

The Dialectical Imagination, Martin Jay
A History of the Frankfurt School and the
Institute of Social Research, 1923-1950
Little, Brown and Co., Boston, 1973, \$3.95

This history of the Frankfurt School is a very fine book, scholastically speaking, and indeed by making a totality of the very individualistic (not to mention egotistic) disparities ~~of the school~~ gives a more cohesive view to the "school of thought" that called itself Critical than it deserves. Yet, because the M author is neither a Marxist nor a philosopher but a historian, he leaves out the outstanding contribution on dialectics which is not just imaginative or literary but philosophical. And this especially holds for Adorno who, because his work is directly on dialectics, Negative Dialectics, which was published after period covered, 1923-50, is not dealt with except superficially here. And yet that could be called, as Lichtheim did, Adorno's "testament".

cf. TriQuarterly,
"From Marx to Hegel: Reflections on Georg Lukacs,
T.W. Adorno, and Herbert Marcuse" by George Lichtheim
TriQuarterly 12, Spring, 1968

Horkheimer wrote a brief foreward in which he called the aim of the School "the belief that formulating the negative in the epoch of transition was more meaningful than academic careers." ~~and then Adorno~~ and then Adorno as being the most precise at formulating that it was necessary not to think of claims to the Absolute as certain and yet, not to deduct anything from the appeal to the emphatic concept of the truth."

Ch. 1
Martin Jay ~~introduction~~ begins the history with the creation of the Institute in the period it was not famous and when it still had a much more direct relationship to Marxism as the Institute helped David Ryazanov get the early essays of Marx way back when. It was then under Grünberg. But since both the name and the actual content of wanting to be neither in, nor quite out of Marxism that gave it its fame, we will limit the review to the Institute as it developed under Horkheimer, both in Germany and as it emigrated to America.

Columbia U.

*[Q] p 38 on French int. the school
who kept away from Institute
& the Germans*

14643

Chapter 2 goes to the heart of the vision called "The Genesis of Critical Theory." (pp. 41-85) On p. 54 he also draws upon ~~Adorno~~ ^{Husserl}, and correctly so, quoting especially p. 162 on Mediation, and ~~Adorno~~ ^{Husserl} said very different things on Reason both in Negations (pp. 135-136) and R&R (pp. 44-46). I like his dealing with Adorno's criticism of Husserl who wrote, "With phenomenology, bourgeois thought reached its end, disassociated, fragmented statement set against one another, and resigned itself to simple reproduction of that which is." On the other hand, Adorno's criticism of Benjamin (p. 71) is all wrong.

p60

Husserl

Chapter 3, "The Integration of Psychoanalysis", reveals Fromm as the person who introduced the whole School to psychoanalysis and the "integration" of Marx and Freud.

Chapter IV, "The Institut's First Studies of Authority", while Ch. V deals with the Institut's analysis of Nazism, but it's Ch. VI which really shows ~~us~~ them going askew which is fantastic since they knew more on aesthetic theory, Hegelian, than anyone else and yet they were so absolutely opposed to what they called "mass culture" that you would think that ads make people do anything they want them to and to chew gum is really ~~nothing~~ short of metaphysics". Indeed, here is how Horkheimer puts it: "It is not that chewing gum undermines metaphysics but that it is metaphysics; this is what must be made clear." And even without chewing gum to put Nazist "ideology" and "mass culture" on the same plane is just to show they ~~know nothing~~ & learned nothing at all in America, least of all from any mass movement.

Chewy gum

Ch. VII deals with the empirical works in the 1940s and ~~is~~ subordinate the real key to the whole study, Ch. VIII, "Toward a Philosophy of History: The Critique of the Enlightenment" (pp. 253-280).

Before going into this, it's interesting to note that Lichtheim is the superior to the young historian who confronts the Frankfurt Institute from books alone. First, because he recognizes the enduring relevance of Hegel as being the relationship of theory to practice, specifically philosophical theory to political practice; secondly, that he knows precisely the crucial point of dialectics in Hegel so that Frankfurt's contribution would be naught if you didn't ~~know that it is central~~ treat that as the heart and soul of the matter. Therefore, GL stresses a Lukacs who was not a FI man, his studies in Marxian dialectics, and how that came through in Frankfurt and particularly in Adorno and Marcuse. But it is Adorno that is not grasped in Martin Jay. Therefore, P. 23 of GL's what he quotes from the Aspects of the Hegelian Dialectic and on p. 26 the negative dialectic itself, at which point (p. 27) GL writes "If Adorno is Lukacs' spiritual antipode-- a critic of idealism for whom in the end Hegel remains relevant because speculative philosophy has not been

Superseded ~~the~~ :: essence interwoven ~~with~~ ~~the~~ ~~text~~

14644