) but also to an estrangement of the music from the locality of its production. This estrangement is ideologically cut short with the cult of the performer. What we see is what we hear. The inner-outer relation can be understood in terms of a distinction between the necessity (fatality) of the spectacular – whereby the inner and outer are collapsed – and the possibility of the non-spectacular, according to which the meaning of the outer is in some way suspended by the inner.

The claim for this potential of music is nevertheless fraught, insofar as it relies upon a version of empirical acoustics. As Kant observed to his distaste, sound crosses space. Unlike light, sound can pass through walls. In a way, headphones formalise this phenomenon: 'I take the music with me'. Music, it seems, depends upon sound. And yet, following an 'Origin of the Work of Art' thesis, sound is not the origin of music; *modern* music is the origin of (its) sound, its 'thingly character'.

Nono speaks of a 'mobile sound' that 'does not fill the space, *but discovers it*, unveils it. And this provokes an unexpected and unpredictable *being in the sound, not to begin* to perceive, but to feel part of the space, to *play*.'[91] This play is not harmonious. It is a tragic play; a modern-day *Trauerspiel*. Nono's 'tragedy in listening' can, up to a point, be understood as a continuation of Cacciari's 'negative thought'. The space of the performance is determined by the geometric space of the Metropolis. Given Cacciari's Foucauldian language, the deconsecrated San Lorenzo perhaps constituted a 'heterotopia'.[92] But aside from what precisely is meant by heterotopia, this would only be the case insofar as the art-*work* of *Prometeo* productively contradicts the space of the San Lorenzo, the real space of here-and-now. According to Cacciari, a manifestation of negative thought 'repeats' as 'going beyond' the real-ideal space of the Metropolis. The blasé, the wanderer, is the productive mimesis of the ideal space, the bad utopia.

If *Prometeo* is a manifestation of negative thought, then the 'mobile sound' is the 'figure' of the wanderer, and that 'in which' the music wanders is the geometric space. As Nono makes clear, this mobile sound is produced *in* the disclosing of the space – which must then 'include' the performance space. Negative thought repeats and goes beyond the present space, the space of the present. Going beyond, as mimesis, is

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[91] Quoted in, Pape, G. 'Nono and his Fellow Travellers', p.62. Translation amended.
[92] Cf. Foucault, Michel. 'Of Other Spaces', trans. Jay Miskowiec, in *Diacritics*, vol.16, no.1 (Spring, 1986).

not world transcendence here. *Prometeo* does not abstractly negate present space. It radicalises the abstraction in the name of a second concreteness. Neither does it valorise *its own* musical space, in the sense of absolute music: 'to me, "symphony" means constructing a world' (Mahler).[93] The mobile sound of *Prometeo* refers incessantly to the performance space, without ever valorising it. It is 'here and now' that the spatial and temporal dimensions of *Prometeo* converge. For Nono,

> the composition of music that wants to restore infinite possibilities in listening today, by use of a non-geometrised space, also runs up against the dissolution of normal time, of the time of narration and of visualisation.

Nono's *fermata* 'dwells' on the performance space, its incontrovertible reference – *as* 'non-dwelling'. The mimetic stasis of the music resonates with its '*Um-welt*'. The listener wanders purposefully – like the performers of *La lontananza nostalgica utopica futura* (1988-89). The *fermata* says that *what* is purposeful in the wandering is the transformation of *this* space; *this* '*Welt*'. In the text of *Prometeo*, Cacciari truncates the final line of *Moses and Aron*,

> But in the wasteland you shall be
> invincible and shall achieve the goal:
> unity with God

into the last part of *Prometeo* (the *Stasimo Secondo*), stripping it of its theistic eschatology, and appending it to his own reflections on *Prometeo*, as *name* and as *nomos*:

> of many names but one form
> it is original division
> it is the bursting in governing
> it is the transgressing the recasting
> it is the plunging the defending
> it is what the circle of the fire reveals
> it opens multiple paths
> it urges us to arouse the broken
> to renovate silences
> it transforms
> it recalls
> it flashes
> it is invincible in the wasteland

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[93] Bauer-Lechner, N. *Recollections of Gustav Mahler*, trans. Dika Newlin (London & New York: Faber & Faber, 1980), p.40.

The wasteland ('*die Wüste*', the desert) is precisely not the abyss of empty universalised space. This desert resembles the abyss, as its mimesis – the fundamental difference being, perhaps, that even a desert occupies *this* world. It is equally *not* the abyss.

This sense of transformation within the world, of this world, is also captured in *Aesthetic Theory*:

> If Schopenhauer's thesis of art as an image of the world once over bears a kernel of truth, then it does so only insofar as this second world is composed out of elements that have been transposed out of the empirical world in accord with Jewish descriptions of the messianic order as an order just like the habitual order but changed in the slightest degree.[94]

Adorno's allusion to the 'utopian' meaning of art (its 'messianic order') hints at how *Prometeo* extends beyond Cacciari's theoretical research. What is missing from Cacciari is the sense in which *Prometeo* produces the problem of space and utopia *as an artwork*. Conversely, and relatedly, a problem arises concerning negative *thought*, as to whether it can actually go beyond the contradiction that it tragically acknowledges. Negative thought threatens to hypostatise possibility as such, theoretically blocking *praxis*. This problem can perhaps be discerned in Cacciari's texts for *Prometeo* – none more so than in his appropriation of *Moses*. If the 'New Prometheus' is 'invincible in the wasteland', then why go beyond it into the promised land? What is the promise of the wasteland? As was the case in the passage from *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, there is a tendency to melancholically valorise the wasteland and to proscribe promise.

Adorno is in fact less sceptical about utopian promise in his aesthetic theory. Art constitutes a peculiarly radical kind of promise:

> As a musical composition compresses time, and as a painting folds spaces into one another, so the possibility is concretised that the world could be other than it is.

Is not this 'other than it is' more of the same 'possibility for its own sake'?; the abstract negation of this place without the promise of another one? Adorno offers a speculatively positive moment of 'otherness' here. For although Adorno upholds the *Bilderverbot* on representations of utopia, the *utopian* meaning of the artwork consists in its autonomy, which Adorno accounts for with various (non-representational) categories – including 'coherence' and 'unity' (see chapter 1). As Adorno's writings on Beckett make clear, the unity of the modern artwork is a negative presentation; the near-impossibility of

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[94] Adorno, T. W. *Aesthetic Theory*, p.138.

unity and meaning, today. But this presentation is itself a unity *as* semblance. Hence, although Adorno might be faulted for neglecting the spatial-utopian meaning of art, he does acknowledge its collective-utopian meaning, albeit – of necessity – speculatively. The question of space in music is, for Adorno, primarily the question of its 'collective implications'. Collective utopia is not represented in the artwork. For (and this comes closer to Heidegger than Adorno would have liked) it is only in the experience *of* (non-) dwelling, that the possibility of building is given.

Further spatial implications of Adorno's aesthetic theory can be drawn out, in relation to Nono – in the light of his understanding of autonomy. Art 'becomes social by its opposition to society, and occupies this position only as autonomous art'. An abstraction from 'empirical society' in 'an obscured form', the artwork both draws from empirical society and discloses the possibility of a difference whole.[95] Adorno once again refers to the idea of the monad. The artwork determinately negates the ideological unity of the familiar world. It is 'the determinate negation of a determinate society' because *its* determinate unity and coherence opposes the existing unity and coherence (there is only space for one!). The utopian meaning of art is to imagine 'the totality as something that could be completely different'. In this sense, the artwork must remain outside of itself. The inner is inner *qua* different outer. As with the Jewish-mystical teaching, the two outers, empirical society and utopia, cannot be absolutely distinguished. Adorno's account of autonomy can be taken to address the question, which he otherwise tends to remain silent over, about the space and place of the artwork.

There is a utopian meaning of art insofar as 'place' appears in it negatively, 'only' as semblance. But *Schein* is itself internally contradictory. Place does not appear as *true* in the artwork. The artwork is *not* a place (whether a utopia or a heterotopia). And yet, Adorno seems to draw upon associations of place with autonomy, appropriation and (proper) naming. These are not simply bourgeois concepts of property and appropriation. The monad is the negating-mimesis of the bourgeois individual, not the bourgeois individual itself. The monad is not individualistic because it systematically refers to a '*totality* as… completely different' – according to which totality the individual would equally be completely different.[96]

When Adorno comes to consider a different totality, it is precisely a concept of place, or place-name, that is invoked:

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[95] Ibid. pp.225-6.
[96] My emphasis.

> What metaphysical experience would be, to those who eschew the reduction of this to presumably religious primal experiences, is closest to how Proust imagined it, in the happiness promised by the names of villages like Otterbach, Watterbach, Reuenthal, Monbrunn. You think that if you go there, you would be in what is fulfilled, as if it really existed. If you really go there, that which is promised recedes like a rainbow. Nevertheless you aren't disappointed; rather, you feel that you are too close, and that's why you don't see it. This is presumably why the difference between landscapes and the districts, which determine the world of images of childhood, is not that great. What Proust experienced at Illiers was something many children of the same social strata shared at different places. But for this generality, what is authentic in Proust's portrayal, to form, one must be enraptured at that one spot, without squinting at the generality.[97]

The singularity of place inhabits experience ('one place', but, as 'generality', any-one-place). Memories are themselves placed (or not: 'I can't place it'). The journey of experience (the *fahren* of *Erfahrung*) arises from an already interpreted world of already named places, without this experience being a tautological re-presentation *of* them. Place-names are named *as* dis-unity. The poverty of experience is, in this sense, a being without place-names, without any place – even, or especially, the place to come. This situation is expressed Romantically as 'homesickness'. Does Adorno keep to his 'tragic' reading of Proust? ('Proust remarks on the caesura which voyages make in the course of life by "leading us from one name to another name".')[98] Or does the supposedly universal trope of childhood uphold the nostalgic longing for the familiar home; for that which Michel de Certeau terms, the 'original spatial structure' of 'the mother'?[99]

Adorno acknowledges a concept of place as social but not explicitly spatial. Hence, perhaps, the near absence of architecture in his aesthetic theory – as well as his valorisation of modern music (as the Hegelian other of architecture). With his absolutist evaluation of modern music, Adorno tends toward the undialectical (where this dialectic of music and space has been recognised from Kant and Hegel to, more recently, Safranski and Jacques Attali).[100] Modern music must make this demand of the dialectic, as happens in *Prometeo*.

The musical space of *Prometeo* is, in Adorno's sense, the 'inner' moment of its autonomy. But this moment cannot be sustained without the space of the performance;

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[97] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.366-368.
[98] Adorno, T. W. 'Valéry Proust Museum', in *Prisms*, trans. Samuel & Shierry Weber (Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1981), p.178.
[99] De Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (University of California Press, 2002), p.109.
[100] Attali, Jacques. *Noise. A Political Economy of Music*, trans. Brian Massumi (University of Minnesota Press, 1986). See, for instance, p.21.

its heterogeneous moment, as it were. Although Adorno stresses that the artwork takes elements from the existing world, and is thereby social, its original transformation of these elements constitutes a different unity, *as* its autonomy. Hence, the heteronomous moment of the work is already mediated in autonomy. Although the musical space *and* time of *Prometeo* could therefore be understood as 'autonomous' (having mediated social rationality into its constructive language) this work simultaneously refuses to mediate the space of the performance into the musical space. Its mediation is its refusal to mediate. It does not propose the absolutism that Adorno sympathetically attributes to Mahler:

> When some well-intentioned person advised Mahler to darken the hall during the concert for the sake of the mood, the composer rightly replied that a performance at which one didn't forget about the surroundings was worthless.[101]

How does *Prometeo* problematise Adorno's *Aesthetic Theory*? In the light of Cacciari's research, the problem of space is not simply one problem among others, just as space is not simply one attribute of place. It is the ideological determination of place through idealised space that forces the question of place. Cacciari tentatively 'goes beyond' in his suggestion that the space of the Metropolis opens up the *possibility* of a new dwelling. None of this critique of space features in Adorno's reflections upon the meaning of place or of utopia – in spite his Weberian fears about rationalisation and his Hegelian fears about Rationalism. It is, once again, the space of this sociality that Adorno tends to neglect. Something like this is nevertheless hinted at in Adorno's foregrounding of music in his philosophy of modernity.

Prometeo negates its medium – music, which aims to be at home everywhere in the world. Like Adorno, Nono knows that the two spheres of musical experience must be thought of together. Nono suggests that the 'Walkman',

> makes it possible to understand and render comprehensible that sounds are not stable and transmitted on only one axis, but are in a situation of constant mobility in comparison to our [visual] perception, thus contributing to refine it... The [bourgeois] listening about which we spoke thus develops through modernity and inside it.

Prometeo 'reveals the space' insofar as the musical space comes into conflict with the space of the performance, as play without resolution; the 'composing [of]...

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[101] Adorno, T. W. 'Valéry Proust Museum', p.175.

dissonances'. *Prometeo* aims to affirm both its place, as semblance, and the non-place of the performance. This dual occupation of the same place is 'tragic' in the sense indicated above – a 'Tragedy *in* Listening', but also a 'Tragedy *about* Listening': about, that is, social space.[102]

That semblance is contradictory is to say that 'the artwork is here and is not here'; a place and no-place. Adorno recognises the attempted destruction of semblance in 'the most recent works', which are themselves works of semblance. Hence, the 'dialectic of modern art is largely that it wants to shake off its illusoriness like an animal trying to shake off its antlers.'[103] Adorno and Cacciari, with Goethe and against Schiller, want to affirm this sense of the tragic contradiction in art. According to Cacciari, the error of the prevailing Promethean humanism of the late eighteenth-century was to take the promise of reconciliation for granted:

> the romantic "prometheism" of the whole humanist tradition regarded [Prometheus] as not only the powerful voice of *technai*, but also as the one who brought to man the supreme *techné* that would enable him to liberate himself from divinity.[104]

Cacciari risks valorising the *im*-possibility of reconciliation. But Nono's *Prometeo* draws Cacciari into a more 'productive', though indeed mystical position. Can Prometheus be at once tragic and utopian, unreconciled and reconciling? Prometheus is the anti-tragedy. In the version told by Aeschylus (Cacciari relies upon Hesiod), Prometheus must wait thirteen generations to be released. The thirteen generations stand for a radically indeterminate and thus non-conciliatory time of waiting – not a long as versus a short time of waiting. Prometheus remains tragic, but not, we hope,

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[102] But does not music mark the death of tragedy? (which only interested Nietzsche insofar as it was *already* music). Monteverdi's 'Tragedy in Music', *Orfeo* – the rebirth of ancient tragedy in modern opera – is baroque melodrama. Opera is, writes Benjamin, 'the dissolution of *Trauerspiel*.' According to George Steiner, in 'the second half of the nineteenth century… opera puts forward a serious claim to the legacy of tragic drama.' Music cancels and includes the tragic: 'just as tragedy marks the transition from historical time to dramatic time, the *Trauerspiel* represents the transition from dramatic time to musical time.' Benjamin, W. *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, pp.211-2; '*Trauerspiel* and Tragedy', p.57. Steiner, George. *The Death of Tragedy* (London: Faber, 1961), p.284.

[103] Adorno, T. W. *Aesthetic Theory*, p.103.

[104] Cacciari, M. '*Verso Prometeo* / The Tragedy of Listening', in *Verso Prometeo*.

indefinitely. Marx regarded Prometheus as 'the most eminent saint and martyr in the philosophical calendar.'[105]

Prometeo initially appears to be weighed-down by these philosophical and intellectual themes, just as Nono's settings of political texts initially appear impossibly awkward. And yet – in both cases – Nono makes the impossible possible, because he knows how these 'programmes' each relate to music. And, 'I am only a musician by chance'. Nono knows that music stands in a specific position to address the problem of 'utopia'. Nono addresses this problem as tragic, *in* spatio-temporal listening. The texts of *Prometeo* remain inaudible. They are more like the theme and motive of the work (interestingly, some of the texts are read by the performers, but not set to music).

Utopia is neither expected nor relinquished in *Prometeo*. Its time, therefore, is neither the bad utopia of waiting without the awaited nor the bad utopia of merely expecting the awaited. There is, once again, a peculiar convergence of the temporal and the spatial. Nono was aware of this, with his dictum on the 'dissolution of normal time' *as* 'a non-geometrised space'. Perhaps *Prometeo* is a 'spatial' articulation of waiting in vain. Or, an expression of waiting in vain is already spatial. That waiting could and even must have a spatial character is not, it was suggested above, alien to the thought of Adorno. His late remark on 'the static character of films like Antonioni's *La Notte*' is prescient of a scene from *The Passenger*, in which the deceased reporter looks out into the desert: 'So still. A kind of waiting'.[106]

Ever since Thomas More's invention, utopia has been an imagined place. Cacciari worries that utopia is precisely the no-place of u-topia *as* place. There is, it was suggested, an equal and opposite danger of revealing and then simply affirming this no-place, to the detriment of utopia *as* place. U-topia *could* signify: no familiar place – but a place nonetheless. It could signify: happy place, eu-topia – happy in an unfamiliar and unprecedented sense. The thought and the politics of the utopian cannot do without place. The shift from space to time in the utopia literature cannot become absolute. No waiting without the awaited.[107]

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[105] Marx, K. 'The Difference Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature in General', in Livergood, Norman D. *Activity in Marx's Philosophy*, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967), p.62.
[106] Adorno, T. W. 'Transparencies on Film', in *The Culture Industry*, p.180.
[107] 'At the very beginning Thomas More designated utopia as a place, an island in the distant South Seas. The designation underwent changes later so that it left space and entered time.' Bloch, E. 'Something's Missing: A Discussion between Ernst Bloch and Theodor W. Adorno on the Contradictions of Utopian Longing', p.3.

5

The Expression of Waiting in Vain

I. Adorno

The Promise of Metaphysics

In the first chapter, it was suggested that the melancholy science of natural-history is a materialist-utopian philosophy of waiting. The retrospective projection of Adorno's reflections on 'waiting in vain' back onto the earlier work (including the 1932 lecture) is philologically justified by the reappearance of the idea of natural-history in his later work. The translator into English of 'The Idea of Natural History' contends that *Negative Dialectics* follows 'precisely the same plan' as the lecture – 'a critique of Heidegger is followed by the presentation of the central concepts of the form of the critique'. 'The Idea of Natural History' is, in this sense, an embryo of *Negative Dialectics* (as well as *Dialectic of Enlightenment*). This parallel is nevertheless limited, as we shall see, by the fact that the last 'model' of *Negative Dialectics* was motivated by an event that was not expected in July of 1932. Adorno's 'Meditations on Metaphysics' immediately follow the two sub-sections on natural-history.[1] The last part of *Negative Dialectics* is in that sense not prefigured in the lecture, but rather begins where the lecture left off.

At the same time, Adorno's later version of natural-history seems to proceed from the concluding remark of the earlier one. This philosophy is 'only an interpretation of certain fundamental elements of the materialist dialectic.'[2] In *Negative Dialectics*, Marx's mediation of nature and history is stressed alongside the mediations of Benjamin and Lukács (the latter two being relied upon exclusively in the 1932 lecture).[3] Adorno attempts that which he failed to demonstrate previously: a 'radical', 'ontological reorientation of the philosophy of history'. *Negative Dialectics* no longer

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[1] Hullot-Kentor, Robert. 'Introduction to Adorno's "Idea of Natural History"', in *Telos*, no.60, p.103.
[2] Adorno, T. W. 'The Idea of Natural History', p.124.
[3] Cf. Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.366-368.

employs this language, which belies the early influence of Heidegger. Adorno had acknowledged Heidegger's attempt to overcome historicism in *Being and Time* – 'false stasis and formalism have been eliminated' – only to retract this in his subsequent polemics. The later Adorno seeks a reorientation of the philosophy of history that is *not* ontological (though he stands by the lecture, which, 'in its broad outlines has retained its validity').[4] Nor can he depend upon philological sources, since that would not amount to a philosophical response at all. This was the problem with the 1932 lecture. Nor can it be a positivist sociology, since that would remain at the falsely descriptive level. The same applies to an anthropological approach – Adorno pits Marx against Feuerbach to this end, though not always consistently.[5] Adorno knows that *his* form of historical materialism, *however* materialist, must contend with metaphysics, both as its other and as (the problem of) its grounding. The idea of natural-history is equivalent to 'the transmutation of metaphysics into history'[6] – the problem being that, on turning the page of *Negative Dialectics*, we read that 'after Auschwitz',

> The capacity for metaphysics is crippled, because what occurred smashed the basis of the compatibility of speculative metaphysical thought with experience.[7]

This problem or crisis of metaphysics is not resolved by its transmutation into history so long as the nature of this transmutation remains obscure. The transmutation is already founded upon an original positing of metaphysics, according to a philosophy of history that is itself metaphysical. What is the nature of this positing, of this grounding? The transition to the 'Meditations on Metaphysics' leaves a tension both within *Negative Dialectics* and within the thought of Adorno as a whole, not least because the question of metaphysics, of (its) grounding, is the abiding question of Heidegger. In a sense, Adorno returns to Heidegger's problem, and not only to the problem of Heidegger. Adorno and Heidegger each contend that the question of metaphysics 'after' metaphysics is a question about time and history. More precisely still, this 'after' concerns a question about waiting.

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[4] Adorno. T. W. *History and Freedom*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge: Polity, 2006), p.124. Hullot-Kentor is thus wrong to suggest, on the basis that it was published posthumously, that Adorno had disowned the lecture.
[5] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.347-351.
[6] Ibid. pp.351-353.
[7] Ibid. pp.354-358.

Why is 'the capacity for metaphysics crippled' after Auschwitz? Metaphysics is no *Hinterwelt* for Adorno. The tradition of philosophical metaphysics is bound to history and culture:

> That it could happen in the midst of all the traditions of philosophy, art and the enlightening sciences, says more than merely that these, as the spirit, were not capable of seizing and changing human beings. In those branches themselves, in the emphatic claim of their autarky, dwells untruth. All culture after Auschwitz, including its urgent critique, is garbage.[8]

Adorno problematically implies that the tradition of metaphysics has been historically European – German even. The term 'midst' signifies a temporal *and* spatial proximity where these 'enlightening' forces are concerned. The latter proximity is an especially fraught notion given that other catastrophes in which Europe has been culpable have occurred, and continue to occur, outside of its geographical boundaries. In his 1965 *Metaphysics* lectures, Adorno acknowledges the contemporary situations in Vietnam and in South Africa, alongside the 'word symbol' of Auschwitz, which nevertheless remains 'the most symbolic thing of all'.[9]

Adorno privileges an enlightened, historical moment that coincides with the historical moment of the Enlightenment – represented, paradigmatically, in the figures of Kant, Hegel and Marx. This moment was, of course, an unfulfilled promise. Philosophy 'remains alive because the moment of its realization was missed.'[10] This promise is tested after Auschwitz, for the promise is needed more than ever in the moment of its being broken. An equivocation over this promise of metaphysics is evident from Adorno's shift of emphasis from each of the twelve Meditations to the next. Adorno writes that 'culture', not metaphysics, is 'garbage'. And yet 'metaphysics is fused with culture'.[11] Is not metaphysics then garbage? Adorno is careful not to damn metaphysics, not least because he has not fully worked-out what will take its place. It is precisely Adorno's hint of what *must* that will be followed up here and related back to the interpretations of waiting in vain in the previous chapters.

To damn metaphysics – and not simply negate it abstractly, in the sense of positivism – would already amount to a metaphysical judgement. Both the promise and the disappointment arising from its being broken are metaphysical. For the promise is

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[8] Ibid. pp.358-361. Translation amended.
[9] Adorno, T. W. *Metaphysics: Concept and Problems*, p.101; p.130. Is the problem, therefore, that Adorno is simply too generous about these enlightening traditions, at work within urbanised Germany? Is he too generous about (*its*) urbanisation, and about enlightenment as such, given his thesis on its dialectic?
[10] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.15-16.
[11] Ibid. pp.358-361.

itself metaphysics. This is the underlying thesis of Adorno's contemporaneous lecture course. Adorno makes two strategic decisions in these lectures. The first is to offer an introductory, though fundamental definition. For, *what* is it that is crippled? The second decision is to generalise the tradition of metaphysics under one name: 'metaphysics began with Aristotle'.[12] Like Heidegger, Adorno acknowledges that Aristotle never used this title, but that he remains its author in spirit. Adorno faults Heidegger for his violent interpretations of Aristotle, but Adorno's interpretation is already mediated through the violent Hegelian interpretation of Eduard Zeller.[13]

Adorno is at one with Heidegger on the question of the origins of metaphysics, when he states that, in contrast to Aristotle, Plato bequeathed a dualism to philosophy. The 'Ideas' are 'the true, the One, the essential', whereas 'the world of the senses' is 'absolutely without being'. Plato is the first metaphysician *only* to the extent that he asks about 'the cause of all things'. The ideas are 'the cause of appearances'. Adorno recognises the 'profound and lasting influence' of Plato upon 'later western philosophy'. But he does not, here at least, take up Nietzsche's thesis on the complicity between Platonism, Judeo-Christian modernity and nihilism.[14] Whereas, for Heidegger, Nietzsche's account of nihilism *is* the problem and history of metaphysics, Nietzsche included.

Adorno and Heidegger are also in some agreement about a fall or crisis of metaphysics in the age of modernity, even though modernity is construed in different ways. For Heidegger, the crisis is that of modernity itself, whereas for Adorno, the crisis emerges in the wake of a specific event of modernity. There is fatalistic sense in which Auschwitz was always coming, nevertheless – that Auschwitz is another name for modernity – when Adorno and Horkheimer suggest that anti-Semitism is constitutive of the structure of (the dialectic of) enlightenment itself.[15] The bourgeois *ratio* must eliminate the principle of non-identity, as represented in the non-representable absolute, if it is to actualise its principle of identity *as* domination. If the dialectic of enlightenment is modernity then modernity is itself, as it is in Heidegger, the problem – for Heidegger.

According to Adorno, Aristotle attempted to mediate where Plato proposed only a dualism. As a consequence, Plato's philosophy remains within the mythic, cyclical

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[12] Adorno, T. W. *Metaphysics*, p.15.
[13] Ibid. p.24.
[14] Ibid. pp.15-16.
[15] Cf. Rabinbach, A. 'Why Were the Jews Sacrificed?: The Place of Anti-Semitism in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*' in *New German Critique*, no.81 (Autumn, 2000), pp.49-64.

time of the Greek religion. Platonism is not metaphysics proper, the thinking of the whole. The Ideas, which have no cause in the sensuous, must have sensuousness conferred upon them extrinsically, in order to individuate them *as* ideas. Platonism is late polytheism. Aristotle, by contrast, attempts to mediate the divine – ultimately, God – and humanity. All of the metaphysical systems of Western philosophy attempt to succeed where Aristotle failed.

Mediation is becoming. In Plato, the first cause is the prototypical 'idea' – meaning that the true Being is non-temporal – whereas, in Aristotle, the first cause is always already manifest *in* sensuous matter, '*hyle* [ὕλη]', as its final form, '*morphe* [μορφή]'. Being is (in) becoming:

> this world of sensible appearance is teleologically oriented towards these ideas, or pure possibilities [*reinen Möglichkeiten*], which are supposed to be contained within them. In Aristotle there is an expression for this relationship of the ideas or possibilities to the existent: ἓν κατὰ πολλῶν: that is to say, the One in the Many.[16]

Pure possibility is more precisely potentiality (or ἐντελέχεια). The actualisation of potentiality is not a possibility, but a certainty. It is the question of 'when?' and not 'if?' Aristotle's *Metaphysics* is full of promise, in the fullest sense of the word, even though it does not yet bear a historical, let alone utopian self-consciousness. Metaphysics, mediation towards the highest, is promise. Adorno's history of ancient philosophy is already Aristotelian. Aristotle inaugurates the promise.

Adorno thus thinks of the promise of metaphysics in terms of history, including the history of philosophy. The 'proposition, that movement is the realization of the possible, already implies the Hegelian thesis of history as progress in the consciousness of freedom.' Of course, the promise is actualised discontinuously. The dialectic of enlightenment is the dialectic of promise and broken promise; progress and regress in the consciousness of freedom and unfreedom. Promise already has a maximal and a minimal signification: expectation and hope respectively. In the 'Meditations', hope, let alone expectation, is now thrown into question. This is why Adorno considers the possibility of waiting in vain; the possibility of impossibility.

The reason that Aristotle fails in his mediation is that he merely displaces the problem of the Many and the One from the first to the final cause, which is just as non-temporal as the Platonic forms. This problem is initially muted in Adorno's account of metaphysics, but it becomes louder. There must be something that unifies all final

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[16] Adorno, T. W. *Metaphysics*, p.33.

forms, something final that is not itself a form – a mover, since All is Becoming, that is not itself moved. As Adorno puts it,

> everything that has not evolved or become what it is, and is therefore the oldest thing, which has always existed, is regarded as the condition of the possibility of any becoming – an idea taken over directly from Aristotle by Hegel; and in which the final cause, that is, the divinity, is seen as the 'unmoved mover' of all things. Aristotle's famous formulation of this doctrine of the unmoved mover is ἀκίνητον κινοῦν.[17]

The unmoved mover cannot be seen in itself but (only) in what (it) moves, as the One in the Many. What if what moves, seen historically, is catastrophic? At one point in his lectures, Adorno defines the 'principle of inertia' as 'radically evil'.[18] What kind of absolute are we talking about in this case, if we may continue to speak of the absolute *at all*? After Auschwitz, it 'can no longer be asserted that the immutable [*das Unveränderliche*] would be the truth and what moves, the transient, would be appearance [*Schein*]'.[19] Again, Adorno does not leap to conclusions about the end of metaphysics: 'historical compassion... prevents one from presupposing such an immutability, and thus changes the contents of metaphysics.'[20]

Auschwitz puts an end, Adorno suggests, to expectant promise. This promise applies to history as much as it does to the individual. Adorno draws upon the traditional metaphysical idea that the individual is a microcosm of the whole. The individual is a whole in itself (the Many in the One). This is a prominent idea of Neoplatonism. It recurs in Kant, as well as in Goethe and in his interpreters. These Goetheans include Benjamin, Dilthey and, indirectly, Heidegger.

Adorno reads Heidegger's 'Being-towards-death' as a desperate attempt to confer meaning upon that which has become meaningless – and not, as Heidegger sees it, as the tragic recognition of the meaninglessness of traditional metaphysics itself. There is a philosophical-modernist struggle for contemporaneity between Heidegger and Adorno:

> The current metaphysics of death is nothing but the powerless solace of society over the fact that through social transformations, human beings came to be deprived of what was once supposed to have made death bearable to them, the feeling of its epic unity with the rounded life.[21]

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[17] Ibid. p.40.
[18] Ibid. p.115.
[19] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.354-358.
[20] Adorno, T. W. *Metaphysics*, p.100.
[21] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.361-366.

Adorno does not reject the tradition of death metaphysics (and this will be crucial for his *comparison* to Heidegger). He upholds it, negatively, with the suggestion that the horrific nature of death in the camps has permanently unsettled the epic unity of a life that ends meaningfully in death – not only for the victims and survivors, but, indirectly, for all who belong to the history that made the camps possible:

> What the sadists in the camps told their victims: tomorrow you will be smoke rising from these chimneys into the sky, names the indifference of the life of every individual, which history is moving towards.[22]

The knowledge of death as the end of life, a classical humanist distinction between human and animal, underlies what Adorno means by 'metaphysical experience'. After Aristotle, metaphysics is nothing if it is not experienced.[23] Otherwise, it remains religion or idealism alone.

Adorno seems to have Benjamin's 'The Storyteller' in mind, when he writes that, 'Death and history, particularly the collective one of the category of the individual [*Individuum*], form a constellation.'[24] Adorno emphasises the individual death – death and individuation – more than does Benjamin, for whom death is a generational and hence collective concern.[25] Adorno's worry about the fate of the individual explains some of his sensitivity towards Heidegger's philosophy of death. It might be supposed that a Hegelian-Marxist would accuse Heidegger of individualism. Adorno does the opposite. The existential categories are formal-transcendental, and to that extent 'impersonal'.[26] Given that Adorno rejects the responses to the 'fall' of metaphysics in dialectical (scientific) materialism, traditional historical materialism, philosophical positivism and Heideggerian nihilism, what, in that case, is his response?

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[22] Ibid. pp.354-358.

[23] In notes for his third lecture, Adorno writes, '*The entwinement of metaphysics with thought, inaugurates so emphatically by Aristotle in opposing hylozoism, is irrevocable.*' *Metaphysics*, p.14.

[24] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.361-366.

[25] Storytelling overcomes the death of the generation by transmitting experience to the next generation. In his 1921 essay on *Elective Affinities*, Benjamin suggests that Goethe had seen the folly of his paganism in the imperative for the redemption of all the dead. Where Adorno points in the direction of a metaphysics of dying, Benjamin tends towards a metaphysics of the dead, including the unborn.
Benjamin, W. 'Goethe's Elective Affinities', trans. Stanley Corngold, in *Selected Writings*, vol.1, p.314.

[26] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.275-277.

After Metaphysics?

Does not Adorno witness in concrete history that which was already declared philosophically decades before? As Lacoue-Labarthe put this: 'God died at Auschwitz.'[27] Adorno, who has much to say about death and Auschwitz, refrains from saying this, in so many words. But he does anticipate and refute the charge of nihilism: 'Philosophy need not do with the word any more'.[28] Adorno's declaration is complicated by the fact that he does not distinguish between passive and active nihilism (or, he considers them identical) and because his most original response to the problem of metaphysics constitutes – according to this interpretation – a post-active-nihilism.

Having outwardly excluded nihilism, Adorno retreats into the familiar territory of Kant. That four of the twelve Meditations revolve around Kant suggests, along with the lengthy 'Metacritique of Practical Reason', that Adorno regards him as occupying the pinnacle of the metaphysical tradition. The problem of metaphysics is, in its purely philosophical form, a Kantian problem, a problem after Kant. If metaphysics has been put into question historically then an engagement with the thinker that put metaphysics into question structurally – for whom metaphysics *is* constitutively questionable – would seem inevitable.

Adorno's position on Kant is, on the surface, ambivalent, because, whilst Kant refuses an affirmative absolute, thus siding with the negative, he thereby risks affirming that refusal absolutely. Kant's 'philosophy circles, probably just as every other one does by the way, around the ontological proof of God. With magnificent ambiguity, he left his own position open.' At the same time, the 'authority of the Kantian concept of truth became terroristic with the ban on thinking the absolute'.[29] Adorno is aware of the problem of the regressive infinity (and thus nihilism) within Kant's critique of pure reason. But this awareness tends to get lost in a focus upon the third antinomy alone.

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[27] Lacoue-Labarthe, P. *Heidegger, Art and Politics*, trans. Chris Turner (Oxford University Press, 1990), p.43.

[28] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.369-374. Adorno associates contemporary nihilism with Heidegger's 'destruction'. The 'destruction of the ontological tradition' (of metaphysics) would become its de-construction; the remembrance of what has been forgotten of Being. Adorno nevertheless considers Heidegger's initial conception to have 'led directly to barbarism and fascism'. Adorno worries about destruction *as such*. 'Cultural critique and barbarism are not without a certain understanding'. Is this the same culture that Adorno brands as garbage? Is all destruction thereby barbaric? Or is not destruction, as culture critique, the negation of the negation? Adorno, T. W. *Metaphysics*, p.127.

[29] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.377-382.

Kant's doctrine of the *mundus intelligibilis* is the prism through which Adorno views Kantian metaphysics as a whole. According to Adorno, Aristotle's 'doctrine of immutability... has survived throughout the history of metaphysics, to the point that it became the subject of Kant's third antinomy.'[30] The problem of 'the intelligible character' is, for Adorno, the problem of the promise of metaphysics.

Like Schelling, Adorno observes that the third antinomy is doomed to a dualism of nature and spirit because Kant remained tied to the Rationalist paradigm of causality from which he initially sought to *free* philosophy. The unconditioned, freedom, cannot be permitted into the conditioned series except through a notion of pre-established harmony, an act of God (see chapter 1). Kant employs a concept of the intelligible character in his practical philosophy that cannot have been derived from his theoretical work. The first *Critique* could only claim that 'freedom is at least *not incompatible with* nature'. It did not show how they *are* compatible.[31] As Adorno puts it,

> According to the critique of reason, this [spontaneity] could no more be spoken of positively than the transcendental causes of the phenomena of external senses, while without the intelligible character, the moral act in what is empirical, the effect on this – and thereby morality – would be impossible.[32]

Transcendental causes can more readily be shown to be necessary theoretically than practically. It is easier to describe and thus posit the unity of experience in terms of the former than in terms of the latter – this being the neo-Kantian distinction between validity and value; the 'is' and the 'ought'. The problem is that of what and how much can be transcendentally deduced from the unity of experience (that is, *which* unity?).

Adorno nevertheless stays with Kant's paradigm of freedom, to the extent that the doctrine of the intelligible remains the sole condition of its possibility. Otherwise freedom is simply arbitrary (Hume) or simply necessary (Leibniz, Spinoza) – not true freedom in either case. Adorno is not interested in grounding the intelligible character in theoretical philosophy *at all* – by proposing a new paradigm of causality, for instance. The theoretical cannot ground the moral. Adorno argues *for* the intelligible character, of which 'there is nothing better amongst human beings', in another way. In order to do so, he takes up the metaphysical and Kantian 'unity of the person' as being 'the location of the doctrine of the intelligible', and then interprets this unity as the speculative whole of *Erfahrung*, not the unity of a formal structure.

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[30] Adorno, T. W. *Metaphysics*, p.58.
[31] Kant, I. *Critique of Pure Reason*, A558/B586, p.546.
[32] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.283-287.

Kant's conception of freedom is formalistic because it fails to mediate the empirical with the pure consciousness. His 'critique of Hume's personality is rigidified into a principle beyond individual persons. He grasps the unity of consciousness independent of every experience.'[33] Adorno once again conflates the unity of experience with the experience of the 'person'. He is left with an individualism that he does not want – the result of combining the metaphysical whole with a proto-vitalist emphasis upon lived experience (in a manner that contradicts Hegelian *Erfahrung*). This concept of experience is, however, Adorno's way of mediating the empirical with the intelligible. It moves in the opposite direction to Kant's attempted mediation. Rather than the intelligible character being the condition for the possibility of the unity of individual experience, the unity of individual experience is now the empirical ground for the possibility of the intelligible character:

> If one dared to wager as to what the Kantian X of the intelligible character owes its true content, which maintained itself against the total indeterminacy of the aporetic concept, it would probably be the historically most advanced, periodically flaring, swiftly fading consciousness, which is inherent in the impulse to do the right thing. It is the concrete, intermittent anticipation [*Vorwegnahme*] of the possibility, neither alien to human beings nor identical with them.

Adorno's interpretation of the intelligible character is experimental. Can what is posited out of experience, the intelligible 'X', simultaneously be the condition for the possibility of that same experience? Another problem is that the 'impulse to do the right thing' looks too existential for Kant, for whom doing the right thing is a matter of rational choice, not impulse. Where is reason here? Adorno seems to respond that the 'impulse' does not come *ex nihilo*, existentially, but is instead given as a historical possibility – both as a possibility *in* history and as a possibility *of* history. The right thing is the right history and is therefore social as well as individual (the unity of the social as the unity of 'persons'). Adorno does not dismiss Kantian reason. He displaces it onto the right history, which flares up intermittently – from out of the wrong history, presumably, because reason is (bound to) rationality – as the 'anticipation' of (its own) 'possibility'. Adorno thus conceives of a non-transcendent absolute in Aristotelian-Hegelian terms: 'the intelligible character is, like freedom, something becoming.'[34]

Adorno attempts to ground the actuality of metaphysical experience upon the experience of the right history, in an almost inductive manner. The turn of the

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[33] Ibid. pp.287-292.
[34] Ibid. pp.292-294.

nineteenth century (up to 1848?) experienced this moment of anticipation. Adorno reads Kant as a key figure on the stage of this moment of promise, the revolutionary promise of maturity. Adorno's own experience of – political – anticipation was no doubt formed during the 1920s. However intermittent it may be, metaphysical experience can only be spoken of in relation to a metaphysically grounded (or inflected) *and* materialist philosophy of history (given the problem of inductive arguments, for positivism). Adorno's philosophy of history is Hegelian to the extent that it sees a ruse of reason at work in it, however discontinuously – *until* Auschwitz. But Adorno does not follow Hegel's systematic grounding of history: the 'doctrine of the positive negation, is precisely and strictly the point at which I refuse to follow Hegel.'[35] Adorno's metaphysics of history still remains to be explained, therefore, since the 'positive negation' is the very possibility of Hegel's history of progressive world-spirit. In *Negative Dialectics*, Adorno believes that he can insert his immanent critique of Kantian freedom into Hegel's 'history as progress in the consciousness of freedom'. It is true that Adorno shares with Hegel a critique of formal freedom in Kant. But for Hegel, the liberal paradigm of individual freedom remains formal. Hegel's attempted sublation of transcendental Idealism even proceeded, in the genesis of his thought, from an objection to negative freedom.

The 'Metacritique of Practical Reason' undergoes a two-pronged auto-critique in the 'Meditations on Metaphysics': (1) If the anticipation of the intelligible character, metaphysical experience, is derived from a history of its anticipations – those of the historically most advanced periods – then this anticipation will have to withstand the actuality of the least historically advanced, barbaric periods. Adorno is consistent when he writes that metaphysical experience, not metaphysics *as such*, is crippled after Auschwitz, to the extent that we are living though an age of immaturity. 'After Auschwitz' might then connote a historical phase, one that could be worked-through 'metaphysically'. Yet this word-symbol is of such magnitude for Adorno that it must 'transform the content of metaphysics' *itself*, including the metaphysics of history. This 'name stands for something unthinkable beyond the unthinkable, namely, a whole historical phase.'[36] Hence, (2) what of the intelligible world, the transcendental 'rationalisation' of the unmoved-mover? What of the promise of metaphysics, and what of messianic promise?

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[35] Adorno, T. W. *Metaphysics*, p.144.
[36] Ibid. p.116.

Adorno knows that the crisis of metaphysics includes Kantian metaphysics. His response, in the last Meditation, goes under the heading of 'Self-reflection of Dialectics'. If dialectics is prefigured in the Transcendental Dialectic (as Adorno contends) then dialectics is Kantian metaphysics and the reflection of dialectics is the meditation on metaphysics. A comparable notion is at stake in Adorno's *meta*-critique of practical reason. The important question therefore concerns the meaning and possibility of this reflection, since this is what is supposed to be extra-metaphysical. Adorno disappointingly displaces the problem. For this paradigm of reflection is already Kantian (or, neo-Fichtean). In his return to the *mundus intelligibilis*, in the eighth Meditation, Adorno suggests that the resources for its retrieval are already contained *within* the Transcendental Dialectic, the 'logic of appearance', *as* proto-negative dialectics: 'That is why the salvation of appearance [*Schein*], the object of aesthetics, has its incomparable metaphysical relevance.'[37] This contradicts Adorno's previous attempt to ground the metaphysical experience of the intelligible character outside of Kantian Idealism. And yet, at least Kant *attempted to ground it*, in the Dialectic itself. Adorno invites the problem of the infinite regress in the antinomical structure of pure reason. In isolating the third antinomy, Adorno perhaps loses sight of its place in the overall *problematic* of the Dialectic. Of course, Adorno might be seeking to revive Kantian reason through his heterodox interpretation of the intelligible character. But in that case, why return to the 'logic of appearance'? The intelligible must appear, as semblance. But this semblance is subject to an anterior antinomy *that guarantees that it must never appear.*

As was seen, the younger Benjamin was attentive to the problem of the regressive infinity in Kantian metaphysics. Adorno's thesis that 'metaphysics migrates into micrology' amounts to a restatement of his dissonant nominalism, the 'anti-system' modelled upon Benjamin's constellational monad and Weber's ideal-type. Benjamin's Schellingian-materialist pantheism lives on in Adorno's micrology, to the extent that the micro has any claim upon the macro, even, or especially, negatively. Adorno's retrieval of the intelligible character through (meta-) reflection nevertheless remains, in much of *Negative Dialectics*, something of a performative contradiction. Adorno replaces that which has fallen, Kantian metaphysics, with more of the same Kantian metaphysics. Adorno's ambivalence over Kant becomes fixed into a Kantian antinomy of its own, which is similarly assumed to be productive ('given to us as a problem'). But the antimony of the antinomy is, surely, a mere tautology. The sense of inertia – precisely

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[37] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.382-386.

that which Adorno wants to resist – is exacerbated by Adorno's nostalgic presentation of the quandary. Metaphysics is crippled, but only metaphysics has the cure. Adorno expresses a sense of loss for a metaphysical experience that, perhaps, never was. The infinite task of reason becomes *Melancholia* and not *Trauer*.

Fortunately, aside from the micrology, the Kantian-Romantic response is not Adorno's only response to the problem of metaphysics. 'Happiness and Waiting in Vain' appears as something of a possibility amidst the seeming impossibility of the 'Meditations'. The section is nevertheless intimately connected to Adorno's overall problematic. The crisis of metaphysics is a crisis of promise. Kant's 'kingdom of ends' becomes the bad utopia of waiting in vain for an end that we already take to be beyond us in advance. The problem of the regressive infinity is, it was suggested, intimately connected to the problem of the (Aristotelian) temporal series of conditions (see chapter 3).[38]

In *Minima Moralia*, Adorno defines the experience of this stretch of time into infinity as boredom. In-finite, because this time is alienated from finite experience. As a form of alienation, this boredom is no benign idleness:

> The man for whom time stretches out painfully is one waiting in vain [*der Wartet vergeblich*], disappointed at not finding tomorrow already continuing yesterday.[39]

In *Negative Dialectics*, the boredom of 'waiting in vain' is explicitly related to the problem of metaphysics. Art 'has demonstrated' the condition of waiting in vain in the absence of metaphysical expectation. Art does not tautologically reproduce waiting in vain however: in *expressing* (it), art says something else. In *Aesthetic Theory*, expression is closely related to mimesis, which is equally productive and poetic. The expression of meaninglessness is not abstractly negative for Adorno; a lament to what has been lost. It is the reverse: 'happiness' – hence the Proustian example (which is admittedly Romantic). In his concluding lecture on metaphysics, and in contrast to the concluding Meditation (the very end of *Negative Dialectics*), Adorno says that 'waiting in vain' is 'no doubt the form [*Gestalt*] in which metaphysical experience manifests itself most strongly to us.'[40] There can, it seems, be no doubt that 'waiting in vain' is central to Adorno's later work.

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[38] Kant, I. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, ed. Mary Gregor (Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp.43-4.
[39] Adorno, T. W. *Minima Moralia*, p.175.
[40] Adorno, T. W. *Metaphysics*, p.143.

How can waiting in vain name *both* unhappy boredom *and* the happiness of metaphysical experience? This transformation is the work of (its) expression. In the lectures, it is the work of the '*Gestalt*', as *Gestaltung*. As Adorno says of Beethoven's 'expansive type', empty time is 'shaped', albeit as the semblance of what a fulfilled time *could be*. As semblance of the awaited, not the awaited of itself, anticipation is here intermittent. Perhaps Adorno's 'intermittent anticipation' (the intelligible 'X') pertains to the nature of the anticipation more than it does to the discontinuity of historical progress. Hence: 'Waiting in vain does not vouchsafe what the expectation aims at, but reflects the condition, which has its measure in the denial.' Reflection takes on a different sense to Kantian-Romantic reflection here. It is as tragic as it is ironic, since it acknowledges what it is denying for the sake of its knowledge (in the sense of the 'tragic irony' explored in chapters 3 & 4). An expression of waiting in vain does not negate anticipation, but is instead a new kind of anticipation. The expression of waiting in vain is original, not weakened anticipation. Adorno will not use the terminology of 'origin' (because of Heidegger), but there is an implicit notion of a temporalisation of possibility in his concept of expression – if only as a negation of 'detemporalisation'. As with Benjamin's 'weak messianic force', weakness is not a comparative to some former strength, in the case of *intermittent* anticipation. This is because fulfilled anticipation has not been realised – traditional (Aristotelian) metaphysics even blocked the possibility of its realisation by positing its necessity dogmatically, outside of experience. Such anticipation can only be produced from the standpoint of consciousness, Dasein (and in *this* sense, Kant was *right*).

A tension nevertheless remains between Benjamin's messianism, at work within Adorno's thought, and Adorno's late confrontation with metaphysics hitherto, including neo-Kantian metaphysics. The problem of waiting in vain is an extension of the radical indeterminacy of the 'when?' into the 'if?' This is why we ask, 'is that all?' But given that the 'expression' is not *itself* in vain, Adorno does retain a moment of promise, of hope, in his – quasi-messianic – form of waiting. In the 'Finale' to *Minima Moralia*, Adorno acknowledges the necessity of the internal contradiction of impossibility and possibility arising from this philosophical messianism. On the one hand,

> The only philosophy which can be practised in the face of despair is the attempt to contemplate all things as they would present themselves from the standpoint of redemption.

But on the other hand, this possibility remains,

> the utterly impossible thing, because it presupposes a standpoint removed, even though by a hair's breadth, from the scope of existence, whereas we well know that any possible knowledge must not only be wrested from what is, if it shall hold good, but is also marked, for this very reason, by the same distortion and indigence which it seeks to escape.

Adorno does not resolve this antinomy, but rather, again in a Kantian vein, takes the 'as if' to be productive, *a priori*, thus siding with possibility against impossibility – regulatively: the 'question of the reality or unreality of redemption hardly itself matters'. Taubes and Agamben have taken exception to Adorno's 'Finale'.[41] But the *real* problem of Adorno's formulation is applicable to these thinkers to an even greater extent: the assumption of 'the messianic light' itself.[42] And unlike Agamben, Adorno internalises this problem, however inconclusively, into his 'Meditations'. Agamben gives no consideration to the 'Meditations', to 'waiting in vain' in particular, which is all the more messianic *because* it is, as Agamben says, 'non-messianic'. Adorno's extension of the 'when?' into the 'if?' sharpens the problem and meaning of an *expression* of waiting in vain as *not* in vain.

The expression of waiting in vain shares a sense of promise, as becoming-waiting, with the traditional idea of metaphysics, but without being traditional. This intermittent promise would even be metaphysical for the first time. It would be, as Adorno puts it, 'solidaristic with metaphysics in the moment of [its] fall'.[43] The expression of waiting in vain can therefore be understood as Adorno's *critique* of anticipation in the intelligible character. This 'changes the contents of metaphysics itself'. The genitive in the expression *of* waiting in vain functions in both ways. An expression of waiting in vain is not identical with waiting in vain, and in a crucial sense opposes it. This is the moment of messianic hope (against all hope) that is to be found in much philosophical messianism. But insofar as such messianism does not consider the relation to the second aspect of the genitive, it remains, in the last instance, overdetermined by traditional-theological metaphysics (as Benjamin himself ruefully remarks, the theological tradition is 'wizened and has to keep out of sight').[44] This is what is new about Adorno's late expression of waiting in vain. For the expression is *of* waiting in vain in the sense of belonging to waiting in vain. There is something *of*

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[41] Cf. Introduction, p.2, n.4.
[42] Adorno, T. W. *Minima Moralia*, p.247.
[43] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, pp.397-400.
[44] Benjamin, W. 'Theses on the Philosophy of History', in *Illuminations*, p.245.

waiting in vain *in* the expression. The expression is a *kind* of waiting, the mediating event of waiting in vain 'into' the awaited.

It was suggested in the previous four chapters that the nature of this mediating event be elucidated by way of a musical philosophy, or a philosophy of the 'musical'. The '*divertissement*' of musical time and the 'bad utopia' of musical space each imply waiting in vain. But musical dissonance names its expression, and, as musical, is another kind of waiting. It is an-other waiting as not the re-presenting willing of some-thing, nor of no-nothing. At the same time, it is both waiting and willing. The expression of waiting in vain was equally understood as a mimesis of detemporalisation, taking the example of Nono's modern music. This 'tragic ironic' mimesis is as spatial as it is temporal.

The meaning and possibility of the expression of waiting in vain nevertheless remains somewhat philosophically under-articulated (in the last two chapters, the means of argumentation was not purely philosophical, but also proceeded by way of a critique of *Prometeo*). As was suggested, the recourse to a post-Idealist idea of natural-history only remains coherent if its metaphysical grounding is confronted. So far as the other chapters are concerned, the 'anti-metaphysical' thinking of the tragic might risk the wishful thinking associated with traditional philosophical messianism. This remains equally the case within Heidegger's *active* nihilism – as he increasingly comes to realise. Some of the results of Heidegger's auto-critique can help to philosophically substantiate Adorno's expression of waiting in vain.

II. Heidegger

The Fundamental Attunement

The 'fundamental attunement [*Grundstimmung*]' of 'profound boredom', which Heidegger introduces in *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, can initially be read in terms of the 'fundamental state-of-mind' of *Being and Time*: '*Angst*'.[45] This shift in terminology anticipates a series of shifts in Heidegger's philosophy at this time, amounting to a sustained critique of the book that had brought him notoriety (as early as

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[45] Heidegger, M. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, p.74; Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, p.228. Translation amended.

1928, Heidegger would report to Karl Jaspers, 'I no longer think of the fact that a short while ago I wrote a so-called book').[46]

In *Being and Time*, state-of-mind ('*Befindlichkeit*': literally, how Dasein finds itself) is 'a fundamental *existentiale*'. For, 'in every case Dasein always has some mood [*gestimmt ist*]' – especially, as we shall see, in the 'pallid, evenly balanced lack of mood [*Ungestimmtheit*].'[47] In the quasi-transcendental terms of *Being and Time*, state-of-mind is the condition for the possibility of '*Stimmung*', mood. In *The Fundamental Concepts*, however, it is '*Grundstimmung*' that is fundamental, or grounding, without being a formal-transcendental ground. The fundamental attunement signals a departure from the latent (neo-) Kantianism of *Being and Time*, recognised by Adorno in his 1932 lecture.[48] Heidegger's *existentiale* had performed the function of a category. This was not (ostensibly) the Kantian category, for it was intended to elude the formal-transcendental structure of Kantian (and all post-Cartesian) metaphysics (of subject-object). Judging from the *The Fundamental Concepts*, Heidegger now doubts whether this attempt was successful. Heidegger's response is to radicalise state-of-mind *into* the fundamental attunement. In what sense is this a radicalisation? And how does it address the problem of formalism, and hence history?

Heidegger is drawn to the twofold sense of *Stimmung* as mood and as attunement, in the sense of a relation (as, paradigmatically, the tuning of a musical interval). Unlike state-of-mind, there can be no attunement *in general*: 'there is not merely one single attunement, but several'. This is because attunement is already a manner of being-in-the-world, not a formal condition of its possibility: 'An attunement is a way, not merely a form or mode, but a way.' There are profound consequences to Heidegger's foregrounding of the fundamental attunement, within and beyond his thought.

Adorno consistently accuses Heidegger of idealism, for the reason that the transcendental structure of Dasein, including the category of historicity, is foundationalist and thus non-historical. Heidegger naturalises the historical structure of Dasein. Existence becomes the timeless ground of time, or Dasein's self-temporalisation. Adorno's critique is problematic for two reasons: (1) A historically attentive reading of *Being and Time* would suggest that anxiety *becomes* fundamental in accordance with the history (or, fate) *of* metaphysical modernity. The philosophy of

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[46] Heidegger to Jaspers, September 24, 1928. Cited in: Safranski, R. *Martin Heidegger*, trans. Ewald Oders (Harvard University Press, 1998), p.190.
[47] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, pp.72-3.
[48] Adorno, T. W. 'The Idea of Natural History', p.112.

history in *Being and Time* short-circuits this reading to a great extent, because the *existentiale* is, *as* a 'category', anachronistically projected into the having-been. If positive religion and metaphysics excluded, and continue to exclude, an authentic attunement of *Angst*, then authentic 'historizing' was, and remains, an impossibility – even for those untimely poets and thinkers. (2) Adorno's principle objection is that Heidegger repeats neo-Kantian historicism along with its epistemology ('critical idealism').[49] This leads to an impotence of critical history.[50] But does Adorno's alternative philosophy of history succeed in overcoming neo-Kantianism, given the problems encountered above? This is once again the conflict between existence and history, ontology and dialectics, that is represented in the conflict between Heidegger and Adorno. Does history ground existence or does existence ground history?

The Fundamental Concepts lectures already anticipate some of Adorno's criticisms, and point towards responses that both resonate with and challenge Adorno's alternatives. For the re-interpretation of state-of-mind as attunement impinges directly upon the twofold problem of formalism and history. Since the fundamental attunement is not formal-transcendental, Heidegger must choose *one* fundamental attunement, of *today*: 'Profound boredom is the fundamental attunement of our contemporary Dasein'. As Miguel de Beistegui has observed, the 'fundamental disposition' of profound boredom renders the lecture-course an eminently transitional work (the first work, I suggest, of Heidegger's 'turning'), both within the genesis of Heidegger's thought and within the structure of that thought. De Beistegui calls (the problem of) this transition: 'Between Existence and History'.[51] Heidegger must support his claim for *the*

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[49] Adorno, T. W. 'The Idea of Natural History', p.112. Cf. *Negative Dialectics*, p.69.

[50] It should be noted that, whereas Adorno continues to view history as science, in an expanded sense, the science of history is only a sub-category of Heidegger's philosophy of history – a consequence of the recent *Lebensphilosophie* critiques of historicism. Heidegger's recourse to Dilthey does not help him in this regard, Adorno suggests, because *his* version of history is just as vacuous as Rickert's: 'Dilthey's attempt at an historical ontology ran aground because he did not engage facticity with sufficient seriousness.'

[51] De Beistegui rightly flags-up the central 'tension' of the lecture-course, between a concept of existence whose essence is 'pure time' and one whose essence is already 'subordinated to a task which is historical in nature'. For, 'insofar as *Being and Time* has already identified the "fundamental meaning" of Dasein as temporality... why must we begin to search for the fundamental meaning of *our contemporary* Dasein?' De Beistegui also acknowledges that 'the solution to this tension... will be found only when Heidegger will reformulate the project of the question concerning the *sense* of being and transform it into the question concerning the *history* of being.' The demonstration of this move is ultimately confused, however. As with Löwith's critique of Heidegger, de Beistegui tends to side with the individual and apolitical Dasein of

fundamental attunement of contemporary Dasein with a philosophy of history that goes beyond the formal historicity of *Being and Time*, initially by way of a phenomenology of contemporary boredom. Heidegger attempts to show his students that they are fundamentally bored.

With both anxiety and boredom, Heidegger proceeds from the everyday and determinate towards the enigmatic and indeterminate. In *Being and Time*, the way is prepared for the account of anxiety with 'fear', that everyday state-of-mind which discloses 'the "*thrownness*" of this entity', Da-sein, 'into its "there".'[52] Fear is determinate, intended towards 'something which we encounter within-the-world'. The first form of boredom, 'becoming bored by', is similarly determinate. With the example of waiting for a train, Heidegger suggests that we are aware both of *what* we are bored by and *that* we are bored (by it). We are all too aware that we are bored because we repeatedly try, and repeatedly fail, to pass the time. In this non-passing of the time, time presses itself upon us, not as something external or invisible (Kant) but rather as the burden-responsibility of Dasein itself:

> What is at issue in boredom [*Langweile*] is a while [*Weile*], tarrying a while [*Verweilen*], a peculiar remaining, enduring... what is decisive in passing the time, and indeed in *what* it shakes off, namely boredom, is, after all, *time*. Passing the time is therefore a shortening of time that drives time on, namely the time that seeks to become long [*lang*]. It is thus an intervention into time as a *confrontation with time.*[53]

In the second example, 'being bored with', we go to a dinner party and only realise that we were bored afterwards. We cannot put our finger on what exactly bored us. We are bored by '*I know not what*'.

Hence, 'in the first case we have a *determinate boring thing*, whereas in the second case we have *something indeterminate that bores us.*'[54] Crucially, the comparison between anxiety and boredom breaks down with the third case of boredom,

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Being and Time, against *any* collective or political Dasein *whatever* – that which must be 'at once too ambitious and naive, too theological and messianic'. Instead of messianism, the transition to a history of Being is secured by way of 'the great works and lecture-courses of the 1930s' (including, it should be noted, the 'messianic' interpretations of Hölderlin). These works seek to reawaken the 'wonder' of the Greek Dasein. De Beistegui does not acknowledge that such an operation already privileges a particular history in a manner that does not seek to account for this privilege. De Beistegui, Miguel. 'Boredom: Between Existence and History', in *Thinking With Heidegger* (Indiana University Press, 2003), pp.61-82.

[52] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, p.174.

[53] Heidegger, M. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, p. 96.

[54] Ibid. p.114.

'profound boredom', because there were only *two* kinds of fear: conditioned (fear) and condition of possibility (anxiety). In boredom, by contrast, an increasing profundity or depth accrues from each form to the next. Hence, the 'second form of boredom has a peculiar *intermediate position.*'[55] At the same time, 'the third form is the condition of the possibility of the first and thereby also of the second.'[56] 'Profound boredom' is indeterminate: 'It bores one [*Es langweilt Einen*]'.[57]

What, then, distinguishes the second and third forms of boredom, given that both are indeterminate? Profound boredom is occasioned by the 'refusal' of 'beings as a whole'. Rather than pitting the determinate against the indeterminate, Heidegger now suggests that the *manifoldness* of boredom signifies that its determinacy is a question of *intensity* (or 'depth'). This is the departure from the 'two level' transcendental (and empirical) Kantianism. Even, or especially, the deepest boredom is the negative concern of 'beings as a whole' – not beings *in general* (Heidegger wants to wrest the *as such* from the *in general*; to displace transcendental with ontological difference).

As was suggested above, Heidegger's description of profound boredom comes close to an idea of melancholy, which he names on two occasions in these lectures. In profound boredom, 'all and everything appears indifferent to us'.[58] The 'all and everything' signifies that profound boredom is bored with 'beings as a whole' – just as, in this respect at least, anxiety, attested to in 'anticipatory resoluteness', is the secret to an authentic (response to) '*Ganzseinkönnen*'. The experience of radical indeterminacy is Heidegger's way of showing that time is a question about the whole and that the whole is a question about time:

> what is at issue is the question of *what time itself is*, such that it can have a relation to things, and furthermore such that from out of such a relation something like boredom is possible as an *attunement* that attunes *us* through and through.[59]

In contrast to determinate fear, that 'in the face of which one is anxious is completely indeterminate'; 'is not an entity within-the-world'.[60] What, in that case, are we anxious about? When anxiety is introduced in Division I of *Being and Time*, only one of the three ways in which Dasein is anxious has been characterised: thrownness.

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[55] Ibid. p.157.
[56] Ibid. p.156.
[57] Ibid. p.134.
[58] Ibid. p.37.
[59] Ibid. p.105.
[60] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, p.231.

The remaining two are Being-towards-death and the call of conscience. In all three 'phenomena', anxiety rises-up out of the abyss:

> The "nothing" with which anxiety brings us face to face, unveils the nullity by which Dasein, in its very *ground*, is defined; and this basis itself is a thrownness into death.[61]

And yet, Heidegger does not discuss 'Being-towards-death' in *The Fundamental Concepts* (he does, briefly, as an instance of how the 'ordinary understanding' fails to grasp a concept when it grasps at it too tightly).[62] Heidegger also declines to pursue the meaning of the expression 'we are *almost dying of boredom*'.[63] Boredom is clearly a question about finitude: 'being affected by time in boredom... is evidently a peculiar *impressing of the power of that time* to which we are bound.' And profound boredom is, like Being-towards-death, radically indeterminate: 'Along with the certainty of death goes the *indeterminacy* [Unbestimmtheit] of its "when".'[64] Nevertheless, the disappearance of Being-towards-death in the lectures has important consequences for Heidegger's evolving understanding of the concepts: world, whole, time and history. It paves the way for a complex relation to Adorno's 'waiting in vain'.

World, Whole, History

What is fundamental about profound boredom is that its indeterminacy is such that it *tells of* the refusal of 'things as a whole'. The 'silent fog' becomes deafening:

> All telling *refusal* [Ver*sagen*] is in itself a *telling* [Sagen], i.e., a making manifest. What do beings in this telling refusal of themselves as a whole tell us in such refusal? What do they tell us in refusing to tell? It is a telling refusal of that which somehow could and was to be granted to Dasein. And what is that? The very *possibilities* of doing and acting. The telling refusal tells of these possibilities of Dasein.[65]

As with the call of conscience, this way of telling 'does not put itself into words at all, yet it remains nothing less than obscure and indeterminate.'[66] But in *Being and Time*, the 'resolute' harkening to the call of conscience is only half of the story about authenticity. Being-towards-death provides Heidegger with the 'anticipatory

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[61] Ibid. p.356.
[62] Heidegger, M. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, p.294.
[63] Ibid. p.96.
[64] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, p.302.
[65] Heidegger, M. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, p.140.
[66] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, p.318.

[*Vorlaufen*]' that, joined with 'resoluteness', becomes 'anticipatory resoluteness' (as we shall see, the anticipatory is to be sharply distinguished from anticipation, which is expectation).[67] In the *Fundamental Concepts*, by contrast, possibility is not aligned with futural temporalisation. The understanding of temporality accordingly differs in these two works, in contradictory ways. These contradictions must be noted in order to take the most progressive elements from both of these 'modernist' works in a coherent manner.

In *The Fundamental Concepts*, the fundamental attunement concerns time in its inherent relation to world, as things-as-a-whole, rather than to things that are not yet, or might never be. In the above citation, Heidegger speaks of possibilities, but these are now things according to things-as-a-whole and, though Heidegger will never admit it, historical time as-a-whole. Possibility inheres in all three temporal horizons – in the 'single threefold horizon of time' – whereas, in *Being and Time*, possibility is the necessary privilege of the futural, for the indeterminate expectation of death, the anticipatory, is the ontological possibility of determinate possibility:

> The anticipatory makes Dasein *authentically* futural, and in such a way that the anticipatory itself is possible only in so far as Dasein, *as being*, is always coming towards itself – that is to say, in so far as it is futural in its Being in general.[68]

This is not the case in *The Fundamental Concepts*. In fundamental boredom,

> All beings withdraw from us without exception in every respect [*Hinsicht*], everything we look at and the way in which we look at it; everything in retrospect [*Rücksicht*], all beings that we look back upon as having been and having become and as past, and the way we look back at them; all beings in every prospect [*Absicht*], everything we look at prospectively as futural, and the way we have thus regarded them prospectively. Everything – in every respect, in retrospect and prospect, beings simultaneously withdraw. The *three perspectives* [Sichten] of respect, retrospect, and prospect do not belong to mere perception... but are the perspectives of all *doing and activity* of *Dasein*... There is a telling refusal of all beings simultaneously in 'what' and 'how' they are: *as a whole*, as we put it.[69]

A tension reigns within Heidegger's 'world' of the lectures, between beings *as such* and, in this instance, a *totality* of beings – past, present and future. The latter even

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[67] I have adjusted 'anticipation' to 'anticipatory' in the Macquarrie & Robinson tranlation, in order to clarify its distinction from 'expectation'. The English translators themselves use 'anticipatory' in their rendering: 'anticipatory resoluteness'.
[68] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, p.373. Translation amended (see note above).
[69] Heidegger, M. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, p. 145.

resembles a form of pantheism. In his 1932 lecture, Adorno cites Heidegger's 'most recent turn towards Hegel' as further evidence of an unacknowledged absolute idealism. Adorno's later critique of Hegel's 'detemporalisation' is equally applicable to Heidegger in this instance.[70] The evolution of Heidegger's whole from a phenomenological to a pantheistic-Aristotelian concept is ambiguous. The totality of the whole comes close to the scholastic-nominalist idea that every-thing has its unique time and place: *haecceitas.* This teaching of Duns Scotus interested the younger Heidegger – ultimately, in relation to Hegel.[71] Adorno finds this nominalism in *Being and Time*, in spite of its emphasis upon the '*pragmata*' of things.[72] Heidegger now states, in *The Fundamental Concepts* that,

> boredom is possible only because every thing, and more fundamentally every Dasein as such, has its time.[73]

This conservative ontology (in every sense) is not modern and post-metaphysical, but medieval and eminently metaphysical (even the Nazis would come to fear Heidegger's Jesuitic scholasticism). Such an ontology views its world as the natural order of things. Prefacing the lengthy discussion of boredom with a discussion of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, Heidegger devotes the remaining lectures to a comparison between the worlds of stone, animal and Dasein. Heidegger's philosophy calls for him to rethink the meaning of nature (as *not* spirit), but he cannot do this whilst confined to an ontology that modern technology – the history *of* modernity – has rendered otiose. What was modern about *Being and Time*, by contrast, was its systematic presentation of possibility *as* possibility. It is a fragmentary, modernist system of freedom. Heidegger

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[70] Heidegger's 1931 lectures on the *Phenomenology* are actually directed against interpretations of 'absolute knowing' as a totality of knowledge, in favour of 'ab-solving'. Heidegger relinquishes Hegelian mediation in a manner that will increasingly become a problem for him. Cf. Heidegger, M. *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Kenneth Maly & Parvis Emad (Indiana University Press, 1994).

[71] The conclusion of Heidegger's thesis on 'The Theory of Categories and Meaning in Duns Scotus' (1915) reads:

> The philosophy of living spirit, of active love, of reverent intimacy with God, the most general directions of which we were only able to indicate roughly, and especially a theory of categories guided by the basic tendencies of this philosophy, stand before the great task of a fundamental critical discussion of that system of historical worldview that is the most powerful one regarding fullness as well as depth, wealth of experience and concept-formation and as such lifted up into itself all of the fundamental motives previously at work in philosophical problems – that is, a critical discussion of Hegel.

Translated by Roderick M. Stewart & John van Buren, in *Supplements* (State University of New York Press, 2002), p.68.

[72] Adorno, T. W. *Jargon of Authenticity*, pp.102-3; *Negative Dialectics*, pp.131-2.

[73] Heidegger, M. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, p. 127.

acknowledged, in the tragic sense, that the world is not the stable creation of a creator, into which we creatures are purposefully placed. Modernity dispels this natural order of things. But so long as Dasein *is there*, *things could be otherwise*.

Heidegger remained too optimistic about the tragic in *Being and Time*, however. Or, he focused upon the hero to the neglect of the chorus. This problem is acknowledged in *The Fundamental Concepts*. The problem of 'world' concerns 'us', 'today'. But, in addressing this problem, Heidegger produces a new set of them. On the one hand, world signifies 'beings as a whole', tellingly refused in fundamental boredom. On the other hand, 'world-formation' means the 'un-concealment' of determinate possibility, illuminated in the '*Augenblick*' of the very same fundamental attunement.[74] Heidegger risks ending-up either with a one-world monism or a two-world dualism (the actual world and the possible one). Both are familiar to traditional metaphysics.

If truth is the un-concealment of that which has refused itself then truth is the same old world, once over. The anomaly is especially acute in the first instance of the temporal horizon. How can the having-been, as some-thing, both refuse itself and be disclosed as a possibility? This problem is symptomatic of Heidegger's equivocation over whether the resolutely disclosing *Augenblick* remains held-open in the *Grundstimmung*, as the readiness to act upon possibilities, or is rather *Bestimmung*, the determinate act of itself. Sometimes it appears to be both.[75] But so long as we are political animals, we can do more about the to-come than we can about the having-been, however much the former must be (intellectually) grounded in the latter. As Heidegger had put it in *Being and Time*: 'Only so far as it is futural can Dasein *be* authentically as having been. The character of "having been" arises, in a certain way, from the future.'[76]

Adorno anticipates these problems in his natural-history lecture: (1) What does Heidegger mean by 'the whole'? And (2), how can the whole include both the possible and the actual?

> [T]he project [*Entwurf*] of being... takes priority over the subsumed facticity; a facticity that is to be fitted in as an afterthought.[77]

Adorno picks-up on Heidegger's equivocation between the *totality* and the *as such*. In *Being and Time*, the whole 'is no longer held to be a systematic whole, but rather a

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[74] Ibid. p. 27-34.
[75] Ibid. p. 149.
[76] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, p.373.
[77] Adorno, T. W. 'The Idea of Natural History', p.116.

structural whole, a structural unity or totality.'[78] But tellingly, Adorno does not pursue the problem of the *as such*. In *The Fundamental Concepts*, Heidegger wants the 'as' to correspond to 'the Being of beings', and thus to ontological difference. Whereas, Adorno often defines 'being' in a traditionally Aristotelian manner (following Benjamin's scholasticism, perhaps): 'the question of ontology... is none other than what I mean by "nature".'[79] Adorno can thus accuse Heidegger of projecting Dasein, as spirit, *onto* nature, in an eminently (German-, but not Schellingian-) Idealist gesture. Heidegger 'only offers an *apparent* solution to the problem of the reconciliation of nature and history'.[80] Adorno's determination of Being as (immutable?) nature nevertheless seems to remain, from Heidegger's perspective, at the level of an ontic misrecognition of the ontological.[81] For Heidegger, the Being of beings cannot be totalised in this way, since the meaning of Being is time. Adorno seems to miss this fundamental thesis in Heidegger (or does he?), which is remarkable given his own interest in time and history. Even in the later polemics against Being-towards-death, Adorno does not confront Heidegger's rethinking of temporality (in any case, Adorno would not have been familiar with the 1929-30 lectures).

Heidegger's lapse into scholasticism coincides with an attempt to address the problems of idealism and solipsism in *Being and Time*. There is a diremption in that book between the whole and the world. The possibility of Being-a-whole is attested to authentically in the face of that which radically individuates. Death is 'in each case one's own'.[82] How can the radically individuated also be the whole? The whole in *Being and Time* is the whole individual, but only according to an attempted redefinition of individual and individuation. Adorno is right to say that Heidegger neglects the individual. Firstly, because this is precisely Heidegger's point. Dasein is not the 'person' (in this sense, Dasein has more in common with Hegelian spirit or Schellingian existence than it does with Kantian subjectivity, hence the interpretations of Dasein as

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[78] Ibid. p.115.
[79] Ibid. p.111-2.
[80] Ibid. p.115.
[81] Much of 'The Ontological Need', in *Negative Dialectics*, is taken up with a refutation of ontological difference. It is a mute point, in spite of his critique of the ideological tendencies of ontology (the 'German Ideology'), as to whether Adorno ever confronts Heidegger's thesis, since Adorno consistently works with a traditional-metaphysical definition of 'Being' – whether Platonic (the supersensuous), Hegelian (indeterminate immediacy) or Aristotelian (*physis*). Adorno suggests that it is impossible to argue with Heidegger, on account of the authoritarianism of his jargon. But why did Adorno not produce a refutation of, for instance, the introduction to *Being and Time*, which contains recognisable arguments for the ontological difference?
[82] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, p.284.

the 'for-itself'). Being is never mine but is always, authentically, a determinate response to the question of Being (and not nothing). Mine-ness means grasping the questionable enigma of Being. Without mineness, Being would remain unquestioned and hence forgotten. That Being belongs to no-one is another way of saying that authentic Dasein is authentic '*Mitdasein*': 'Resoluteness brings the Self... into solicitous Being with Others [*fürsorgende Mitsein*].'[83] This sort of thinking is not unique to Heidegger, of course. For Adorno,

> Humanity can be thought only through [an] extreme form of differentiation, individuation, not as a comprehensive generic concept.[84]

Adorno's speculative universal collectivity is nowhere to be seen in *Being and Time*, however. Heidegger needs a collective movement of history to give content to his historicity. Not the collective of humanity, but of the German nation. Nevertheless, *The Fundamental Concepts* lectures show that Heidegger begins to think about concrete history ('contemporary Dasein') and collectivity ('our') prior to his ideological conversion to National Socialism. Heidegger at no point aligns the 'we' to the Germans in *The Fundamental Concepts* (even though he was probably thinking of it).

'*Ganzseinkönnen*' does not explicitly include a world, as 'things-as-a-whole' does in *The Fundamental Concepts*. In *Being and Time*, things are redefined as 'equipment' prior to the explicit introduction of the problem of authenticity. Being-in-the-world (of 'public' things) is thus biased towards the everyday and inauthentic (except for a brief return to equipment at the end of the book). Heidegger alludes to this problem, his former deconstruction of the *res*, in the lecture course:

> It never occurred to me... to try to claim or prove with this interpretation that the essence of man consists in the fact that he knows how to handle knives and forks or to use the tram.[85]

Heidegger now seeks to incorporate explicitly world into the possibility of authenticity – except that, not only is the openness of resoluteness, *Ent-schlossenheit*, now emphasised over its mineness (openness to Being *as* the question of mineness) but equally, the problem of authenticity now concerns *us*. Indeed, Heidegger never really deals with the *Solitude* of his subtitle (which he calls 'individuation' in the lectures).

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[83] Ibid. p.344.
[84] Adorno, T. W. 'Progress', in *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords*, ed. Henry W. Pickford (Columbia University Press, 1998), p.151.
[85] Heidegger, M. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, p.177.

If ontological questioning is to occupy the void left by metaphysics then it must question 'comprehensively', in a manner that 'includes the questioner'. Between 1929 and 1932, Heidegger experiments with a redefinition (de-construction rather than destruction) of metaphysics, because it has traditionally served to ask this question of the whole.[86] In Aristotle, *physis* means both 'nature' *and* 'nature of'.[87] Physics is already metaphysics. These are but hints of a different kind of 'comprehensive philosophizing' for Heidegger, who now follows Schelling in contending that any systematic philosophy of facticity must include a positive account of nature. The *Freiheitschrift* is cited towards the end of the lectures.[88] Heidegger's repetition of Schelling's incorporation of contemporary natural science also repeats its syncretism, however. Heidegger intends to show, against idealism, that Dasein and animals share a world, only by sharing, against naturalism, different intensities (or, depths) of world. Heidegger combines a pre-modern materialism with modern zoology – a true dialectic of myth and enlightenment. Nevertheless, the Schellingian problematic might be recuperated in the light of both the ontological post-metaphysics of *Being and Time* and Adorno's melancholy science of natural-history. A historical – and 'musical' – concept of *Stimmung* is central to both philosophies. This sense of historical attunement can mediate the two thinkers, the two positions, in order to respond to the question: what is the relationship between the world of possibility and the world of the awaited? For this is the messianic-utopian question of waiting.

III. Adorno and Heidegger

Boredom, Waiting and Death

In *Being and Time*, we read of a determinate and an indeterminate kind of waiting. Death always lies ahead, as 'that which is not to be outstripped'. But since the end cannot be determined in its 'what?' or its 'when?' – since Dasein would in these cases be '*Nicht-mehr-da-sein*', then death cannot be *expected*, authentically, that is. Expectation, *Er-wartung*, is determinate waiting, in the sense that we already have what we are expecting before us:

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[86] This can be glanced at from the titles of Heidegger's works during this time: *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* (1928), *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* (1929-30) and the inaugural lecture, *What is Metaphysics* (1929).
[87] Ibid. p.30.
[88] Ibid. p.364.

> To expect something possible is always to understand it and to 'have' it with regard to whether and when and how it will be actually present-at-hand. Expecting is not just an occasional looking-away from the possible to its possible actualization, but is essentially a *waiting for that actualization* [ein *Warten auf diese*]. Even in expecting, one leaps away from the possible and gets a foothold on the actual.[89]

Expectation does *not* wait, to the extent that the awaited is already 'present-at-hand', projected from the present into the expected future – or, conversely, projected from the expected future into presence. We await the train in expectation of it. We know, now and in advance, what it will be like for the train to arrive since we have waited for trains that have arrived in the 'having-been'. The perpetuating present holds apart the possible and the actual, as a *long while* – as boredom. Heidegger maintains that, in his first example,

> it is waiting itself that is boring and that bores us, but boredom is not itself a waiting. Furthermore, not every waiting is necessarily boring. On the contrary, waiting can be full of suspense.[90]

Heidegger is surely alluding to the more nuanced account of waiting in his *Hauptwerk*. Read in the light of *Being and Time*, the first form of determinate boredom must *return* in order for profound boredom to *be* profound. *No indeterminate waiting without determinate waiting* (as Benjamin observed, 'he who waits... takes in the time and renders it up in altered form – that of expectation').[91] Heidegger is reluctant to define boredom as waiting because he wants to retain the theme of attunement. It is not obvious that waiting is an attunement. Nevertheless, Heidegger cannot avoid waiting, since what is at issue in profound boredom is time, which is (authentically) futural.

The second example of boredom is defined in terms of the perpetuating present of expectation. What differentiates the first and second forms of boredom is not, therefore, the question of determinacy alone. Whereas, in the first example we fail to pass the time, in the second example we succeed at it, completely. We did not even notice that we were bored. Hence, distraction is the flipside of boredom. Warding-off boredom through distraction, from boredom, means negating its long while, and shortening its time:

> We make time *stand*. We let the time we have taken for the evening – our taking consists precisely in this – endure in such a way during the evening

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[89] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, p.306.
[90] Heidegger, M. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, p.94.
[91] Benjamin, W. *The Arcades Project*, p.107.

> that in being there alongside and part of whatever is going on we take no note of its flow or its moments. The enduring of the 'during' swallows up, as it were, the flowing sequence of nows and becomes a *single stretched 'now'* which itself does not flow but stands.[92]

Is it any coincidence that the evening's distractions include 'listening to music' – given that the temporality of music is, at one fundamental level, that of the sequential 'nows' that becomes a single, stretched 'now'?[93] The 'old aim of secular music', suggests Adorno, was 'that of the *divertissement* that distracts from boredom'. Music is the art of nihilism *par excellence*, Heidegger will suggest in the later 1930s. For both Adorno and Heidegger, distraction from boredom, perpetuates a fundamental alienation – of, for Adorno, the capitalist mode of production. But at the same time, the peculiar connection between boredom and distraction 'lives on in the relationship to the time of autonomous music', that is, to *musically modern* time. Autonomy and authenticity are not, in that case, the simple 'others' of distraction and inauthenticity. Heidegger's sense of the historically telling refusal of things-as-a-whole provides a philosophically argumentative way of understanding the messianic '*Augenblick*' in Adorno's post-Benjaminian understanding of boredom, distraction – and *praxis*-expression.

The 'Continuous stream of "nows"' is seemingly what Heidegger previously called the 'vulgar' 'representation' of time.[94] In the lectures, vulgar temporality is made present and not merely represented. At the dinner party, 'we are *entirely present*'. Heidegger's conception of the present is already less promising than it was in *Being and Time*. There, the privileging of the futural was even situated in the *inauthentic* mode of Dasein: the everyday 'Present [*Gegenwart*]' is not simply the perpetuation of 'nows' but is rather 'the "waiting towards" [*Gegen-wart*]'.[95] This benign optimism about everyday temporality is a consequence of the existential structuralism of *Being and Time*. It undergoes a severe reassessment in *The Fundamental Concepts*. Expressionist anxiety is, it could be said, superseded by dada boredom (and is thereby *also* expressionist). It is the seeming im-possibility of possibility that now confronts our contemporary Dasein, not the plenitude of heroic possibilities. This seeming impossibility is, understood in the light of Adorno's waiting in vain, twofold. Firstly, the impossibility of possibility names the reified totality, or totalisation as reification. Second, this totalisation is the false consciousness. Unfreedom, impossibility, appears

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[92] Heidegger, M. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, p.124.
[93] Ibid. p.109.
[94] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, p.463.
[95] Ibid. p.387.

as freedom, possibility. The whole is such that it tends to become impossible to conceive of 'the totality as something that could be completely different', *even* for those who are *not* 'sworn to this world'.

Heidegger's reassessment of freedom in *The Fundamental Concepts* anticipates some of Adorno's criticisms of *Being and Time*. Heidegger's formal historicity had led him to abstract the meaning of death from its socio-historical context – as if every age could be equally heroic. Adorno's critique of Being-towards-death makes sense precisely because the fall of metaphysics – of consoling promises of all kinds, including consolation for the absence of promise in the various forms of distraction – becomes unbearable, leaving talk of authentic Being-towards-death as meaningless. The 'terror', *not* anxiety, about of death today is that 'of seeing how much the living resemble it'. Poets such as Georg Trakl gave expression to this situation, Adorno suggests. Heidegger's outlook on the contemporary situation in the 1929-30 lectures is similarly bleak (he later wrote on Trakl, of course). Could this be a reason why Being-towards-death disappears from Heidegger's work (until the 'mortals' of 'the fourfold')? Being-towards-death is, in its heroism, anachronistically 'pristine'. It does not finally shake-off the suspicion of solipsism – that it is *never* the whole. The analysis of fundamental boredom can, by contrast, illuminate the meaning of finitude in a way that confronts the existential solipsism.

Neither Adorno nor Heidegger can do without a future-oriented conception of finitude. Death pre-eminently articulates this orientation phenomenologically (initially, through the death of others). For Heidegger, Being-towards-death is the way in which the question of Being *appears for* Dasein, as its question: 'Why is there Being and not nothing?' is no logical conundrum that invintes a propositional answer (as it is given by Leibniz, to his own question). Though Adorno rejects Heidegger's ontology, he nevertheless understands *Erfahrung* as a (metaphysical) relation to death *and* whole (individual and social). For Adorno, the 'good life' would be one in which death was not terrifying. There is another affinity to Heidegger's 'death metaphysics': the expression of waiting in vain, the intermittent anticipation of possibility, is a kind of temporalised possibility, in a similar way that, for Heidegger, indeterminate waiting is grasped as the possibility of possibility. Both oppose expectation in the name of expectation.

If Heidegger's philosophy of boredom is read as a critical reconceptualisation of Being-towards-death, rather than as its mere surrogate – as a necessary *critique* of heroic solipsism and formal-transcendentalism – then it might be possible to understand

waiting in vain in terms of profound boredom as a temporalisation of (historical) possibility on the (ironic) basis of Heidegger's initial account of originary temporalisation in *Being and Time*. Adorno's metaphysical experience can be read, against Adorno, as a critique of Heidegger's 'metaphysics of death' rather than as its abstract negation. It is, then, a twofold critique of metaphysical waiting (expectation) on the one side and ontological waiting (without expectation) on the other. Indeed, Heidegger's ontology provides a means of understanding the expression of waiting in vain as more *failed* promise. In that form, the expression would be in bad faith, since it would be the intermittent interruption of that which it had rejected: traditional metaphysical promise. On Adorno's side, the critique of anticipatory resoluteness is the historical critique of 'trans-historical' existence (de Beistegui), and by extention fundamental ontology.[96] It proposes that society can and must change – but not according to a pre-established harmony.

This mutual critique promises to set up a post-metaphysical account of the expression of waiting in vain that retains the historical facticity in the idea of natural-history. If the expression of waiting in vain is the interruption of anticipatory resoluteness then inauthentic distraction becomes the interruption of authenticity, which accordingly becomes a possibility of another modernity, not a reaction to it (as it often tends to be in Heidegger; see chapter 2). This interruption is not another form of messianism by the back gate. Interruption names the positive character of the waiting-expression, between metaphysics and ontology, history and existence.

One of Johann Peter Hebel's *Assorted Thoughts* (1811) reads: 'Boredom waits for death [*Die Langweile wartet auf den Tod*]'.[97] Death cannot be expected, but it can be willed. Passive nihilism is the will to nothing. Willing and longing are forms of expectation. They actualise the impossible (ideal) and make the actually possible (real) impossible. Romantics *are* waiting in vain because they are waiting for an object of infinite willing and longing. Adorno stresses that an expression of waiting in vain is *not* 'a sphere of Romantic wishing'.[98] In *The Jargon of Authenticity*, Adorno questions what he takes to be Heidegger's dismissal of *all* reflections upon death.[99] But such reflection is not necessarily the willing-love of death that concludes *Tristan und Isolde* (but death is precisely *ambivalent* in the later Wagner's *music*!). Adorno at one point approves of

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[96] De Beistegui, M. *Thinking With Heidegger*, p.74.
[97] Cited in: Benjamin, W. *The Arcades Project*, p.101.
[98] Adorno, T. W. *Metaphysics*, p.143.
[99] Adorno, T. W. *The Jargon of Authenticity*, 107.

Heidegger's alternative comportment: *Vorlaufen*. 'Only rarely do Heidegger's words contain as much truth as these.'[100]

The anticipatory is, like the expression of waiting in vain, *not* expectation. *Vorlaufen* is the *running-ahead* of 'that which is not to be outstripped'.[101] The anticipatory holds-open the greatest possibility *in* resoluteness. The *Augenblick* of the telling refusal in profound boredom must therefore be said to open-up the greatest possibility in the mode of the anticipatory – even though this is *not said* in the lectures. There is an affinity between profound boredom and *Vorlaufen*, on account of the shared indeterminacy of their waiting. This return of the futural into profound boredom means that the worlds of the existing and the possible are now temporalised, historically, and not confused unhistorically. The existing world is the world of contemporary Dasein and world formation is the waiting that belongs to the awaited.

In the early 1930s, Heidegger strategically retreats from the existentialism of *Being and Time* and advances into what he perceives to be the actual possibilities of his time – and place. The account of Being-towards-death nevertheless reminds the reader of *The Fundamental Concepts* that the greatest possibility is nothing without factical possibilities. Heidegger knows this, even though he does not connect boredom to death in the lectures. This is the formal-transcendental problem that the fundamental attunement was intended to address. Profound boredom does not quite close its eyes to the world. The telling refusal is a squinting that seeks out the brightest of dim possibilities, possibilities that must be grasped. Where Heidegger makes his way through the fog, Adorno goes underground to make a similar point:

> For thought there is really no other possibility, no other opportunity, than to do what the miner's adage forbids: to work one's way through the darkness without a lamp, without possessing the positive through the higher concept of the negation of the negation, and to immerse oneself in the darkness as deeply as one possibly can.[102]

Just over two years after the lectures, Heidegger would become impatient with his indeterminate waiting. In the absence of a politically committed philosophy (of culture) and in the presence of a popular political movement that confirmed his prejudices, Heidegger would make a political decision of his own. Heidegger's activities of 1933 amount to an indictment of existentialism. The problem of formalism could not be resolved immanently within Heidegger's system. The historical content

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[100] Ibid. p.131.
[101] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, p.306.
[102] Adorno, T. W. *Metaphysics*, p.144.

had to come from the outside. Waiting without expectation converges with decisionism. But what if Heidegger did not remain true to (his) waiting? What if the philosopher of waiting failed to experience waiting, or rather its *expression*?

Waiting, Destining and the Messianic

Who is to say when is the right time for waiting and for no-longer waiting? Who, for that matter, is to say that boredom is the fundamental attunement of our contemporary Dasein (whether it be in 1930 or 2008)? Heidegger gives the following response: *we* are. The telling refusal of factical possibilities *itself* signifies that profound boredom is the fundamental attunement of contemporary Dasein. The fundamental attunement simultaneously tells of this refusal. The reason that boredom, and not anxiety, is the fundamental attunement of contemporary Dasein, is that 'what oppresses us most profoundly and in a concealed manner is the very *absence of any essential oppressiveness in our Dasein as a whole.*' This is not at all to say that there are no contemporary 'needs'. Heidegger is more attuned to the (culture of) crisis at the end of the 1920s than he would like to admit:

> everywhere there are disruptions, catastrophes, needs: the contemporary social misery, political confusion, the powerlessness of science, the erosion of art, the groundlessness of philosophy, the impotence of religion.[103]

Heidegger is looking for a deeper, unifying need. This need is 'demanded', ontologically, *in* the telling refusal. What is more, distraction (though Heidegger only uses this term in *Being and Time*) *is* the telling refusal itself:

> This absence of oppressiveness is only apparently hidden; it is rather attested by the very activities with which we busy ourselves in our contemporary restlessness.[104]

Heidegger initially comes close to the philosophy of culture that he dismisses, insofar as his claim about boredom relies upon empirical social evaluations. But Heidegger's 'empiricism' is of a particular kind here. The fundamental attunement is primarily 'attested to' not, for instance, in the evidence of an emerging culture industry, but rather in the attestation itself, which is already the experiential register of the social and cultural. The value of (the concept of) attunement now becomes clear: the fundamental

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[103] Heidegger, M. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, p.163.
[104] Ibid. p.164.

attunement is an attestation of something fundamental, beyond the attunement (or, attunement *as* relating beyond). Who does not feel boredom today? No one can remain distracted all of the time. There is, of course, a precedent for this notion of attestation, as a fundamental and historical condition – in the concept of alienation.

The fundamental attunement tells of contemporary Dasein *as* a unique historical situation. Only us moderns are worthy of profound boredom, and hence worthy of the question of 'Being as a whole'. In a sense, the rise in importance of both autonomous and (ultimately) heteronomous music is part of the story of the fundamental attunement, since each makes a claim of a whole. Heidegger's musical description of *Stimmung* appears as more than a passing reference in the light of his later characterisation of music and nihilism. The fundamental attunement of boredom anticipates Heidegger's account of the subject of metaphysical modernity as an affective (and to that extent, musical) subject that wills an object in its totality. In the earlier work, this false totality (false with respect to 'Being as a whole') is defined in terms of extreme depth, 'deep boredom', and in the later work, extreme height, the 'highpoint of humanity' (see chapter 2). In both cases, of extreme depth and height, another whole becomes possible.

Heidegger subsequently moves away from historicity and towards 'destiny [*Geschick*]' or rather 'destining [*Schickung*]'. This philosophy of history in the strong sense of *Geschichte*, is not yet fully in place in *The Fundamental Concepts* (as the lapse into scholasticism would suggest). Neither is it as yet the 'remembrance' and 'forgetting of Being'.[105] And yet, in the 1929-30 lecture-course, Heidegger no longer imposes a formal structure upon history, but instead attempts to experience it from the qualitative standpoint of the contemporary. As with Adorno, destiny is now on the side of a notion of facticity, since profound boredom has crept-up on us unawares – as if a Dasein of its own. This alien destiny, the wrong history, is the alienation of another destiny, the right history. What Adorno calls reification, the 'naturalisation of history' is, to this extent, comparable to Heidegger's 'darkening of the world'. The 'refusal of things' is, at some

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[105] The concept of 'fate' was of course *introduced* in *Being and Time*. '*Ganzseinkönnen*' is not a contingent, relativist philosophy of history, Heidegger insists, but is rather the greatest possibility of historical Dasein:

> Once one has grasped the finitude of one's existence, it snatches one back from the endless multiplicity of possibilities which offer themselves as closest to one... and brings Dasein into the simplicity of its *fate* [*Schicksals*]. This is how we designate Dasein's primordial historizing [*ursprüngliche Geschehen*], which lies in authentic resoluteness and in which Dasein *hands* itself *down* to itself, free for death, in a possibility which it has inherited and yet has chosen.
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> Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*, p.435.

level, comparable to a notion of re-ification (the refusal of things as the world becoming a thing).

The attunement of *Trauer*, in allegorical *praxis*, allows for the possibility of arresting and overcoming reification. During the 1960s, Adorno moves away from a 'purely derogatory' concept of reification (a move away from Lukács, for various reasons).[106] This possibility of negating the negation looks more piecemeal in Adorno than it does in Heidegger's (and *some of* Benjamin's) philosophy of the event. Can an event *ever* be piecemeal? But the increasingly metaphysically fraught nature of the melancholy science brings Adorno, unwittingly perhaps, closer to Heidegger's terrain, such that the problem of the metaphysical grounding of the melancholy science becomes more acute. In *The Fundamental Concepts*, Heidegger cites and then rejects Oswald Spengler as a misreader of Nietzsche.[107] What Adorno says of Spengler in the 1960s equally applies to Heidegger, who sought to colonise the space of these philosophers of crisis: 'After Auschwitz, a regression... has already *taken place* and is not merely expected à la Spengler'.[108] Heidegger is the philosopher of the problem of nihilism but Adorno is thrown onto this problem by the force of a history that Heidegger both failed to foresee and to remember.

For both thinkers, however, waiting in vain is alienation *and* the possibility of the self-negation of alienation, by way of (its) determinate expression. For Adorno particularly, boredom is not an existential *a priori*. Boredom 'need not necessarily exist'.[109] As a historical phenomenon, it can change and even disappear. What does an *expression of* waiting in vain promise, in that case? The right history for Adorno; the right destiny for Heidegger – the appropriating-event of Being. The problem of waiting is then indistinguishable from the problem of history *as* destiny. If the possibility of an expression of waiting in vain were solely contingent, then there would indeed be no awaited in the singular. Such waiting, before the 'endless multiplicity' of possibilities (Heidegger), *is*, in that case, constitutively in vain. Heidegger's turn from the historicity of *Being and Time* to contemporary Dasein sets up the turning from Dasein to Being. The wrong history is now 'the forgetting of Being' and the right history 'destining' through 'remembrance of Being'. In his 'Letter on Humanism', Heidegger autobiographically dates his turning, 'from "Being and Time" to "Time and Being",' to his lecture-course 'On the Essence of Truth', which was given shortly after *The*

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[106] Adorno, T. W. *Metaphysics*, p.142.
[107] Heidegger, M. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, pp.69-74.
[108] Adorno, T. W. *History and Freedom*, p.4.
[109] Adorno, T. W. 'Free Time', in *Critical Models*, p.171.

Fundamental Concepts.[110] The turning is equally a turning to a notion of destiny that is intended to counter the bad infinity of an endless multiplicity of *possibilities*; that is, a history without beginning. This also gives a different sense to Heidegger's subsequent return to waiting, which is no longer solely phenomenological, but is now equally now 'messianic'. What it lacks is a coherent political direction (after Heidegger's condemnation of militarism). This is the gain of historical materialism, which nevertheless lacks the ontological grounding that was so necessary for Heidegger.

Heidegger's heterodox 'turn to Hegel', decried by the younger Adorno, becomes strangely pronounced in his 'history of metaphysics' (it was suggested in chapter 2). The problem of metaphysics (including Hegel's?) is that its interpretation of Being, as object-dominating subject, becomes a totalising interpretation of *all possible* interpretations. The 'enframing' of the 'world picture' is, accordingly, a 'forgetting of Being' *as* 'the mystery'. Profound boredom can be said to arise from the nothing that is left *after* the totalising interpretation, which nevertheless does not put an end to Da-sein (which *asks*, 'is that all?' – this asking is *not nothing*). This interpretation must nevertheless fail from the standpoint of the appropriating event, of 'Time and Being'. The necessity of this 'only' is structurally messianic – but without, outwardly at least, the ontotheological problems of traditional (dogmatic) messianism.

In its content, Heidegger's conception of history takes on an increasingly nationalistic character during the 1930s. Even when he ceases to believe that National Socialism is of the essence of the history of Being, Heidegger will contrive it as of the essence of the forgetting of Being – thus serving to absolve himself, Germany and Europe from any historical responsibility for its consequences.[111] In *Negative Dialectics*, Adorno confronts these developments in Heidegger's philosophy of history. Yet he neither mentions Heidegger's conception of destiny nor its possible relation to National Socialism. Rather, Adorno writes of Heidegger's attempt to 'justify subjugation to historical situations, as if it were the behest of being itself.'[112] But this is mainly the critique of formalism once again – that which *did* make possible Heidegger's 'decision'. It is as if Adorno has denied himself that critique because he has already branded Heideggerian historicity as ineffectual. It is the concept of 'destruction', not historicity, that 'led directly to barbarism and fascism'. But ever since his curiosity about *Being and Time*, Adorno had shared Heidegger's imperative for a strong

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[110] Heidegger, M. 'Letter on Humanism', in *Basic Writings*, p.231.
[111] Cf. Wolin, Richard. *The Politics of Being* (Columbia University Press, 1990), pp.137-147.
[112] Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, p.134.

philosophy of history; an imperative that becomes increasingly heterodox-Hegelian for both thinkers, in very different ways.[113]

The contemporary 'demand' of Dasein is a privileging of the contemporary:

> This occurrence of a fundamental attunement itself and the very choice in question as an engagement of the philosopher's existence is rooted in the history of Dasein.[114]

Heidegger does not (yet) say it in so many words, but this 'history of Dasein' is a destiny of Dasein, because the occurrence of the fundamental attunement of profound boredom discloses the problem of metaphysics – of the whole – for the first time. The 'history of Dasein' no longer signifies historicity – that which 'brings history to a halt in the unhistorical' (Adorno). The genitive in 'history *of* Dasein' now functions in both senses. At the same time, Heidegger is not yet proposing *what* the whole *will be*:

> The possibility of a different kind of necessary grounding for metaphysics must remain open. However this possibility is not some empty, formal or logical possibility; rather what is possible regarding this possibility depends entirely upon the destiny of man [*Schicksal des Menschen*].[115]

When Heidegger does not wait in naming this destiny (as 'Germania'), he does not remain true to waiting *as* naming. At the same time, there is no naming without the name, no waiting without the awaited.[116]

Adorno's idea of waiting in vain founders, it was suggested, upon its self-problematised metaphysical (non-)grounding. Heidegger's confrontation with metaphysics signals a response, to which Adorno must in turn respond. Both Heidegger and Adorno connect the waiting of boredom to a form of post-metaphysical waiting. Both connect a particular attunement to an-other possible historical whole, and to the whole *as* possibility of history. An expression of waiting in vain is, then, the

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[113] Adorno relies upon a citation of Löwith for the *explicit* connection between Heidegger's decisionism and Hitlerism ('a vulgarly decisive moment'). But as was suggested above, Löwith seems to oppose any and all possible historical determinations of Dasein. He stands by the structural existentialism of *Being and Time*. Adorno does not mean to legitimate Löwith's position here. But the reliance upon Löwith, allied with the absence of a critique of destiny, is notable, given Adorno's own, strong conception of history. Where the younger Adorno had opposed natural-history to Hegelianism, the Adorno of *Negative Dialectics* critically incorporates Hegel. Adorno's destruction of Hegelian spirit seeks to retain Hegel's sense of *history in the singular*. Hence: 'World-spirit and Natural History. Excursus on Hegel'. Adorno, T. W. *Negative Dialectics*, p.295.

[114] Heidegger, M. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, p.182.

[115] Ibid. p.171. Translation amended.

[116] Cf. Düttmann, A. G. *The Memory of Thought*, part II.

intermittent anticipation of the right history, since the expression, the act, seeks to bring about that history. Why should there be any anticipation at all? Because to experience is to be anticipatory *and* is to anticipate.

In *The Fundamental Concepts*, Heidegger makes an ontological claim on behalf of expropriated experience. He simultaneously acknowledges the impossibility of a heroic experience of Being-towards-death. The anti-hero is profoundly bored (*The Man Without Qualities*). But on Adorno's side, death remains the fundamental *problem* of experience. An expression of waiting in vain is the critique of anticipatory resoluteness, the authentic mode of Being-towards-death. This is equally the 'twisting free' of traditional metaphysics (discussed in chapter 2) since it combines the non-willing of the anticipatory with the willing expectation of the awaited. For Adorno, metaphysics *after* metaphysics means 'thinking beyond itself, into *openness*.'[117] Of course, this is not the 'clearing of Being', or 'the open' in Heidegger. And yet, in both cases, openness names the necessity of thinking out(-side) of metaphysical willing, as the possibility of confronting *its* nihilism.

Adorno and Heidegger each turn to the category of thinking, both in relation to waiting. The former can maintain that 'thought' is consistent with a notion of determinate critique and not resigned quietism. And yet, since '*praxis* is delayed for the foreseeable future', such 'thought' once again conjures-up the spectre of the regressive infinity; of a theory without *praxis*. It is telling that, in his radio-lecture 'Resignation' (1969), Adorno does not address the objections of his detractors to theory but rather turns the table on their equal-and-opposite valorisation of *praxis*. The question of the mediation of theory and *praxis* – of, in a sense, waiting and awaited – is sidetracked (and this relates to the whole problem of critical theory as *methodology*). Adorno is left defending theory as the 'happiness' of the 'thinking person'.[118] This does not seem very far from Heidegger's 'piety of thought'.[119]

Heidegger's 'thinking' makes no such claim of determinate negation, since this identity philosophy is part of the problem of metaphysics. Like Adorno, Heidegger questions the metaphysical distinction between theory and practice *itself*. But Heidegger's 'task of thinking', after 'the end of philosophy', *does* threaten to valorise a waiting without expectation, sliding into the regressive infinity to which it was originally opposed. Man's 'essence [*Wesen*]', Heidegger will state in 1949, 'is to be the

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[117] Adorno, T. W. *Metaphysics*, p.68.
[118] Adorno, T. W. 'Resignation', in *Critical Models*, p.293.
[119] Heidegger, M. *The Question Concerning Technology*, p.35.

one who waits'.[120] Man is condemned to wait, for nothing. Notwithstanding Heidegger's speculative redefinition of 'essence', waiting comes to be in vain *after all* – '*Gelassenheit*' as 'being left empty [*Leergelassenheit*].'[121]

In his *Spiegel* interview, Heidegger counters the charge of quietism with a notion of destiny. Destining is the time of the awaited. Since Heidegger thinks the whole after metaphysics as the Being of beings, and (still) as time, the destining of Being is the appropriating event of Being and/as Time. The whole, the awaited, would then be experienced in a non-dominating comportment, since domination marks the non-time of presence:

> It is not a matter simply of waiting until something occurs to man within the next 300 years, but of thinking ahead (without prophetic proclamations) into the time which is to come, of thinking from the standpoint of the fundamental traits of the present age, which have scarcely been thought through. Thinking is not inactivity but is in itself the action which stands in dialogue with the world mission [*Welt-geschick*].[122]

If the *active* elements of the 'thought' of waiting – in Adorno and Heidegger – are brought together, then the expression of indeterminate waiting, of waiting in vain, becomes the possibility of determinacy. An expression of waiting in vain is, in that case, not in vain.

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[120] Ibid. p.42.
[121] Heidegger, M. *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, p.117.
[122] Heidegger, M. 'Only a God Can Save Us', p.42.

Coda

Two interconnected questions were asked in the introduction: (1) How can a concept of waiting contribute to a systematic philosophy 'after' messianism? (2) How is this waiting musical in its expression? We are now in a position to summarise the response.

(1) A problem with historical materialism arises, it was suggested, from the question of its self-grounding – especially, it seems, when it does not seek to address this question. This is equally the problem of positing its value-concepts: humanity, history and utopia. Like the German Idealists, Heidegger understands the problem of grounding as the problem of metaphysics itself. However, the dominant Platonic metaphysics, including Idealism, has perpetuated a representating, dualistic paradigm of grounding-positing that is complicit with nihilism. This issue appears in Adorno as the critique of identity. The problem with the Heideggerian destruction is that it does not get to grips with the problem of history – and, therefore, humanity and utopia – because its concept of existence is 'trans-historical'. Its exceptionally authentic *Ereignis* is all too amenable to a trans-social solipsism.

The tradition of historical materialism – Hegelian-Marxist, metaphysically Aristotelian – gives rise to a teleological form of a-waiting, including utopian waiting (*however* scientific). 'Non-Christian' messianism problematises this expectation without always confronting the metaphysical grounds of its alternative (to Aristotelian) metaphysics. Heideggerian existentialism, on the other hand, offers a deepened account of waiting which nevertheless tends to valorise itself into a waiting without expectation of the awaited: utopia. Hence, there is an opposition of 'waiting for', which *over*-wills the awaited, and 'waiting not for', which *under*-wills it.

The strategic thrust of the response has been to suggest that (the) two key proponents of both 'sides', Adorno and Heidegger, are not so opposed as is often thought – meaning that they also *share* problems (notably, neo-Kantianism). The first response to this opposition was to interpret Adorno's idea of natural-history in relation to a particular philosophical counter-tradition, in order to propose a notion of historical facticity that shares characteristics of Schellingian-Heideggerian existence without being 'existentialist'. This anticipated the examination of Heidegger's fundamental attunement, which promises to ground metaphysics, quasi-ontologically, from the

standpoint of its fall: our contemporary Dasein. As historical, this out-of-tune attunement is specific to an experience of modernity as a standpoint upon history as a whole. For, what is surely definitive about modernity (about *all* modernities) is its capacity to totalise. This has consequences for the *time* of modernity, since there is, according to these totalisations, no time or place of waiting. Totalisation as such is not the problem here, however, since modernity *is* (we cannot not totalise). Rather, it is the *manner* of the contemporary totalisation, in capitalism. The dissonant attunements of *Trauer* and fundamental boredom are, in that case, other manners of relating to the whole (and perhaps more should have been said about a distinction between a quantitative totality and a qualitative whole). Both Adorno and Heidegger conceive of a changed comportment as a non-transcendental condition for the possibility of a changed whole (the comportment is not *itself* the changed whole). The idea that this can promise *historical* change is equally suggested in the fact that Heidegger himself comes close to a 'messianic' philosophy of history that can (violently) be interpreted in relation to historical materialism. As with totality, the *danger* of a strong concept of history, Heidegger's included, does not of itself warrant its rejection (as happens in many a liberal-minded critique of meta-narrative), if only because we cannot escape it. This danger is itself the twofold possibility of catastrophe and of utopia. As materialist, the *expression* of waiting in vain is already on the way from theory to the *praxis* of a historical-utopian task (an account of this would require an investigation into the relationships between *Trauer*, alientation and labour, which was beyond the scope of this study).

A kind of post-active nihilism connects the thought of Adorno and Heidegger, such that an-other time becomes thinkable in the midst of the totalisation, and hence 'detemporalisation', of historical time. Detemporalisation is the time of reification. Its mimetic temporalisation is post-actively nihilist in the sense that (i) it resists the will to nothing of passive nihilism, and (ii) it resists the will to power of active nihilism. It can only do so with a new conception of willing – and resisting – *as also waiting*. The *necessity* of this other time, which can indeed be termed quasi-messianic time, was proposed by way of a critique of Heidegger's anticipatory resoluteness *as* the expression of waiting in vain. Again, this comprised an attempt to mediate existence and facticity, ontology and history, according to the overall problematic of a system of freedom.

(2) The attunement of waiting in vain is 'musical' on account of the shared affective, temporal and spatial properties of music. An attunement, as mood, is

affective. This, no doubt, lies behind the actualisation of (commodity) music as a seemingly privileged cultural form of 'world consummation'. Music is specifically modern on account of its totalisation of the affective, willing subject of a spatio-temporal continuum: world as willed (non-) object. The dissonant attunement is opposed to affective willing, from out of it, since the melancholy *science* is the concern of knowledge and thus of world disclosure. This 'out of' was understood by way of a critical reversal of the traditions of the harmony of the spheres and of music as *sui generis* language (attempts to conceive of the whole as *logos*). An expression of waiting in vain is a dissonant attunement – a relating in the sense of *ratio* – to the possibility of an-other whole; the temporalising mimesis of the contemporary impossibility of utopian dwelling *as* its future *possibility*.

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