

## General Introduction

Theodor Adorno is one of the most exciting, controversial, difficult, and misrepresented philosophers of the twentieth century. This book hopes to preserve the excitement and controversy whilst illuminating the difficulties and curbing some of the misrepresentation of his work. This monograph is devoted to the study of Adorno's notion of the particular dialectic that is known as the dialectic of 'Enlightenment' and is the title of one of Adorno's best-known texts, coauthored with Max Horkheimer<sup>1</sup>.

After over fifty years of consistent study, two elements of *Dialectic Of Enlightenment* remain seriously neglected. The work is almost always read as a severe critique and unremittingly bleak view of 'Enlightenment'; yet there exists a systematic utopian dimension to Adorno's thought which has yet to be fully interpreted and understood<sup>2</sup>. Further, in spite of a wealth of research into Adorno's post-Kantian German philosophical inheritance, his important intellectual debt to Sigmund Freud, remarkably, still remains comparatively uncharted<sup>3</sup>.

*Adorno's Positive Dialectic* fills in these two lacunae. First, we interpret *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and other key texts by Adorno to uncover the narrative of 'Enlightenment's' failure and the concomitant utopian story of its

<sup>1</sup> Adorno and Horkheimer's use of the term 'Enlightenment' differs from the historical use – referring to the eighteenth century – and will be discussed below.

<sup>2</sup> Adorno's Utopianism has become recognised recently, although there is still much more research needed here. Of the few who recognise this in Adorno, most, for example Wellmer, see Adorno's Utopianism as limited to his aesthetic thesis only, and moreover, herein to his concept of 'the New' (see Wellmer, A. 1985, 1991). None have offered the kind of systematic unveiling of an overarching utopianism of the kind I shall be offering here. See later in this General Introduction.

<sup>3</sup> The only exceptions to this being Alford, F. (1988), Benjamin, J. (1988) and (1998), Dews, P. (1995), and Whitebook, J. (1995). Many of these offer perceptive insights on our topic, but their own project is quite distinct: none pursue a book-length study of Adorno's relationship to Freud.

redemption. Second, we uncover the Freudian debt underlying Adorno's thesis about 'Enlightenment'. We do so by depicting Adorno's German philosophical inheritance and the intersection of this with his appropriation of Freud. Expressed concisely, *Adorno's Positive Dialectic* conjoins German philosophy with Freud in order to offer an argument for a *positive dialectic* of 'Enlightenment' in Adorno's work<sup>4</sup>.

Our book consists initially of this introduction which serves to bring Adorno's life, works, and the reception of his ideas into focus for those to whom this is not well known. We also offer an outline of our overall project and contextualise our reading of Adorno amidst the plethora of other readings currently available. *Adorno's Positive Dialectic* then moves on to a Prelude which is, I hope, helpful to those less familiar with his philosophical inheritance. In this Prelude, we depict his foundations in the German post-Kantian tradition and the intersection of this with key ideas from Sigmund Freud. Thereafter, we enter the main body of the text. Herein, we offer our interpretation of Adorno, which consists of two parts. In Part I we analyse his critique of Enlightenment, and in Part II we detail his Utopian project of Enlightenment's redemption.

#### ADORNO AND THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL

To introduce Adorno we place ourselves back to the first half of the twentieth century. Herein, we imagine the highly cultivated Jewish-German family into which Theodor Adorno was born in 1903<sup>5</sup>. His very early years were lived out against the backdrop of the First World War and his education was completed during the time of the moderate socialism of the freshly created Weimar Republic. As he blossomed into adulthood, Adorno witnessed the build-up of National Socialism and saw Hitler's rise to power. Adorno is, in fact, perhaps best known for his intellectual reaction to the atrocities conveyed on the political tide of Nazism. He sought refuge from that barbarity, in what he perceived as an institution of like-minded colleagues, the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research, commonly known as the Frankfurt School, which he joined in 1938<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> *Dialectic of Enlightenment* was co-authored by Adorno and Horkheimer. As both authors claim responsibility for every word, it is true to say that this text represents each author individually as much as it represents both taken together. Thus it is entirely valid to discuss this work in relation to Adorno alone. As we draw upon further works which are solely authored by Adorno, our book taken as a whole is a study of a single author. N.B. For a good discussion of the similarities and differences between Adorno and Horkheimer, see Held, D. (1980), pp. 200–210; Rosen, M. in Rosen, M. and Mitchell, S. eds. (1983); Wiggershauss, R. (1994) or Zuidervaart, L. (1991), pp. 15–27.

<sup>5</sup> For a discussion of Adorno's familial relationship to Judaism, see Wiggershauss, 1994, p. 67.

<sup>6</sup> For more biographical details on Adorno, see the detailed account offered by Wiggershauss, 1994, pp. 66–94 or Zuidervaart, L. (1991), pp. 3–10.

The Frankfurt School was originally set up as an institute for Marxist-orientated study by Felix Weil, the son of a millionaire. It had been formally opened in 1923 and was first directed by the Marxist Carl Grunberg. Later, directorship was handed on to Max Horkheimer, who became Adorno's great friend<sup>7</sup>. The early Institute's principal members besides Horkheimer and Adorno included Eric Fromm, Friedrich Pollock, Leo Lowenthal, Herbert Marcuse, Franz Neumann, Otto Kirchheimer, and, of course, more complexly, Walter Benjamin<sup>8</sup>. Due to the political upheaval in Germany in the nineteen thirties and forties, the members of the Institute were forced to flee Europe. They went to North America, where they lived, researched, thought, and wrote until Nazism was defeated in Europe. Then in the mid forties the Institute, including Adorno, returned to Germany. Throughout these disruptive events the members of the Early Frankfurt Institute retained their sensitivity and intellectual conviction. To pain, horror, and bewilderment they responded with intense intellectual productivity<sup>9</sup>.

Generally speaking, the Early Frankfurt Institute's members were all animated by a concern to understand how the European world had degenerated into the barbarism represented by Nazi Germany. How was it possible that such brutality could arise from the midst of supposed civilisation? The disciplinary orientations through which they pursued this question centred around the social sciences and spread into areas as diverse as politics, sociology, literary theory, aesthetics, history, psychoanalysis, and, of course, philosophy.

The various members of the Early Frankfurt School were not only united in their aim to understand Western society's regression to barbarism, they were linked too by the tradition from whence they derived their intellectual stance. Broadly speaking, they were all committed to a project of 'criticism', be it philosophical, social, psychological, or political.

Expressed in very general terms, the Early Frankfurt School followed the conviction that within society, it was lies masked as truth, folly masked as reason, 'fantasy' veiled as insight, that entailed the collapse of a rational

<sup>7</sup> Of the early members of the Frankfurt School, the most significant relationship for Adorno was that with Horkheimer. There are several dimensions to this. First, Horkheimer influenced Adorno. Second, he was also a collaborator. Third, there were differences between the two which entailed distinct foci of analyses. Fourth, there were more profound philosophical differences which entailed explicit disagreements between them. Finally, implicit philosophical differences also existed which were not raised as points of debate. For details of some of the complexities of Adorno's relationship with Horkheimer, see (for intellectual distinctions) Rosen in Rosen, M. and Mitchell, S. eds. (1983); (for social and personal) Held, D. (1980); or, Wiggershauss, R. (1994).

<sup>8</sup> Later as we all know the Institute grew to include others, the most famous being Jürgen Habermas.

<sup>9</sup> See Held, D. (1980), chapter 1, Wiggershauss, R. (1994), chapter 1; Zuidervart, L. (1991), pp. 3–10.

society and resulted in corresponding widespread social and moral collapse. In short, it was society's false beliefs – which the Early Frankfurt School referred to as 'myths' – which accounted for why a supposedly enlightened society could degenerate and a phenomenon like Nazism, occur.

The Frankfurt School's response, most poignantly advocated through critical theory, was a particular kind of criticism. This can best be described as a general attempt to *unmask delusions*, that is, the *self-deceptions* which individuals, institutions, and Western culture at large had, they believed, sunk into. So critical theory was a process of 'internal' 'self-criticism' to remove delusions that society held about itself<sup>10</sup>.

One of the Early Frankfurt School's critical theories took the form of a critique of 'Enlightenment'. This somewhat idiosyncratic stance equated mid twentieth-century society with Enlightenment. In holding such a controversial view, they wished to say that their own times were part and parcel of an intellectual movement that is usually regarded as belonging to the eighteenth century. This view was neither accidental nor casual, which is to say they did not express their critique of society as a critique of 'Enlightenment' simply because they were bad historians (as some historians might have us believe<sup>11</sup>) but because they regarded modern Western society as a *continuation* of the project of 'Enlightenment'. Thus their use of the term 'Enlightenment' differs somewhat from the historical one. Let us embody this distinction by henceforth referring to the eighteenth-century historical notion by using the upper case, and Adorno and Horkheimer's concept enlightenment by deploying the lower case<sup>12</sup>.

#### ADORNO: INTELLECTUAL LIFE

Having seen the social and intellectual milieu of the Frankfurt School, we can now focus our attention upon Adorno's intellectual project itself. From the early 1930s until his death in 1969, Adorno wrote dozens of key texts which mirrored several of the projects of other members of the Early Frankfurt School, in particular Horkheimer, Lowenthal, and Marcuse<sup>13</sup>.

Generally speaking, Adorno's work belongs within the framework adopted by the Frankfurt School: he was animated by the same motivation – to understand how and why Western civilisation decayed to Nazi barbarism. He pursued this question through the rubric of philosophy with emphasis upon social forms of understanding. Adorno's main influences besides

<sup>10</sup> For more details, see Held, D. (1980) chapters 5 and 6, Wiggershauss, R. (1994), chapters 5 and 6, or Zuidervaart, L. (1991), pp. 15–27.

<sup>11</sup> See Sherratt, Y. (2000), p. 521.

<sup>12</sup> See Sherratt, Y. (2000), pp. 521–531.

<sup>13</sup> Wiggershaus, 1994, pp. 66–94.

Kant included Hegel, Marx, and Lukacs, also spreading to embrace Weber, Nietzsche, Freud, and Walter Benjamin.

Adorno wrote about what he considered to be the more general regression of contemporary Western society's politics, morals, reason, and arts, including the visual arts, literature, and most especially music. He expressed some of his criticisms through works of philosophy, for example in *Negative Dialectics*, he analysed canonical German philosophers, notably, Kant, Hegel, and Marx, and criticised others such as Husserl and Heidegger. He reflected upon society in works such as *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and *Minima Moralia* and in addition, he completed an array of remarkable studies on aesthetics, literature, society, and history. Further, he was notably influenced by psychoanalysis, and finally, he produced analyses of musical composers whilst also composing himself. Herein, the majority of his attention was focussed upon New Music, with mentors such as Berg and Schoenberg.

During the course of his life, Adorno wrote with remarkable intellectual continuity. Although in certain respects his own project was one of criticism, and was thereby of the same ilk as that of the Frankfurt School, Adorno's own mode of critical thinking was also in many ways quite distinct<sup>14</sup>.

#### ADORNO'S DISTINCTNESS

The philosophical thinkers from the Frankfurt School worked within the remit of critical theory. This entailed, among other things, that they focussed their criticism of Western society upon problems inherent within knowledge and reason. They believed first, that false knowledge and forms of reasoning were responsible for widespread social decay<sup>15</sup>. Second, they also believed that the very enlightenment forms of knowledge and reason themselves were inadequate – these being scientific and objectifying – and this inadequacy fed back and became responsible for the social decay of enlightenment itself<sup>16</sup>.

Horkheimer was the theorist who developed the specific idea of a critical theory<sup>17</sup>. With this he offered a distinct kind of critical reasoning. This was to

<sup>14</sup> See Adorno, T. (1973), Buck-Morss, S. (1977), esp. chapters 2 and 3; Held, D. (1980), pp. 200–222; Sherratt, Y. (1998a).

<sup>15</sup> The Frankfurt School, in general, and Adorno and Horkheimer in particular, are not careful in distinguishing between the concepts of knowledge and reason in the manner that traditional Anglo-American epistemologists would. This is due, in Adorno and Horkheimer's case, to the complex socio-historical view of the epistemological wherein the division between rational processes and empirical ones is indistinct. We follow their usage here and discuss reason and knowledge together.

<sup>16</sup> These points are principally summaries of the key ideas from Adorno, T. (1973), Adorno, T. (1974), and Adorno, T. and Horkheimer, M. (1979); and also, Horkheimer, M. (1986).

<sup>17</sup> 'Traditional and Critical Theory', Horkheimer, M. (1986).

be a more self-reflective and historically self-conscious mode of reasoning: It was only this which he considered appropriate to the human, or social, sphere of meaning. He developed this against the scientific and objectifying kinds of reason ubiquitous in enlightenment, and appropriate, in his view, to the natural sciences only<sup>18</sup>. In particular, critical theory was an alternative to, what he termed, 'traditional theories' – all those which were objectifying of the social world<sup>19</sup>.

Horkheimer's critical theory was definitive of the Early Frankfurt School and taken up in a later generation by Habermas. Although he opposed practices usually regarded as typifying enlightenment, namely, moves to bring objectivising kinds of reason into the humanities, Horkheimer's critical theory remained firmly entrenched within the remit of what he perceived to be enlightenment. Indeed the whole point of Horkheimer's criticism was that it was more in the spirit of enlightenment than traditional (scientific) approaches to studying society. Horkheimer was dedicated to the same pursuit of critical reasoning as the enlightenment itself, so that the development of critical theory was an attempt to uphold what he perceived to be the true values of enlightenment.

Adorno's distinctness from Horkheimer, as well as from other Frankfurt School members, lay in his stepping outside of the sphere of enlightenment. In spite of the fact that Adorno agreed with the Frankfurt School in general, and with Horkheimer in particular, that enlightenment reason was the fundamental problem within Western society – he disagreed with them insofar as he took his critique further. He criticised enlightenment reason from deeper foundations.

Adorno drew upon arguments from arenas other than those specific to enlightenment reason alone. Armed with these Adorno took the project of the critique of enlightenment reason further than any Frankfurt School member had done. Enlightenment reason had to prove that it was itself rational, not through an attempt to generate critical self-awareness as was Horkheimer's remit. For Adorno, enlightenment reason had to prove that it was rational through arguments borrowed from psychology<sup>20</sup>. Specifically, Adorno drew from Freudian psychoanalysis to develop a critical analysis of enlightenment reason and corresponding subjectivity<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> His criticism is most strongly directed against positivism which he saw as the deepest incursion of scientific practices into the humanities.

<sup>19</sup> See Horkheimer, M. (1986).

<sup>20</sup> Note that Adorno does not take care to distinguish between the enlightenment idea of reason and the 'empirical actuality' of reason as it occurs in his own contemporary society.

<sup>21</sup> Note therefore that he draws from the psychological to explain the social. In this he is not a forerunner by any means as Freud himself had used his psychoanalysis to explain social behaviour in, for instance, *Civilisation and Its Discontents*, which, of course, was hugely influential upon the Frankfurt School.

Having attained a distinctness through stepping outside of discussions about enlightenment reason, Adorno then returned his discussion to this very sphere<sup>22</sup>. His overarching aim (like the Frankfurt School's) was to make enlightenment reason more rational. That is, he too was an advocate of enlightenment values. In going beyond traditional (German) discussions of enlightenment reason and in using arguments from psychoanalysis to develop his own critical perspective, Adorno's critique of enlightenment became one of the most unusual and sophisticated in the twentieth century.

#### ADORNO'S PRINCIPAL TEXTS

The most important texts of Adorno's critique of enlightenment span contributions to German philosophy and embrace key works of social criticism, the philosophy of history, epistemology<sup>23</sup>, aesthetics, and, of course, the deployment of Freudian psychoanalysis. Undoubtedly, of the array of his studies, those of particular importance are: *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (co-authored with Horkheimer), *Negative Dialectics*, *Aesthetic Theory*, and *Minima Moralia*.

Of these, the first, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is arguably the pivotal text of the Early Frankfurt School. Herein, Adorno and Horkheimer set out a view representative of the school's social analysis. They depict a philosophy of history of Western society which claims that the entire history of the West is one of oscillations between two extremes, namely myth and enlightenment. This philosophy of history also acts as a critique of enlightenment. They build upon the German post-Kantian tradition and psychoanalysis and also include branches of social, literary, and anthropological theory to map out a philosophy of Western history<sup>24</sup>. *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is both an instance of Horkheimer's brand of critical theory and also represents Adorno's own definitive brand of critical thinking.

*Negative Dialectics*, solely authored by Adorno, both analyses and embodies his own conception of critical thinking. In the main it is a contribution to epistemology<sup>25</sup> and herein Adorno criticises the predominant kinds of reasoning available in his contemporary enlightenment society. First, he criticises scientific kinds of knowledge, which he regards as objectifying and unsuitable for understanding the social world. Second, he is sceptical of analytic, or logic-based, forms of reason, that is, reason as typified by the Anglo-American philosophical tradition. Finally, he is also sceptical of

<sup>22</sup> In fact, from psychoanalysis.

<sup>23</sup> It should be borne in mind that Adorno himself is against the term 'epistemology' as he opposes the idea that one can distinguish either reason or knowledge from the socio-historical processes within which they are embedded. A problem arises from this for us, as we need to use the term 'epistemology' to demarcate thought processes from other human activities, so that we will, in fact, contrary to Adorno's own usage, refer to 'epistemology'.

<sup>24</sup> Schmidt, J. (1998) pursues biographical details and maps out influences upon the text.

<sup>25</sup> Recall that Adorno is adamantly against 'epistemology' as we have indicated above.



systematic, or 'grand' theories, that is, those brands of reasoning typical of his own German tradition.

Like critical theory, Adorno's *Negative Dialectics* is an attempt to develop a critical alternative to the above mentioned modes of understanding. More especially, like critical theory, it is an alternative to the (objectifying) practices of the 'traditional theories' that Horkheimer had identified<sup>26</sup>. However, whereas critical theory was a critical and self-reflective alternative to traditional theories, Adorno's *Negative Dialectics* was an attempt to negate many of the traditional features of theorising within the very mode of reasoning itself. That is, its focus was more upon the form of thought, which Adorno regarded as depending upon the practice of 'identification'<sup>27</sup>. Most scholars regard Adorno's critical thought, however, as breaking apart any possibility of reasoning, and he is often seen as presenting little more than a 'cul de sac': in Jay's words, 'Negative Dialectics is the bleakest expression of Adorno's melancholy science'<sup>28</sup>.

Turning to examine Adorno's notable contribution to German aesthetics, in *Aesthetic Theory* we find, first, a contribution to the criticism of the major mainstream traditions of the discipline. Second, we find the development of Adorno's own influential aesthetic theory, centred mainly around the concept of the 'New', although also containing important arguments for *art* in relation to *knowledge* and *reason*.

*Minima Moralia*, written in a literary, aphoristic style, contains the use, criticism, and development of key Freudian ideas. Adorno shapes these early psychoanalytic concepts for the criticism of contemporary Western society.

Each of these seminal texts is on the one hand, a discrete contribution to a particular discipline: *Dialectic Of Enlightenment* to the philosophy of history and social criticism, *Negative Dialectics* to German epistemology, *Aesthetic Theory* to German aesthetics, and *Minima Moralia* to literary criticism and psychological analysis; on the other hand, each of these texts relates to each other, thus forming an overarching systematic philosophical perspective unique to Adorno.

## ADORNO'S RECEPTION

### Disciplinary Contributions

Adorno's work has been well researched in the secondary literature. First, a large and varied body of studies examine Adorno's discrete contribution to all the particular disciplines mentioned above. These range from

<sup>26</sup> See Horkheimer's 'Traditional and Critical Theory', Horkheimer, M. (1986).

<sup>27</sup> See Chapter 4 of this monograph for a detailed analysis of negative dialectics, also known as non-identity thinking.

<sup>28</sup> Jay, M. (1984), p. 241.



analyses of his works on specific areas of the arts – for instance, musicology<sup>29</sup>, literary theory<sup>30</sup>, the visual arts<sup>31</sup> – to other works pertaining to Adorno's sociological<sup>32</sup>, political<sup>33</sup>, or philosophical contributions<sup>34</sup>. However, in spite of the richness of research within each disciplinary orientation, there is little exploration of the systematic connection between ideas from discrete areas<sup>35</sup>. Due no doubt to the focus of this literature, it leaves open the question of how key concepts from certain of his seminal texts relate to each other<sup>36</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> For a musicologist's account see Paddison, M. (1993) or for a sociological account, Blomster, W. V. (1994); Witkin, R. (1998). See also Bernstein, J. (1994) Vol. 3, pp. 211–300 and Vol. 4, pp. 1–121.

<sup>30</sup> See Hohendahl, P. (1995) and Hohendahl, P. (1997), pp. 62–82 for a discussion of Adorno on language; see also Pensky, M. (1997) and the essays therein by Bernstein, J. M. (1997); Hansen, M. B. (1997), and Wurzer, W. S. (1997). See also Weber-Nicholsen, S. (1997) Zuidervaat, L., and Huhn, T. eds. (1997), who explore literary issues in Adorno.

<sup>31</sup> For the visual arts and aesthetics, see the excellent studies by Bernstein, J. (1992), Wellmer, A. (1997), pp. 112–134; and Zuidervaat, L. (1991). For a discussion of cultural issues see Benjamin, A. ed. (1991); Dews, P. (1987) offers a theoretically sophisticated account as does Geuss, R. (1999). Homer, S. (1998) through his discussion of Jameson on Adorno touches on many key issues. Looking at specific aesthetic concepts, for instance, 'mimesis', see Fruchtl, J. (1986), Hansen, M. B. (1997), pp. 83–111, Schultz, K. (1990); and on 'aura', see, Recki, B. (1988), Sherratt, Y. (1998), and Weber-Nicholsen (1997).

<sup>32</sup> Some examine his contribution to sociological theory within which they may look to Adorno's criticisms of the social sciences, for instance, Bottomore, T. (1984), Held, D. (1980), Wiggershaus, R. (1986).

<sup>33</sup> For his political contribution to critical theory and its implications, see Benhabib, S. (1986), Brunkhorst, H. (1999); for his contribution to political theory and the history of political thought, see, again Brunkhorst, H. (1999) and Connerton, P. (1980), Krahel, H.-J. (1994), Schmidt (1998).

<sup>34</sup> For Adorno's contribution to epistemology, see, Buck-Morss, S. (1978), Zuidervaat, L. (1991), pp. 48–52; for moral philosophy, see Geuss, R. (1999), pp. 78–115; for Adorno's contribution to the philosophy of aesthetics, see Bernstein, J. (1992), Zuidervaat, L. (1991), or for Adorno in relation to contemporary continental philosophy, see the thoughtful studies by Dews, P. (1987) and (1995).

<sup>35</sup> This, in spite of Adorno's well-known claim that you had to read all his works to understand him.

<sup>36</sup> These interconnections are often discussed, for example, Weber Nicholsen talks about the relations between philosophy, literature, and aesthetics. Wellmer discusses the link between epistemology, philosophy, and aesthetics. Most authors draw upon several of Adorno's main texts for their arguments but there is still much work to be done on a systematic interdisciplinary examination of key connecting concepts like 'mimesis', 'aura', and 'non-identity thinking'. Moreover, how his psychological views relate to his philosophy of history as expressed in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is notably under-studied. Thus concepts which are rather extensively written about (for example, the aesthetic of 'aura', Adorno's use of the Freudian notion 'ego', the 'historical concept of 'Enlightenment', and the thesis of its regression to myth; or indeed Adorno's concept of 'non-identity thinking'), although each is properly studied within its own terms, are rather poorly understood in relation to other concepts. For instance, Weber Nicholsen (1997), points out the interesting intersection of aesthetic and epistemological ideas but doesn't philosophically demonstrate their link (see my review in Sherratt, Y. 1998c). She does not answer *how* Adorno's aesthetic concepts, eg. aura, have cognitive properties.

Second, a further extensive body of scholarship focuses predominantly upon Adorno's overarching philosophical perspective. These studies can be divided into two groups. First, there are those with a strong view about Adorno, that is, they offer an interpretation of his philosophical perspective. Second, there are those that direct their scholarship towards Adorno's intellectual heritage, looking here mainly to his relation with German philosophy and in particular, to the purported centrality of his debt to Marx.

Examining more closely these bodies of scholarship, it is clear that the first category, namely those offering an interpretation of Adorno's overall philosophical project have a very distinct thread of continuity running through them, to wit, a consensus about his 'negativity'<sup>37</sup>. Most Adorno scholars regard him as 'pessimistic', the bleakest representative of the Early Frankfurt School<sup>38</sup>. Within this overarching consensus there are of course certain distinctions. First, a significant body of interpreters depict Adorno as principally a Marxist<sup>39</sup>. Second, and relatedly, the vast majority consider his work through the light of the Early Frankfurt School's critical theory<sup>40</sup>. Third, others believe he is the anticipator or articulator of a form of post-structuralism, for instance Pensky, who claims that 'Adorno and contemporary post-structuralist theory certainly bear some intuitively clear affinities'<sup>41</sup>. Finally, very few scholars as noted above, examine his

<sup>37</sup> Note that these studies are not criticised here, either by arguing that they are flawed or that they entirely misrepresent Adorno. The contribution of these works is significant, but they do, however, represent Adorno in a particular light, and we wish to show further dimensions to his philosophy. We do not dispute Adorno's negativity but claim this is only one half of his philosophy and emphasise the strength of his Utopianism. See later in this introduction for an indication of the nature of the link we argue for, between Adorno's negativity and Utopianism.

<sup>38</sup> Martin Jay's (1973) phrase, but a sentiment shared by Buck Morss, S. (1977); Roberts, D. ed. (1991) – Roberts, accepting that Adorno can only be negative believes we have to go beyond him for anything positive; Rose, G. (1978) – an excellent study which again, focusses on Adorno's negativity.

<sup>39</sup> Sophisticated accounts are those given by Bernstein, J. (1992), Buck-Morss, S. (1977), Jameson, F. (1990), Jay, M. (1984), and Rosen (1996).

<sup>40</sup> See Benhabib, S. (1986) – a study in the context of Marxist derived critical theory; the many studies collected in Bernstein, J., ed. (1994), vols. I, III, and IV. Geuss, R. (1981), although this focusses upon the later Frankfurt School; Held, D. (1980); Rosen, M. (1983), pp. 98–116; Zuidervaart, L. (1991), pp. 15–27. These views do not, of course, contradict those which emphasise Adorno's Marxism, as they interpret critical theory as based upon Marxism (rather than, say, being a principally Hegelian-derived, or indeed Kantian-derived, Idealist form of critical theory).

<sup>41</sup> Pensky, (1997), pp. 5. See also pp. 1–22. Pensky goes on to say, 'Of course, this... places Adorno in a proximity with the later development of poststructuralist theory' (Pensky, M. (1997), p. 5), and further Pensky refers to Adorno's 'negative dialectic and *deconstruction*' (my emphasis) (Pensky, M. (1997) p. 6). See also Nagele, R. (1982–3); Ryan, M. (1982), pp. 73–81. Meanwhile, Zuidervaart, L. (1991), pp. 248–274, has interesting points to make about Adorno and 'post-modernism'. A post-structuralist interpretation of Adorno is one which I dispute, and develop an alternative to throughout the entire course of my