

History and Freedom, by T. Adorno

a. People / Organizations:

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b. Quotes:

- "the only way to capture reality and the true experience of it is to go beyond the immediate givens of experience" - Author (pg. 30)
- "Adorno is concerned with internal mediation..." - Hilmar Tillack (pg. 116)
- "**what exists is not the ultimate reality** - or perhaps we should say: **what exists is not just what it claims to be.**" - Author (pg. 138)
 - "Interpretation in fact means to become conscious of the traces of what points beyond mere existence..." - Author (pg. 138)
- "**A human being who is not mindful at every moment of the potential for extreme horror at the present time must be so bemused by the veil of ideology that he might just as well stop thinking at all.**" - Author (pg. 203)
- "**you need to free yourselves completely and utterly from the idea that everything that has ever existed is able to preserve itself in a form identical with what it once was.** It is possible, and may even be the decisive factor that enabled human beings to emerge; it is possible, I say, for something age-old to survive and nevertheless to become radically different from what it originally was." - Author (pg. 236)
- "Ladies and gentlemen, we have come to an end. I am fully conscious, as I have already mentioned, of the fragmentary nature of what I have been saying, although I have at least made the attempt to pull the different threads together. The ideas I have tried to convey have not always been easy to grasp, but if you have followed me attentively I hope that you will have been able to understand some of the very difficult material that I have been attempting to communicate to you." - Author (pg. 266)
 - **this is Adorno's methodological defect - his 'immanent critique' is exhaustingly fragmentary.*

c. General Notes:

- Lecture 1 (pg. 3)
 - "freedom is limited to self-preservation" (pg. 3)
 - "nothing seems less plausible than the claim that there is progress in the consciousness of freedom..." (pg. 4)
 - "**...the growing concentration of the economy, the executive and the bureaucracy has advanced to such an extent that people are reduced more and more to the status of functions. What freedom remains is superficial,** part of the cherished private life, and lacks substance as far as people's ability to determine their own lives is concerned. In reality they are only given free rein in limited activities because they could not stand it other-wise, and all such license is subject to cancellation." (pg. 5)
 - "Even in the sphere of consumption...they have become appendages of the machinery. Goods are not produced for their sake and their consumption satisfies people's own desires only very indirectly and to a very limited extent. Instead, they have to make do with what the production line spews out. Freedom becomes impoverished, jejune, and is reduced to the possibility of sustaining one's own life. Mankind has reached a point today where even those on the commanding heights cannot enjoy their positions because even these have been whittled away to the point where they are merely functions of their own function. Even captains of industry spend their time working through mountains of documents and shifting them from one side of their desk to the other, instead of ignoring office hours and reflecting in freedom. Were they to pursue the latter course, their businesses would collapse in chaos. Where an optimum of freedom seems to have survived people cannot avail themselves of it." (pg. 5-6)
 - "Freedom is also a realm of subjective experience; that is to say, it is not just to be assessed by some objective standard. Where a subjective interest, a consciousness, is absent, there can be no freedom." (pg. 6)
 - "It is an illusion to imagine that freedom is a substantial value merely because words are long-lived. **Freedom survives only in remote mountainous regions where there is still resistance to totalitarian tyranny.** Elsewhere, it has long since acquired the odium of obsolescence. What is of significance for the internal structure of individuals today is a phenomenon identified by psychoanalysis. This is the phenomenon of ego weakness. David Riesman speaks of inner-directed and other-directed characters. By the latter, the predominant type today, he means the social character whose actions are guided by outside influences. In his case the discrepancy between the development of his ego and the power of the forces that bear down on him has the effect that his ego does not reach the point of a dialectic between his internal and external powers. In consequence he simply conforms. The chaining of people to consumption is an index of this. Political apathy has also become the universal rule in all countries now, as long as direct personal interests are not affected. It should be thought of in the same context. The progressive democratization of political institutions will do nothing to mitigate the loss of a sense of freedom, the growing indifference or the enfeeblement of the desire for freedom because the socio-economic reality of even the freest political institutions stands in the way of such a sense of freedom." (pg. 6-7)
 - "People are not as bound to authority as was supposed as recently as some thirty years ago because of their identification with their father imago. **What we are witnessing is rather a neutralizing effect resulting from the pressure to conform. This leads to a closing off of the entire horizon of freedom and dependency. Where no freedom is experienced, there can no longer be any authority.** The vanishing of this conceptual pair, freedom and authority, is more significant today than the growing apathy. This process of neutralization is what we must be concerned with. **Resistance to the routinization of science is another task that still remains to philosophy.**" (pg. 7)
- Lecture 2 (pg. 10)
 - "In these lectures I wish to deal only with one specific problem of history, namely the relation between the universal, the universal tendency, and the particular, that is, the individual." (pg. 11)
 - "...in the society in which we live, every single progressive act is always brought about at the expense of individuals or groups who are thereby condemned to fall under the wheels. Thus because of their particularity, because they disregard the organization of society as a whole, each of these progressive events means that there are always groups who are their victims and who legitimately doubt their value." (pg. 12)
 - "The fact is that particularity will be the mark of all historical movements as long as there is no such thing as what we might call a human race, that is to say, a society that is conscious of itself and has its fate in its own hands. As long as that remains true, all progress will be particular, not just in the sense that progress will always come about at the expense of groups who are not directly involved in it, and who have to bear the brunt of progressive changes, but in the sense that progress has a particular character by nature." (pg. 12)
 - "I think it a mistake to conceive of this idea of a progressive rationality as something incompatible with particularity. I believe that if we are able to appreciate the particularity of the universal, in this instance of progressive rationality, we shall understand a little about the dialectics of the universal and the particular as a structure of history. This is because **the universal principle contains a particular within it as a bad, negative element.**" (pg. 13)
 - "I should like to refer you here to the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, by Horkheimer and myself, a book that at long last is due to appear again in the foreseeable future. **This domination of nature was not self-reflective but asserted its control over its so-called materials by subsuming, classifying, subordinating and otherwise cutting them short.** By materials here we include the materials of nature, the human beings that are to be dominated, and even the subjection of one's own inner nature to the process of rationality. And this contains an idea that I think you should bear in mind since I believe that it is of key importance for our argument. It is the idea that **the principle I have called the universal principle,**

- the principle of progressive rationality, contains an internal conflict.** In other words, this kind of rationality exists only in so far as it can subjugate something different from and alien to itself. We can put it even more strongly: it can exist only by identifying everything that is caught up in its machinery, by levelling it and by defining it in its alterity as something that resists it and, we may even go so far as to say, something that is hostile to it. In other words, then, antagonism, conflict, is in fact postulated in this principle of dominant universality, of unreflecting rationality, in precisely the same way as antagonism to a subservient group is postulated in a system of rule. And the stage at which self-awareness might lead this rationality to bring about change - that stage has still not been reached." (pg. 13)
- "...**universal history exists precisely to the same degree as the principle of particularity,** or, as I now prefer to call it, the principle of antagonism, persists and perpetuates itself." (pg. 14)
 - "The important point here is that you should not think of the spirit of which I am speaking as something absolutely autonomous. It is true that the spirit has made itself independent and it is equally true that, through its potent instruments, logic and mathematics, it has freed itself from the conditions that brought it forth. Because of the division of labour into mental and manual work, spirit even appears to itself as something absolute and autonomous - as a method that includes its opposite within itself. But we should not buy into this view of spirit. **The evolution of spirit as rationality, as the reason that dominates nature, or as what I have called technical rationality** - in other words, the evolution of the technical forces of production in toto - **is the product of the material needs of human beings, of what they need for their preservation;** and the categories of the spirit constantly and necessarily contain these needs as the necessary elements of their form. **Spirit is the product of human beings and of the human labour process** just as much as it informs and ultimately dominates human labour processes as a method, **as technical rationality.** It is vital that we should not hypostatize the concept of spirit, but that we should instead see it in its dependence upon a concept of life, upon the need to help sustain the human life in which it has its roots. Only if we do this will we be able to understand how spirit in the shape of technical rationality could have contrived to achieve such a unifying control over the life of mankind as has increasingly been the case. **Spirit is no absolute first thing. The postulate that spirit is primary is an illusion,** an illusion created, and necessarily created, by itself. But by the same token it is something produced by the reality of a life bent on self-preservation, something that postulates itself as primary only so that it may criticize existing reality or gain control over it. I spoke earlier of the absence of self-reflection on the part of spirit and of technical rationality, an absence of reflection that had the unfortunate consequence of forcing reason into a strange and paradoxical relationship with blind, historical fate. But this was caused not least by the fact that spirit misconceives itself as primary, instead of perceiving its interconnectedness with actual life." (pg. 16)
 - **"The growth of rationality is something like the growing ability of the human species to preserve itself or, as we may also say, the growth in the universal principle of the human self. And the progress of this rationality in its unreflective form is at bottom nothing other than the exploitation of nature transferred to men and continuing to work in them.** However, in so far as it is this exploitation and in so far as it is bound up with such concepts as exploitation as well as with what is opposed to it and subjugated by it, **this progressive reason harbours within itself an element of self-destruction.** I told you about this last time when I attempted to portray the experience of the course of history as it is available to us in the here and now as in essence the experience of its negativity, that is to say, as the experience of the way in which we are impotently dragged along in its wake. In other words, then, **this progressive instrumental reason is the embodiment of the antagonism that consists in the relation between the supposedly free human subject, who for that very reason is in fact not yet free at all, and the things on which his freedom is built.** The antagonistic character of progressive rationality is the aspect of it that turns the universal, the universal that is in the process of asserting itself, into the particular which causes such anguish to us who are likewise particulars." (pg. 16-17)
 - **"...[the] universal is a metaphysical principle, it exists only in your mind; in reality there is nothing but spontaneous individual phenomena, the individual acts of individual human beings;** and this universal is no more than an idea you have let others foist on you. Nowadays, there really is something like a perversion of consciousness, a reversing of what is primary and what secondary, which goes so far that, for purely epistemological reasons that have by now become automatic, we let ourselves be talked out of everything we experience at any given moment as the determining forces in our lives, and we are taught to regard them instead as a metaphysical sleight of hand." (pg. 18)
 - Lecture 3 (pg. 19)
 - **"...dialectics is necessarily and permanently concerned with the critique of mere facticity, of mere immediacy..."** (pg. 19)
 - **where aesthetic theory is Adorno's predominant methodology.*
Cf. Aesthetics https://www.binseelsnotes.com/files/uqgd/d7b063_ee30eb30d1504fc38543bdc3409951ee.pdf
 - "the very concept of 'fact' ensures that it cannot be insulated from its surrounding environment..." (pg. 20)
 - "we can speak of mediation only if immediate reality, only if primary experience, survives" (pg. 20-21)
 - "...for in reality...the fact that people pursue their own individual interests makes them at the same time the exponents and executors of that same historical objectivity that is ready to turn against their interests at any moment and thus may assert itself over their heads. There is a contradiction here since it is claimed that what asserts itself despite people's own efforts does so by virtue of them, by virtue of their own interests. But since the society in which we live is antagonistic, and since the course of the world to which we are harnessed is antagonistic too, what we might term this logical contradiction should not be thought of as merely a contradiction, merely the product of an inadequate formulation. It is a contradiction that arises from the situation. To put it in metaphysical terms, it states simply that **the very constraints that are imposed on people by the course of the world, and that compel them to attend to their own interests and nothing beyond them, is the very same force that turns against people and asserts itself over their heads as a blind and almost unavoidable fate. It is this structure of things that leads us to the point I have been aiming at:** namely, a conception of the philosophy of history that permits us to comprehend history, that is to say, to go beyond its bounds as mere existence [Dasein] and to understand it as something meaningless. And **this meaningfulness is itself nothing but the dreadful antagonistic state of affairs that I have been attempting to describe to you.** So the primacy of universal reason is not to be understood as the primacy of some substantive rational force beyond human beings that directs human actions - and this is something I should like you to understand, since I regard it as of prime importance for the theory of history." (pg. 26-27)
 - "...the meaning of history always comes across to the individual as something blind, heteronomous and potentially destructive. And this unity of the to-be-penetrated and the impenetrable, or, if I may express it differently, the unity of unity and discontinuity, is in fact the problem of the philosophy of history and how to theorize it." (pg. 28)
 - Lecture 4 (pg. 29)
 - "the only way to capture reality and the true experience of it is to go beyond the immediate givens of experience" (pg. 30)
 - "What I mean to say is that this particular factor which, like every immediacy, is an indispensable element in triggering the universal, as I explained to you in the last few lectures - **this particular factor is itself mediated by the universal which would not exist without it.** In this instance, it was mediated by the development of the forces of production in the hands of the middle classes. What this tells us about the theory of history, then, is that, taken in isolation, none of these factors would suffice to give even an approximate explanation of the course of history. In short **you need to grasp the complexity of the pattern, by which I mean the overall process that asserts itself, the dependence of that global process on the specific situation, and then again the mediation of the specific situation by the overall process.**" (pg. 37)
 - Lecture 5 (pg. 39)
 - **"My discussion of the French Revolution may well have been far too abstract and schematic.** But if you follow my train of thought for a moment you will realize that, once you take all the relevant factors into account, **the philosophy of history merges with the writing of history.** In other words, you

- can really only do philosophy of history seriously if you enter into the subject matter of history itself with all the nuances and distinctions that we struggled with last time." (pg. 39)
- "I have tried to show you how the philosophy of history, that is, the interpretation of historical events and the philosophical understanding of these events, not only presupposes historiography proper, but also moves in the direction of history-writing in the process of explicating them." (pg. 40)
 - "Thus it is important to realize that the philosophy of history does not fall outside the scope of historical research, but that the constellation of historical events, both as a whole and in detail, should regard itself as the philosophy of history proper. But the converse is also true. By this I mean that philosophy should have the tendency to become history just as readily as history should become philosophy." (pg. 40)
- "I am sorry if you find it confusing for me to set about obscuring a distinction that I have only just clarified, but it cannot be my task to make difficult and complex matters appear simpler than they are merely from a desire to present everything to you in an easily digestible form. The task of thought is to attempt to present this complexity to you in as precise a way as possible, even when the matter in hand is extremely difficult and complex. To put it in aesthetic terms, my aim is to present what is vague in a conceptually clear shape." (pg. 42)
 - "Nominalism believes that the universal is no more than a conclusion arising from the countless particularities which are then brought together in a single concept." (pg. 43)
 - "And here I have reached the point where it becomes clear that, even though they are highly innovative, Hegel's philosophy of history and his construction of dialectics really belong to traditional theory; they remain imprisoned in a Platonic framework. Once reason...has lost its relation to the individuals who are concerned with self-preservation, it degenerates into unreason." (pg. 43)
 - "**I have already said that when the concept of reason becomes abstract, when it becomes separated from individual interests craving fulfilment, it turns into unreason.**" (pg. 44)
 - "...the principle of self-preservation is itself irrational and particular if it is restricted to individuals..." (pg. 44)
 - "if I may borrow an expression from my friend Horkheimer, that the constitution of humanity as a species amounts to a gigantic public company for the exploitation of nature, without involving much alteration in the idea of particularity. In all probability, we would have to reflect far more deeply about the principle underlying reason, namely the principle of self-preservation, if we are to make much progress beyond the simple idea of gathering everything up in the notion of species. We may add a further point regarding that quite logical and consistent perversion of universality which involves the idea of the whole as opposed to the particular, while simultaneously converting the whole into a particular. We may point out that this perverse conclusion is what triumphed in fascist race theory according to which this universality was twisted into a natural relation, naturalized and thereby turned into a particular. Then, like all particulars, this one became increasingly intolerant of other particulars, choosing instead to beat the life out of them whenever possible. This will perhaps explain to you why the dialectic of reason or the dialectic of Enlightenment is a matter of such profound importance in history, so much so that we must conclude - and I perhaps exaggerate in order to make the point - that, in the historical form in which we encounter it to this day, reason is both reason and unreason in one." (pg. 45)
 - "**The concept of the primacy of reason contains the idea that reason has the task of taming, suppressing, ordering and governing whatever is unreasonable, instead of absorbing it into itself in a spirit of reconciliation. Thus this notion of reason as domination is inherent in the concept of reason from its inception and the idea of conflict is implicit in it from the outset.** Accordingly, we should not be too surprised if conflict continues to reproduce itself through reason; that is, if reason continues to flip over into unreason. The more powerful the world spirit is (and it has never been as powerful as it is today, when we have all been reduced to the status of its agents), the more powerful the world spirit is, the more we are justified in doubting whether the world spirit really is the world spirit, rather than its opposite. This leads us to conclude that the primacy of the totality in history represents anything but the victory of the Idea. We can formulate it like that or, alternatively, we might say - as I have already indicated - that the world spirit exists as the universal that comes to prevail; but that it is no world spirit, that it is not spirit, but that for the most part it is the negativity that Hegel had shifted from the universal to its victims, to what he refers to as 'worthless existence', to mere individuality. We can find evidence in the great philosophies of spirit to support our belief in the dubious nature of the concept of spirit at the very point where it becomes so inflated that it identifies itself with the totality, where it lays claim to the totality. The evidence is so powerful that I would like to commend it to you. Far from encouraging, requiring and stimulating spirit to become a real force in the world, **this philosophy of absolute spirit displays an almost universal tendency to discourage everything one might think of as spirit in a concrete sense, namely the ability of individuals to reflect, to understand and to criticize.**" (pg. 45-46)
- Lecture 6 (pg. 49)
 - "In my view, **the crucial contribution to a theory of history is to be found in the idea that mankind preserves itself not despite all the irrationalities and conflicts, but by virtue of them.**" (pg. 50)
 - **"...society, the totality, does not simply survive despite conflict, but because of it"** (pg. 50)
 - "You will best be able to understand this perhaps if you reflect that in the developed bourgeois society all life is dominated by the principle of exchange and, at the same time, by the necessity - which is imposed on the many individuals - of securing for oneself as large a portion as possible of the social product in the course of this struggle of all against all. But, and this is something that was understood quite clearly by the old liberal theory of Adam Smith and David Ricardo, thanks to this antagonism, thanks to this conflict of interests, the machinery of society does in fact succeed in maintaining itself. This is to be understood in the sense that use values are produced not to satisfy human needs but for profit. I do not wish to involve myself in lengthy explanations of Marxist theory and so will just say that by use values I mean the satisfaction of needs, either natural needs or, as is almost universally the case, needs as mediated historically. **The only reason why goods are produced is so that the producers, by which I mean those who control the means of production, should be able as a class to profit from them as much as possible. This of course is what sets up the principle of conflict: between those who pocket the proceeds and those from whom the profit is made in the final analysis, and who therefore miss out on it. But the life of human beings is reproduced only by going through this process which contains the conflict, the class relationship, within itself.** Down to the present day life has succeeded in perpetuating itself only because of this division in society, because a number of people in control confront others who have been separated from the means of production. And given this reality, the needs of human beings, the satisfaction of human beings, is never more than a sideshow and in great measure no more than ideology. If it is said that everything exists only for human beings, it sounds hollow because in reality production is for profit and people are planned in as consumers from the outset. In short, it sounds hollow because of this built-in conflict." (pg. 50-51)
 - "Now it is an open question - and one that I shall make no attempt to answer today - whether or not the human race could only have been perpetuated by means of conflict, whether conflict was historically an absolute necessity. In other words, does it make any sense at all to conceive of a course of history that does not involve this conflict? **The most powerful evidence that things could not have been otherwise is to be seen in mankind's commerce with physical nature.** For nature began by inserting humanity into a situation of lack, where people had too little, and it was only with the aid of those particular forms of organization that it was possible to cope with this situation. They could not have done so without the relations of domination that forced people to come to terms with shortages and to make them good. This was the factor that made conflict inevitable." (pg. 52)
 - "The fact is that **people tend to regard what is older and pristine as somehow better because it comes from the inner nature of man, whereas any**

- casual glance at the wretched existence of primitive peoples who have survived but who still live in Stone Age conditions ought to persuade us to abandon every such idealization of primeval society once and for all.** But, as I have said, the interest of Marx and Engels in this question, which may appear somewhat pointless to you, was really quite different. The reason why they placed such enormous weight on the idea that the origins of conflict are to be found in the economy and in the historically necessary structure of human relations of production, rather than in power relations, was that otherwise their own point of view might have led them to believe that, in analogy to those mythical and legendary conditions of primitive society, it would only have been necessary to alter the existing power relations to bring about a rational society, without taking economic conditions into account. Thus the interest in such questions is not in the nature of origins, despite what the title of Engels's book might lead us to suppose, but in highly topical political issues." (pg. 53-54)
- "The driving motif of the socialist way of thinking about history was the idea that the revolution is just around the corner, that it can break out at any moment and that therefore everything, the entire construction of history included, should be interpreted retrospectively in terms of the requirements of the impending revolutionary situation. And since these thinkers were convinced, and rightly so no doubt, of the profound historical impotence of anarchism, they pursued the traces of anarchist thinking back into the dim and distant past, and they did so with a relentless rigour that makes one shudder, all the more so since we now know how this aspect of socialism later developed." (pg. 54)
 - "...these are the themes that I have been trying to explore today - themes that put any aspiring social critique into such a weak position. Its position is weak not only because existing society can confront any criticism with its own power and glory, but also because it can be pointed out that there could be no possibility even of something different and better, that is, of a rationally organized society, without a means-ends rationality with its domination of nature. And it is precisely that means-ends rationality whose world-historical consequence has been all those disasters whose memory has been repressed or eradicated to a simply unimaginable degree by the victorious powers of history. Only an actually achieved identity would lead to the reconciliation of opposing interests - and not simply the comforting thought that the quintessence of all conflicts would, by making life possible, permit something like reconciliation among all mankind, namely their continued existence. And never can reconciliation be the merely asserted reconciliation brought about by the violence towards everything subsumed under it. To sum it up in a rather bolder way, **an achieved identity, in other words, the elimination of conflict, the reconciliation of all those who are opposed to one another because their interests are irreconcilable, an achieved identity does not mean the identity of all as subsumed beneath a totality, a concept, an integrated society. A truly achieved identity would have to be the consciousness of non-identity,** or, more accurately perhaps, it would have to be the creation of a reconciled non-identity, much as we find in the utopia conceived by Hölderlin, though to a degree that has been exaggerated by the current state of research in Hölderlin studies." (pg. 55)
 - "...on the one hand, society only survives because of the conflicts it contains - which is then expressed in the affirmative doctrine that all is right with the world. On the other hand, despite this, people experience the present unreconciled conditions, and this comes to be expressed as a denial of the possibility of reconciliation in general. Needless to say, if you say of an unreconciled situation that reconciliation has taken place, this torpedoed the possibility of a true reconciliation in the future, since it undermines the very people who wish to bring about the very state of affairs that is supposed to exist, and makes them look like fools or rogues." (pg. 56)
 - "the general situation which is characterized by compartmentalism, rigid categorization and stereotypes coming from above. It is in general a situation that necessarily rubs off on those who resist it. The overwhelming power of rigid categories, the static, rigid categories of the universal that confront the critical mind, forces the critics to take on something of their rigidity - even if only so as to describe them in the course of asserting their own position. This is to say nothing of the fact that we all live in bourgeois society and therefore - even if we are not conscious of the fact and do not realize just how deeply it has penetrated into the darkest recesses of our souls even when we disagree - we remain the children of the condition that we oppose, and carry endless baggage around with us which we then reproduce, all unbeknown to ourselves." (pg. 56-57)
 - "Conformism and its opposite, nonconformism, belong to the categories of consciousness or of attitude, subjective categories that are falsified the moment they are isolated, torn from the totality, taken abstractly, independently of the historical moment and the function and constellation of individual motifs in a specific situation. **I believe that in general this is something we can learn from dialectics, namely that there is no category, no concept, no theory even, however true, that is immune to the danger of becoming false and even ideological in the constellation that it enters into in practice.** Normally, I am very critical of the entire concept of ideology. But if it has any truth it lies in the suspicion that, precisely because spirit is in general dependent on the course of the world and its constellations, no isolated instance of spirit, no embodiment of spirit that sets out to oppose the course of the world, can be true or false in and for itself - or, rather, independently of its relation to that reality." (pg. 57-58)
 - Lecture 7 (pg. 59)
 - "I should even like to venture the still broader generalization, one of some importance for a theory of history - in so far as it is at all possible to establish 'general principles' in a dialectical philosophy - that **there is no category, no valid concept that might not be rendered invalid at the moment when it is cut off from the concrete context to which it really belongs.** This applies with particular force to the concept of *ratio*, which is of such pivotal importance for the theory of history - and I believe that it will do us no harm to cudgel our brains a little on this subject before we proceed further. I have already told you' that the simplest way to construct something like a universal history is to create the history of a progressive rationality. Now it is extremely easy to hold this ratio, in other words, the unfolding of reason, responsible for the perennial catastrophes of history." (pg. 61)
 - "I explained to you in one of the recent lectures that the element of domination and thus the conflict inherent in reason was itself intrinsic to the process of history; that the concept of reason necessarily contains matter alien to reason, matter that has to be subjugated. I argued that the concept of reason only has meaning if there exists outside it material on which it can act - by abstracting, arranging or summarizing, etc. My intention (and I think it is important to clarify this) was not to talk you into a kind of idealist philosophizing; I did not mean the reason in which all this is embedded to be thought of as the origin, the absolute origin of the material it dominates and on which it works. It would be quite contrary to what I have been trying to tell you if you were to go away believing that there is a dialectic of ratio or, God forbid, enlightenment, in the sense of a dialectic of pure forms of consciousness, independently of the material to which it relates. What I would say - and I have hinted at this already, but I should like to repeat it quite explicitly - is that precisely the abstract nature of ratio, that is, its setting aside of concrete subject matter, points to social processes in which everything depends on who is equal with whom, or rather unequal, in the social hierarchy. That is to say, abstract reason ignores these specific concrete aspects of society. Specific class relations, for example, cannot be explained by an appeal to ratio, although they reproduce themselves in it. Instead, reason contains this amalgam of abstract thought and material that has to be subjugated, and this fact is itself merely the reflection of an attitude of thought, of reason, to reality, which in its turn (and this too we must reiterate) does not remain external to reason. On the contrary, as Durkheim was the first to have pointed out, in an inspired, but also highly contentious way, reason becomes embedded in the forms of consciousness including its most abstract forms, such as the categories of pure logic and even the so-called intuitive forms of time and space. However, I leave open the question of whether there is not a dialectic at work here in the sense that, for hierarchical social conditions to be deposited in subjective forms, there must always be an element of constitutive subjectivity which ensures that people experience things in one way rather than another. That is a complex matter that I really wish to mention only in passing and certainly do not want to resolve here. Thus we may speak of the irrationality of ratio in the present historical phase; we may point out that the prodigious achievements of science benefit only a small group of people or that science seems to be moving towards the destruction of the human race. We may accuse reason of all sorts of other irrationalities. Indeed, I would not defend reason against these accusations; I would certainly not deny that, as the process of rationalization advances, it claims any number of

victims. But we should not let things get out of proportion; we must be clear in our own minds that the responsibility for the threats that the advancing sciences unleash on mankind lies not with reason or science, but with the way in which reason is entwined with very real social conditions. Within these social conditions reason is directed at purposes that are irrational because of the irrational state of society as a whole. Thus while reason contains such a destructive element, thanks to its unreflecting persistence as stolid domination, the blame for this must not be laid exclusively at the door of the isolated category of ratio, but must be ascribed to the totality. It can really only be grasped in the relationship between the processes of rationalization - chief among them scientific and technical inventions - and the external purposes imposed on them and from which they cannot escape. For even though this advancing ratio impinges on and even modifies the existing relations of domination, it is always tied into them." (pg. 61-62)

▪ Lecture 8 (pg. 69)

- "After all, surely history is made, as has been remarked, by human beings; all historical events are tied to the human beings who bring them about. On the other hand, these events work themselves out at the expense of human beings, human beings are their victims, history stretches its hand out over all human beings. I have intentionally phrased this question in a slightly blunt and primitive way." (pg. 69)
- "I should like to begin by reminding you of something I have tried to impress upon you, namely the coercive nature of history. It is not just that we are constantly exposed to its blind, overpowering events and also its larger tendencies. Nor is it just the fact that, in so far as we act as social beings, as socialized beings, we act as character masks (to use Marx's term). By character masks I mean that, **while we imagine that we act as ourselves, in reality we act to a great extent as the agents of our own functions.**" (pg. 69)
- "...**individuality is a reflective concept, that is to say, we can only speak of individuality where individual subjects become conscious of their individuality and singularity, in contrast to the totality, and only define themselves as individuals, as particular beings in the consciousness of this opposition.** In this particular sense, we can say that the individual is a product and, as I said, may be a transitory phenomenon." (pg. 70-71)
 - "Of course, you should be aware that the natural form of individuation, that is to say, the physical separation of individual people from each other, does in a sense enter into this reflexive concept because **the biological fact of individuality requires that just as people have come into the world singly, so they should perpetuate themselves as individuals.** So it is true that **the notion of individual self-preservation, which is the central feature of individuation and also of the development of individual character, does extend back into the realm of biology.** In contrast, animals do not possess this self-awareness and a fixed self as an internal authority has not become crystallized. The fact that animals do not have this self-awareness suffices to explain why individuality can be considered a reflexive category and thus the product of history. The process of socialization to which human beings are subjected by history, the process of inclusion in society as a whole, is one through which the universal realizes itself in history and so can be described as a historical process." (pg. 71)
- "I believe this is fundamental to an understanding of the attitude of the individual human subject caught up in the historical process, that **the historical coercion which moulds human beings enters into the very core of their psyche and their subjectivity is in a sense shaped by this socialization process.** The sphere of psychology in which we imagine that we are ourselves is also the sphere in which in a certain, obscure sense we are furthest from being ourselves. This is because we are preformed by that being-for-others to the very core of our being. This being-for-others is what is most successful in breaking whatever part of the existence of the individual that has not submitted to that identity coercion. By this I mean that **the more individuals identify with the universal - not consciously, but in their unconscious and preconscious reactions - the more they can be said to distance themselves in a sense from the universal by the fact that their identification with it is blind and defenceless because they are acting unconsciously, as a form of adaptation.** It has frequently been maintained - with justice, I would say - that the realm specific to psychology is the realm of irrationality. This is true of psychology as knowledge as well as of the objects with which psychology concerns itself. I believe that we see here the explanation of this irrationality. That is to say, at those points where human beings strive to internalize the universal, the very thing that should harmonize with their reason, they almost always act irrationally. For this universal is directed against their conscious interests in the sense in which I have already discussed at some length and which I shall perhaps be able to explain further during this lecture. This is because the identification with the universal cannot be achieved in any other way, through reason, for instance, which human beings nevertheless stand in need of if they are to survive in an irrational universe. For this reason they can achieve their own socialization only in a way that is irrational, or even anti-rational in principle, or as we could say in clinical terms: neurotic, or as a consequence of repression or regression or by means of all those modes of self-mutilation that psychology enumerates. The distinction between psychology and reason has in addition to its subjective explanation, for example, in the individual resolution of the Oedipus complex, an objective, historical explanation, though of course the entire Oedipus complex could not be understood without the family and with it the authority of the father as a social phenomenon." (pg. 71-72)
- "...**positive knowledge is in reality a negative**" (pg. 72-73)
 - "By this I mean that **people simply do not know what the world has done to them because, if they did know, they would be different from what they are and could not be turned into whatever it is that the course of the world has made of them.** Incidentally, such concepts as the objectivity of despair or the objectivity of happiness can be measured against such things. That is to say, their objectivity is of the kind that might have broken through the illusion of identity that has been created by a painful process of identification that is consistently and necessarily faulty and unsuccessful, and cast it off. For this identity is completely misconceived. We may say that the measure of its failure is one we can see everywhere today. It takes the form of that infantility among adults that surfaces at its most extreme where the adults are at their most grown up. That is to say, it manifests itself when they have rid themselves of the last trace of their childhood dreams and have completely surrendered to the business of self-preservation that has lost its ultimate purpose and become a fetish. At that point, the reason that has kicked over the traces, that has run wild and insists only on its formal fulfilment without following its rational purpose, merges with illusion and, psychologically at least, deteriorates into damaged goods." (pg. 73)
- "**if people really were to become fully aware that their own selves - that is to say, the point where they believe that they belong entirely to themselves - that their own selves belong not to them but that they are,** right down to and including their idiosyncrasies and peculiarities, **what might be called the negative imprint of the universal, that would involve such a fearful loss of self-esteem as one tends to call it in bourgeois circles that in all probability they would be unable to bear it.**" (pg. 74)
- "Without these problematic identifications with the law that governs them objectively, that is to say, without the primacy of self-preservation and the forms in which this is reflected, the human subject would probably be unable to survive in this world. Whoever wished to exist immediately, absolutely immediately, without the psychological hardenings and stigmata through which we are transformed by the unreconciled universal, would be an entirely defenceless person, and probably a feeble human being without a self who would be completely helpless and powerless in the face of the world, an easy prey. The deepest reason for this is that, owing to the socialization process, that is to say, owing to our adaptation to the social and historical universal, we are forced to renounce our instincts - every day, at every moment, in a myriad of ways." (pg. 75)
- "This sets up a **catastrophic vicious circle in which human beings have an objective interest in changing the world and in which this change is quite impossible without their participation.** However, **these mechanisms of identification have stamped themselves on people's characters to such a degree that they are quite incapable of the spontaneity and the conscious actions that would be required to bring about the necessary changes.** This is because, by identifying with the course of the world, they do so in an unhappy, neurotically damaged way, which effectively leads them to reinforce the world as it is. And that, I would say, is the truth about the situation of human beings in history." (pg. 76)
 - "...since the achievement of a proper identity cannot succeed because of the objective course of the world and because people's interests

- cannot be reconciled, people are necessarily crippled by this unconscious act of identification with the world. **To an increasing extent, they find that they lose the inner, spiritual freedom which would enable them to detach themselves from the course of the world; they find themselves unable to rise above it as free, autonomous and critical beings.** I can illustrate this tendency by referring you to an expression originally introduced to psychology by Carl Gustav Jung but which I took the liberty of applying some years ago in sociology. This is the idea of 'concretism'. This concept contains the idea of the displacement of the libido to what is immediately present to people's minds. Because they identify with the institutions, commodities, things and relations immediately familiar to them, they are incapable of perceiving their dependence upon processes at some distance from them, the actual objective processes." (pg. 77)
- "By way of conclusion, the inference I should like to draw from what I have been telling you today is that, to a degree that is difficult to grasp, psychology has an immensely important role to play. This remains true even though objectively, and compared to the objective necessity of history, it is only a secondary, supplementary phenomenon. For were this not so, people would simply not put up with the situation as I have described it. Psychology has become the cement of the world as it exists; it holds together the very conditions that would be seen through rationally, if this irrational cement did not exist. This probably also explains why the most effective form of ideology today, namely the culture industry, is concerned less to transmit particular ideologies, propositions and attitudes than to reinforce and reproduce in an unending chain those same mechanisms that enable people to identify with the things with which they are not identical. Thus what I mean by this cement is the way in which human psychology has embedded the world in human beings in the form, moreover, of a perverse, deceitful consciousness; it is a deformed consciousness that knows only how to yield. It is independent of specific theoretical or political ideas, which for the most part it never even begins to formulate. Nevertheless, this consciousness is the only form in which ideology really survives today. Thus the form taken by ideology and by the false identity of subject and object in a world of radical discord is one in which a conscious-unconscious state is produced in people both objectively, and with their own connivance and the aid of their own instincts. This state of mind blinds them to the unreconciled nature of life and leads them to accept and adopt as their own the very conditions that they feel to be their exact antitheses. And this, ladies and gentlemen, may perhaps explain to you why, in a theory of history or a theory of society that is basically objective in nature, such a subjective science as psychology (which as you will know is commonly traduced in Russia) is able to make such a crucial contribution. Its task is to analyse the cement, the ideology, that exercises such immense influence over human beings, and is thereby able to reproduce the entire global situation. We may conclude, then, and this brings me back to my starting-point, that, at the very moment when people believe they are most themselves and belong to themselves, they are not only the prey [Beute] of ideology. We might even go so far as to say that they themselves have turned into ideology." (pg. 77-78)
 - Lecture 9 (pg. 79)
 - "During the period of the so-called ascendancy of the bourgeoisie, this concept of universal history, by which I mean that of a continuous history of mankind, was generally conceived as an upward development, albeit not without set-backs." (pg. 80)
 - "nowadays, this idea of universal history is highly controversial and problematic" (pg. 80)
 - "The concept of the individual becomes radical in the modern world, the bourgeois world, only when the form of the economy, that is to say, the way in which the lives of human beings are reproduced, is determined by initiative, by labour, a sense of responsibility, the autonomy of individual human beings standing in a relationship based on exchange. 'Radical' here means that for centuries, right down to the threshold of our own age, the individual has proved to be the figure through which the universal, that is, the reproduction of the human world, is mediated. Modern history begins with the discovery of the individual, and this has a quite different pathos and what might be called a quite different three-dimensionality from the manifestation of individuality in antiquity." (pg. 86)
 - "...the concept of individuality...[has] its shadow side, namely the *crisis* of individuality" (pg. 86-87)
 - Lecture 10 (pg. 89)
 - "Despite Benjamin's strong sympathy for Marxism, particularly in his late phase, it is astonishing to see just how undeveloped his knowledge of Marxist theory is." (pg. 90)
 - "Put in general terms, the consciousness of discontinuity is simply that of the prevailing non-identity. This non-identity is the opposition between whatever is held down and the universal domination that is condemned to identity. And if history is looked at materialistically, as the history not of victories but of defeats, we will become incomparably more conscious of this non-identity than was true of idealism. The task of a dialectical philosophy of history, then, is to keep both these conceptions in mind - that of discontinuity and that of universal history. This means that we should not think in alternatives: we should not say history is continuity or history is discontinuity. We must say instead that history is highly continuous in discontinuity, in what I once referred to as the permanence of catastrophe." (pg. 92)
 - "The position is not that an identity rules which also contains non-identity, but **non-identity is a non-identity of the identical and the non-identical. Thus non-identity includes what gives history its unity, what enables it to accommodate itself to the concept as well as what doesn't**. For the very things that subjugate and submit, these very acts of subjugation and submission in which identity is torn apart, forge the identity of history of which we speak and which we must describe as negative identity. Simply to erase universal history from our thinking about history - and in this respect I disagree with what Benjamin says explicitly, although the opposite is objectively implied in his writings - would be to blind oneself to the course of history, the 'storm' of which he speaks. We would blind ourselves just as effectively as by doing the opposite, namely by subsuming the facts of history into its overall course (which is what I have shown Hegel to have done) without emphasizing the non-identical side of history, since to do this confirms the course of history by the way in which it ignores individual fates." (pg. 92-93)
 - "thus the task is both to construct *and* to deny universal history..." (pg. 93)
 - "**The domination of nature** - which incidentally is mentioned in one of Benjamin's theses' - **welds the discontinuous, hopelessly splintered elements and phases of history together into a unity while at the same time its own pressure senselessly tears them asunder once more**." (pg. 93)
 - "if you reflect for a moment on what I said at some length previously, namely that the totality preserves itself and prevails through conflict, that is to say, through the enduring persistence of particularity, you will be able to dispel an illusion about particularity. It remains true that historical particulars are constantly the victims of the general course of history. As against this, **the overall course of history is only possible because the particulars necessarily harden out and become inflexible**, whether they will or no. In this sense, we can say that **the particular deserves the totality in which it finds itself. This too is an idea that I have tried to explain to you from a different angle, namely from the idea that the social totality comes to prevail through the actions of individual human beings**." (pg. 95-96)
 - "I would say that chance is the form taken by freedom under a spell. As long as the spell of history lasts, whatever is immune to this spell is mutilated and defeated; it is stripped of meaning, blind and therefore a matter of chance. All the non-identical phenomena that are expelled as a result of the domination of the identity principle are nevertheless mediated by the power of that principle. What persists are the stale remnants left over once the process of identification has taken its share. And even these stale remnants are left mutilated, scarred by the power of the principle of identity. **The spell cast by the identity principle**, by the world spirit, to formulate it even more emphatically, **perverts whatever is different** - and even the smallest quantity would be incompatible with the spell if it were still pure. This other then becomes something evil and pernicious. Because it is a random thing, this non-identical remnant then becomes so abstract that in its abstractness it converges with the law of identification. This is the truth implicit in Hegel's doctrine of the unity of chance and necessity, a doctrine which he intended positively, as praise of the world spirit, though to be sure he did not really intend to say what I am suggesting here. Chance coincides with necessity only where both are equally bereft of meaning, equally external

and equally unreconciled. The replacement of the traditional laws of causality by statistics whose core, even in its own terminology, is the principle of chance can provide us with proof of the convergence of chance and a victorious necessity. But what chance and necessity have, lethally, in common is what metaphysics refers to as fate. Fate has its place; it is a negative concept. I believe that this is the dividing line separating thought from all mythologizing notions of fate, such as Heidegger's in his Hölderlin interpretations. Fate has its place in the sphere in which the thinking of rulers holds sway, as well as in the realm of those who fall outside that sphere and for those who, having been abandoned by reason, acquire an irrationality that barely differs from the irrationality of the necessity insisted upon by the subject. The scraps of a subjugated nature that have been spewed out by the process of domination are just as deformed as those that are ground down by the machinery. Only true understanding would be superior to the two. It would stand in for a state of the world - true understanding, which of course would not amount to actual reconciliation, because knowledge alone is not the same thing as reconciliation - but true understanding would stand in for a state of the world in which everything that exists would cease to exist merely for others. This is because it would no longer remain content with its own existence-for-itself, its separation and particularity. Thus **reflection on difference would help towards reconciliation**, what Horkheimer once called 'happy reflection'. This is what would help, rather than extirpation and the elimination of the totality." (pg. 97-98)

- Lecture 11 (pg. 99)
 - See text
- Lecture 12 (pg. 105)
 - "The nation developed everywhere through a struggle against feudalism. Feudalism was a world-historical force, but because of its basis in the family it was an essentially natural form of organization. People cling to these natural bonds and to part from them always costs us an effort - just think back to what the first day at school costs a child who has been brought up sheltered by his family, and you will be able to imagine what a nation expects from such natural associations. Thus by retreating from these natural bonds, the nation also suppresses them, even though it takes over some of their features, and this forces it to act as if it were itself a natural form of society. And this is the primal pseudos, **the primal delusion implicit in the concept of the nation** and which then finds expression in those ideologies of national spirit that I have already criticized in connection with the Hegelian texts, as you may recollect." (pg. 106)
 - "In consequence, from the very outset...**the idea of the nation has possessed what today we would call a romantic element that culminates in the delusions of racism.** The delusion is that a form of association that is essentially dynamic, economic and historical misunderstands itself as a natural formation, or misconstrues itself ideologically as natural. **This culminates in a belief in races**, even though it is perfectly plain that under fascism the national groups that have imagined themselves to be defined by race have long since ceased to be so. I believe that these arguments make clear that this delusion, this fiction, strictly applies to the historical dynamic that is implicit in the concept of the nation. It is not sufficient, or rather it is too easy, to talk about the delusions of racism and to denounce them. What counts here is the ability to explain it and to recognize its place in the dynamics of history. I believe that only by doing so, only by uncovering the historical roots of racism, does it become possible to escape the persistent habits of thought associated with it. It is a delusion in a strict sense of the word. **Mind has become estranged from nature and even from itself, so that in this situation racism represents the mind's compensation for what has been done to it, for the nature that has been suppressed in it. This nature then reappears in perverse form, namely as fiction, and in that guise it necessarily assumes the destructive qualities that we have seen in nationalism** throughout its entire history from the end of the eighteenth century and through the nineteenth, passing through imperialism until it reached its apogee in fascism. We may say, then, that the concept of the nation gives us an insight into the mechanisms that Freud analysed on the level of individual psychology in his book *Civilization and its Discontents*. Only here, they appear as collective powers or as achievements of the collective unconscious, if I may for once be permitted to use this expression. In the concept of the nation, repressed nature is mobilized in the interests of a progressive domination of nature, progressive rationality, and, as a regressive phenomenon, that is to say, as a return to something already rendered obsolete, it is just as contaminated by that as it is by its untruth, which compels it constantly to gloss over its failings and exaggerate its virtues. Precisely because the nation is not nature, it has ceaselessly to proclaim its closeness to nature, its immediacy and the intrinsic value of the national community." (pg. 106-107)
 - "...it was only with the creation of modern nation-states that something like a universal legal system was established..." (pg. 107)
 - "The concept of race occurs frequently [in Hegel], and likewise the reference to his belief in the difficulty in modifying nationality, something he regards as a natural given without seriously inquiring into the mechanism that enables a national consciousness to persist even when it has been rendered obsolete by history. This is one of the moments in which we might almost say that the dialectical philosopher lapses naively into static ways of thinking." (pg. 108)
 - **"the concept of nation has always had its precarious and repressive aspects both internally and externally..."** (pg. 111)
- Lecture 13 (pg. 115)
 - **"Laws of nature not to be taken literally, not to be ontologized.** In other words, the laws of nature capable of being abrogated. They are the blind *continuation* of eating and being eaten as the principle on which reason is modelled and which it no longer needs once it has achieved self-consciousness. That is the pivotal transformation [Umschlag]. No *other* reason, only the reason that knows itself." (pg. 115)
 - "The idea of natural laws governing history, the idea that social entanglements are the natural outgrowth of history, goes together with the unfreedom of the individual." (pg. 117)
- Lecture 14 (pg. 121)
 - "...we should not let ourselves be tempted to ontologize. We should not argue, as has been imputed to me, wrongly I believe, that this means that in the beginning there was society which then created heaven and earth. For society itself is determined by the things of which it is composed and it therefore necessarily contains a non-social dimension. Critical, dialectical thought should repudiate the idea that these two concepts, history and philosophy, are isolated, entirely detachable strata. The traditional antithesis of nature and history is both true and false. It is true when it expresses what happens to nature; it is false when it simply reinforces conceptually history's own concealment of its own natural growth." (pg. 122)
 - "Nowadays, at any rate, **the joy of thinking lies in interpretation. The conception of interpretation, the sudden moment of insight, is what everyone hopes for when he philosophizes today, seriously philosophizes, as opposed to 'studying' philosophy. Anyone who is unwilling to undertake this, who has never experienced the pleasure of interpretation personally, should leave philosophy alone**, at any rate, the only philosophy that seems to be possible today. I would say that interpretation is the only thing that could inspire people to 'do' philosophy today." (pg. 128)
 - **"...philosophy, as I have been suggesting in these lectures, is the Stygian darkness that sets out to unveil meaning"** (pg. 129)
- Lecture 15 (pg. 133)
 - "We might even say in general that the transition from philosophy to criticism represents something like a secularization of melancholy. **This is a melancholy that has become active, not a melancholy that makes do, that remains stuck fast in an unhappy consciousness, not at home with itself, but a consciousness that exteriorizes itself as a critique of existing phenomena.** Such a melancholy is probably the pre-eminent critical, philosophical stance. In other words, if you read the phenomena of history as the cyphers of their own transience or their own natural deterioration, they will also always be defined by their own negativity. This element of negativity is the element of criticism in philosophy. Interpretation and critique come together at a profound level. This explains why I find it foolish to demand that we should first understand a thing and only then criticize it. For since **the process of understanding and interpreting entails negation, a consciousness of the immanent demise of a phenomenon is at one with the criticism of what the world has done to it.** In general terms, we might say that interpretation means reading nature from history and history from

- nature. Interpretation teases out of the phenomena, out of second nature, out of what has been mediated, out of the world around us that has been mediated by history and society, the fact that they have evolved - in just the same way as it shows that there can be no evolution without the process being convicted of its own naturalness, while the evolution itself, mediation, must be understood as prolonged state of immediacy, a natural condition. The two aspects belong together. You may say that each is present in the other; in other words, nature is present in history as transience, a proposition I spent the entire first part of these lectures explaining to you. Conversely, we shall also be able to say that history is present in nature as something that has evolved and is transient. At the same time, however, because these two aspects are indissolubly linked, every interpretation is also posited - and I believe that anyone who, like me, emphasizes the standpoint of immanent interpretation and criticism is obliged to refrain from making a fetish of this immanence. **For in order to liberate this immanence, to appropriate its power, we need the knowledge of what is other. This means that the deep melancholic gaze of which I have spoken will be able to discover the element of becoming, or of having become, in what has evolved, only if it can bring to the contemplation of phenomena the consciousness of that process of becoming.**" (pg. 134-135)
- **"Interpretation, I said, is criticism of phenomena that have been brought to a standstill; it consists in revealing the dynamism stored up in them,** so that what appears as second nature can be seen to be history. On the other hand, criticism ensures that what has evolved loses its appearance as mere existence and stands revealed as the product of history. This is essentially the procedure of Marxist critique (if I may briefly make mention of this here). Marxist critique consists in showing that every conceivable social and economic factor that appears to be part of nature is in fact something that has evolved historically. Thus there is always an element of reciprocity: what appears to be natural is discovered to be historical, while things that are historical turn out to be natural because of their transience. Behind this phenomenon stands the historicized dialectic of subject and object which cannot be reduced to their pure state. To destroy immediacy means dissolving the appearance of naturalness [Ansich-sein] through the critical process. It means demolishing the claim that phenomena that have evolved [in time] are just what they are [in the present]." (pg. 135-136)
 - **"With Marx, on the other hand, the tendency is for the negativity contained in the very naturalness of immediacy, of a later, mediated, evolved immediacy, to come to the surface; he assigns to the reflective mind the task of dispelling this illusion of naturalness and, in contrast, of uncovering the true reality in the hidden laws of motion, in what lies concealed, what does not lie on the surface** - while the façade shrivels into mere illusion. If it does not sound too pompous, we might say that this is a kind of metaphysical and dialectical interpretation of the relationship between dialectic and ideological critique." (pg. 137)
- "Ladies and gentlemen, I have spoken of the joys of interpretation. Now that I am coming to an end of my discussion of this topic, let me say another few words about this. Perhaps what I have said about the joys of interpretation will by now have become a little clearer to you. **These joys consist in refusing to be blinded by the semblance of immediacy, and instead in uncovering the process by which the work became what it is so that we may transcend that semblance.** At the same time, they refer to the power of the mind to retain its self-control in the face of the sorrow that is aroused by the contemplation of the past. Kant had noted, in one of the profoundest passages in the 'aesthetics of the sublime', that what a common-or-garden aesthetics customarily thinks of as aesthetic 'pleasure' is in reality a state in which the mind remains in control of itself in the face of the overwhelming power of nature, in the face of total transience.' Thus **the joy of philosophy** - and philosophy should not deny this pleasure, but shed light on it and make it its own - **is connected with the activity of interpretation.** In fact, we are capable of experiencing this pleasure only in so far as we are capable of this act of interpreting. When it comes down to it, the source of this pleasure lies in the fact that the phenomena - and I mean the phenomena in their most concrete form, the form in which they have all the colourfulness that children desire, that children focus upon, for all happiness comes from our childhood - our pleasure derives from the fact that the phenomena always mean something different from what they simply are. Thus **interpretation leads us to break through their surface existence.** The deepest promise interpretation makes to the mind is perhaps the assurance it gives that **what exists is not the ultimate reality** - or perhaps we should say: **what exists is not just what it claims to be.** We might say, then, that the negativity of natural history - which always discovers what phenomena used to be, what they have become and, at the same time, what they might have been - retains the possible life of phenomena as opposed to their actual existence. In this sense, the interpretative stance in philosophy is the prototype of a utopian stance towards thought. And philosophies that remain true to this utopian motif have always had a soft spot for interpretation. **Interpretation in fact means to become conscious of the traces of what points beyond mere existence** - by dint of criticism, that is to say, by virtue of an insight into transience, and into the shortcomings and fallibility of mere existence." (pg. 137-138)
- Lecture 16 (pg. 142)
 - "in the age of catastrophe the idea of progress cannot be conceived of as settling for less. Progress should no more be ontologized, unthinkingly ascribed to the realm of Being, than should decline, with which, admittedly, modern philosophy appear to be more comfortable" (pg. 149)
 - "If progress is as much a myth as the idea of the path fate has ordained for the constellations, the idea of progress itself is the anti-mythological idea par excellence. It disrupts the circle of which it formed a part. Thus **progress means escaping from the magic spell, including the spell of progress that is itself nature. This happens when human beings become conscious of their own naturalness and call a halt to their own domination of nature,** a domination by means of which nature's own domination is perpetuated. In this sense, we might say that progress occurs where it comes to an end." (pg. 151-152)
 - Lecture 17 (pg. 153)
 - "...progress means...escaping from the magic spell" (pg. 153)
 - "The explosive tendency of progress is not simply the flipside of the movement towards the progressive domination of nature; it is not the abstract negation of that tendency, but calls for the development of reason through the domination of nature. Only rationality, the principle of social rule as applied to the subject, would be capable of eliminating that domination. The possibility of the emergence of such a principle is brought about by the pressure of negativity. On the other hand, reason, which would like to escape from nature, is what shapes nature into the very thing it has to fear. **What makes the concept of progress dialectical, in a strictly non-metaphorical sense, is the fact that reason, its organ, is just one thing. That is to say, it does not contain two strata, one that dominates nature and one that conciliates it. Both strata share in all its aspects. It is for this reason that we can speak of a dialectic of progress in such a rigorous sense. In reason, the organ of this dialectic,** these two strata, which I have called the one that dominates nature and the one that conciliates it, do not just subsist alongside one another, but both go to make up the unity of reason in equal measure. **The one element only turns into the other, or can only turn into the other, literally by reflecting on itself, in other words, if reason is applied to reason, and if through this act of self-limitation it emancipates itself from the demon of identity.**" (pg. 157-158)
 - **"The ossified institutions, the relations of production, are not absolute Being, but man-made and revocable, however powerful they may be. In their relations to the subjects from which they originate and which they hold in their grip, they remain antagonistic through and through.** It is not merely that the totality demands change, if it is not to perish, but also, because of its antagonistic nature, it finds it impossible to impose that full identity with human beings that is depicted in negative utopias. This explains why progress in the world, the arch-enemy of that other progress, nevertheless remains open to the possibility of it, no matter how little it is able to assimilate this possibility into its own law." (pg. 162)
 - "The eternal sameness of the totality, mankind's dependence upon the necessities of life, the material conditions of self-preservation, hides behind its own dynamism, the growth of ostensible social wealth. Ideology profits from this. Spirit, however, which, as the truly dynamic principle, would like to transcend this state, is told that it has failed, and this pleases ideology even more. **Reality creates the illusion that it is moving onwards and upwards, while remaining at bottom what it was before.** Spirit aims at something new, in so far as it is not just part of an existing apparatus. But in its hopeless attempts to create it, it vainly batters its head against the old, much as an insect attracted to the light flies

- into the windowpane. Spirit is not what it aspires to be: the Other, the transcendent in all its purity. It too is a piece of natural history" (pg. 162-163)
- Lecture 18 (pg. 164)
 - "the paradox that progress both exists and does not exist...is one that appears nowhere so vividly as in philosophy..." (pg. 167)
 - "what is at stake is that...philosophy is faced with the challenge of transcending itself..." (pg. 170)
 - "...the concept that has turned out to be crucial for the theory of history, and incidentally also for the theory of progress, has been that of the spell [der Bann]. The concluding sentence of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* states that all living things are, or seem to be, under a spell - and both statements, i.e., that they are under a spell and that they appear to be under a spell, are probably equally valid. This idea is really an unspoken premise and it could be said that my efforts here, and my own philosophical work more generally, are concerned with what we, that is to say, Horkheimer and I, called a spell, and with our attempts to explore this concept of the spell in all its implications." (pg. 172-173)
 - Lecture 19 (pg. 177)
 - "...we have defined freedom as escaping from the spell or working our way out of the spell" (pg. 177)
 - "we might also say that...freedom is something that has to be created or that creates itself" (pg. 177)
 - "we need to be aware that **the idea of freedom as something purely individual is itself an abstraction from the contexts in which we find ourselves as living, social individual beings; and in the absence of these contexts, freedom has no meaning at all. Freedom can only ever be defined in these contexts or, depending on circumstances, as freedom from them.** We may also express it by saying that, without the freedom of the species, in these contexts, as long as it remains particular, as long as and to the extent that it presupposes the unfreedom of other human beings - a definition, incidentally, that is very similar to those given repeatedly by Kant, although I have formulated it in ways that are somewhat removed from his actual words." (pg. 178)
 - "individual is to a certain extent the touchstone of freedom. If people point to the freedom of the totality, of society as a whole, and if this simply reinforces the unfreedom of individuals, then you can be sure that even societal freedom, objective freedom, is in a bad way and that genuine freedom has degenerated into ideology." (pg. 180)
 - "In the final analysis, **we must say that we should not think of freedom as a merely abstract idea** - which is what seems to be suggested by the statement that it does not yet exist. It is not a mere abstraction suspended somewhere above the heads of human beings who snatch at it without being able to jump high enough to reach it. Instead, **we can only speak meaningfully of freedom because there are concrete possibilities of freedom, because freedom can be achieved in reality.** And in contrast to the entire dialectical tradition of Hegel and Marx, I would almost go so far as to say that actually this has always been possible, that it has been possible at every moment." (pg. 181)
 - "Freedom is quite certainly not immediately identical with reason; as a form of thought, reason is on its own, to begin with. For it to become freedom reason requires something further, something that I have elsewhere termed 'the additional factor'..." (pg. 183)
 - Lecture 20 (pg. 187)
 - "The separation of outer and inner is generally naïve, pre-critical. Even though the distinction should be retained, since it presents itself in primary experience (i.e., to the actually alienated), it should not be made absolute." (pg. 187)
 - "**The question of freedom is a pseudo-problem** [Scheinproblem] because [to pose it] turns it' into an independent problem as opposed to the phenomena it includes." (pg. 187)
 - Lecture 21 (pg. 190)
 - "For profound reasons, for reasons connected with the structure of society, the general bourgeois consciousness has always been vacillating and ambivalent in the sense that it fears the limiting of freedom and the constraints placed upon it, while at the same time it takes fright at its own courage and fears that a freedom made real might lead to chaos. This may enable you to understand a phenomenon that lies very much at the heart of the history of the doctrine of freedom and that will show you just **how dialectical the entire complex of freedom really is.** We might well begin by thinking, the ordinary man in the street might well imagine, that the interests desirous of freedom, including social freedom, social liberation, that these interests might well hasten to endorse theorems concerned with human freedom. Whereas, conversely, we might assume that those who wish to keep human beings in a state of dependency would define human beings as dependent, necessarily unfree creatures, making use of categories drawn from nature. This was in fact common practice in the very early stages of bourgeois philosophy, in Hobbes, where the vindication of absolute monarchy went hand in hand with the definition of man as a purely natural creature. This rather primitive explanation may well have appeared plausible, but the fact is that, in the history of ideas and the internal logic of such concepts as freedom and unfreedom, history does not always choose the most plausible route that you might expect. I believe that you can well understand why the bourgeois thinkers of the Enlightenment set such curious limits to the idea of freedom. These limits can be seen in the way that freedom was turned into the monopoly of philosophy, and this brings me, so I should like to believe, very much to the heart of the substantive problems of freedom (even though I am speaking in historical terms). For it turns out that **the more theory urges the need for freedom, and the more theory insists that human beings are essentially free, that their will is absolutely free and that they have absolute responsibility for themselves, then the more readily theory lends itself to repression.**" (pg. 196-197)
 - "You can see from this that ideas that originally had a utopian complexion and a critical complexion tend, notwithstanding their truth content, to degenerate in the course of history into ideologies. We can say that **the doctrine of freedom really has degenerated gradually into mere declamations kept for high days and holidays.** There is an infallible sign for this ideological distortion of the idea of freedom, one that will enable you to recognize it wherever and whenever talk about freedom lends itself to the justification for restrictions on freedom, in other words, where talk about freedom is perverted into the exact opposite of what it is supposed to achieve. What I have in mind are all the propositions that assert that freedom originally consisted in nothing other than voluntarily accepting a compulsion that human beings cannot escape anyway. Wherever it is maintained that the substance of freedom is that you are free when you freely accept what you have to accept anyway, you can be certain that the concept of freedom is being abused and is being twisted into its opposite." (pg. 197)
 - "in the light of Freud's analysis of the super-ego...the super-ego only has any power because it is unconscious" (pg. 198)
 - "**a serious dialectical analysis of freedom is needed**, because it is only through a process of philosophical reflection that would include all these elements that the question of freedom can be rescued from the vague waffle that in the long run can have only one consequence. This is that decisions about the legal or constitutional implications of freedom will hide behind these vague ideological commitments and will then be arrived at not through the exercise of autonomous reason, but simply in accordance with the power relations on which so-called world-views lean for support." (pg. 199)
 - Lecture 22 (pg. 200)
 - "The entire problem of freedom as it confronts us today contains a possible paralogism. A paralogism is essentially a fallacy..." (pg. 201)
 - "I do not have even the slightest intention of suggesting that reflections on freedom might provide any scope at all for evading a confrontation with such experiences, that is to say, with everything that Auschwitz represents. I believe that every thought that fails to measure itself against such experiences is simply worthless, irrelevant and utterly trivial. A human being who is not mindful at every moment of the potential for extreme horror at the present time must be so bemused by the veil of ideology that he might just as well stop thinking at all." (pg. 203)
 - "freedom in the sense of moral responsibility can only exist in a free society" (pg. 203)
 - "the responsibility in question amounts to something like our ability to intervene. We can only think of ourselves as responsible in so

- far as we are able to influence matters in the areas where we have responsibility.** Everyone can learn the truth of this within his own limited sphere of activity when he perceives that there are frequently situations in which he is given responsibility for something by some institution or other, but without at the same time being given the authority to impose his will and to exercise control over what falls within his remit. This is the antinomy of authority which is caught between the twin poles of responsibility and the ability to impose one's will. It will be familiar to everyone who has been given some authority in the administered world and who occupies any position of responsibility in it. I would say that this is the antinomy par excellence, and it gives everyone who has experienced it something of an insight into the tangled nature of the real world." (pg. 203-204)
- "Responsibility, then, is the touchstone by which freedom can be measured in reality, by which freedom can be imputed, as the lawyers put it. But if responsibility truly is the critical zone of freedom, we must say that today there is a complete mismatch between responsibility and influence - not merely in so-called official circles with regard to people who have authority to issue directives in a particular, defined area, but who then for a hundred different reasons issue instructions that do not reflect their own understanding, or do so only to a very limited degree. But over and above this, there is the so-called sovereign nation, in other words the people who cast their vote in the polling booths in order to determine their political and social destiny. These people have neither objectively nor subjectively the possibility and influence needed to ensure that their actions will shape the world as they would like it to be." (pg. 204)
 - "I mention it only because it enables you to understand an insight we owe to Hegel. This is that, **while freedom appears to us as a subjective quality, as if the judgement about whether freedom exists is one that falls exclusively to the subjective mind, this insight enables us to see how dependent freedom is on objective realities and to gauge the extent to which we are capable of influencing the real world with its overpowering, structured institutions by what we do as formally free subjective agents.**" (pg. 204)
 - "The fact that every individual feels excessive demands are being made on him; the fact that every individual discovers that his so-called, i.e., formal, freedom and responsibility constantly impose demands upon him that he is unable to meet, and that we feel the whole time that we are bound to fail because of objective circumstances - all this leads to a kind of resignation and indifference which, if anything, only encourages our acquiescence in what is imposed on us from outside and the shoulder-shrugging indifference to everything associated with the concept of freedom." (pg. 206)
 - **"Let me add, or remind you, that freedom and unfreedom are not primary phenomena, but derivatives of a totality that at any given time exercise dominion over individuals"** (pg. 207)
- Lecture 23 (pg. 209)
 - "...it will then become obvious that **the human subject's interest in his freedom is narcissistic**" (pg. 209)
 - "what is remarkable is that this interest in freedom runs in tandem with the opposing interest, namely the denial of freedom" (pg. 211)
 - "Mimetic behaviour is not causally determined by objective factors, or factors that are seen to be objective, but involves instead an involuntary adjustment to something extra-mental. Because of its involuntary nature there is something irrational about this adjustment that theories of freedom generally refuse to acknowledge but which is part of the definition of freedom. This is something that I regard as crucial to what I want to say to you about freedom. **The more the ego obtains control over itself and over nature, then the more it learns to master itself and the more questionable it finds its own freedom.** This is because its archaic, uncontrolled reactions appear chaotic. We might almost go so far as to say that, while something like freedom becomes possible only through the development of consciousness, at the same time this very same development of consciousness effectively ensures that freedom is pushed back into the realm of archaic, mimetic impulse that is so essential to it. We might say, then, that the situation with freedom is like that of so many other things in the world in the sense that, the more it is translated into the imagination, the more it distances itself from its own immediate reality. I say this only to show you that what is at first sight a historical or psychological conflict between freedom and conformity is in fact meta-psychological. That is to say, it reaches down into what we may designate as appropriate to the prehistory of individuation as such. The concept of freedom could not be formulated in the absence of recourse to something prior to the ego, to an impulse that is in a sense a bodily impulse that has not yet been subjected to the centralizing authority of consciousness; while on the other hand, its trajectory terminates in the strength of the ego itself. In other words, it contains a conflict within itself. When I speak of a dialectic of freedom I hope that I have been able to show you that we are talking of dialectic in a very strict sense, that is to say, of a contradictoriness that is integral to the concept we are investigating" (pg. 213-214)
 - "When I told you that **the ego had conceived the idea of freedom for egoistic reasons,** this contained the idea that the ego has enormous difficulty in grasping the elements of its own dependency. This is not merely a matter of psychology which strives to keep narcissistic traumas at bay because they entail a loss of self-respect, but it arises, we might say, from the principium individuationis itself. As the human subject separates itself off and becomes a single being, and defines itself as a single being, it must of course, if it is to defend its individuality against others that crowd in on it, insulate itself against the consciousness of its own entanglement in general. In the *principium individuationis*, individual beings appear in a society that reproduces itself through conflicting interests - and this reinforces their tendency to blot this out, thus strengthening the individual's belief that he is merely a being for himself." (pg. 217)
 - Lecture 24 (pg. 219)
 - "The day before yesterday I discussed with you the aspect of the consciousness of freedom that has its roots in the fact that the human subject has no knowledge of the internal causes of its own impulses, of what we might call its inner causation. In the process **I placed great emphasis on one element connected with the ego-principle itself. This was the element of narcissism,** since of course - and I might add: from a psychological point of view - the mechanisms of repression discovered by depth psychology play a vital role, and in a psychogenetic sense an even more essential one. This is because the conditioning factors, the blind conditions, at which the subject balks are in fact the powers of the id, the repressed instinctual impulses. **'Repressed' in this context means keeping something at a distance from the subject. This disguising of the unfree elements of subjectivity from subjectivity itself is caused,** as you know from your reading in psychology, **by the ego.** A further factor is that the ego, which, as you know, has come into being as the authority of the personality as a whole, and which is responsible for overseeing reality, that is to say, it has the task of testing external reality to make sure that nothing bad happens to a person - a further factor, then, is that because of this task this ego-authority assumes something of a propensity to externalize. This is so closely identified with its ego impulses, in other words the impulse to self-preservation, that it is only relatively late and only after a very high degree of differentiation has taken place that the ego arrives at a self-reflexivity that can be taken for granted every bit as much as the schoolmaster's statement in the Latin lesson (to take an example from everyday life) that the general conquers the city. It is my belief that we ought not to take this primacy of the ego for granted even though it has become something of an article of faith among philosophers. We might say that the fact **that the ego operates coercively on the external world,** that it operates in an extroverted fashion (if I may use this psychological term), **prevents it from becoming aware of its own compulsive nature and the unfreedom of the principle governing its own freedom.** I would remind you in passing that this compulsive nature of the subject, its unfreedom, has what I might even go so far as to call its ontological roots in the fact that, in its solidity and its determinate nature, **the ego imitates the coercion that is imposed on it from without, so as to be able to combat it.** I believe that this is something I have already told you about in some detail. In short, then, **the subject's consciousness of freedom, his naive consciousness of freedom, is something like a web of delusion. The subject is trapped within itself.** The name of the resulting delusion is that of its freedom as something that exists in the here and now, a quality that it ascribes to itself like other qualities. **We could say that the human subject is bewitched by the idea of its own freedom as if by a magic spell. And this condition of being spellbound by one's own freedom, this inability on the part of the self-preserving subject to perceive the way it is conditioned as a consequence of this mechanism of self-**

- preservation - this is something we might well describe as the meta-psychological or, if you like, metaphysical truth of the Freudian doctrine of repression.**" (pg. 219-220)
- "I would remind you that the ideas of freedom and unfreedom within the subject, as subjective qualities, are both based on extra-mental models. Freedom arose or was crystallized not merely by naïvely postulating an authority that dominates nature - which is what the ego turned into. It was constructed also as the positive counterweight to the experience of social coercion. In the light of the social coercion to which the ego succumbs, the self forms the idea that it would be better to be different, that it would be better to be free. In this web of delusion it adopts a kind of compensatory role in the sense that, having once surrendered to external compulsion, it imagines that it can still define itself as a free being, inwardly at least." (pg. 220)
 - "But in the same way, unfreedom, too, that is to say, determination, has its extra-mental roots. They are situated in the dependent circumstances in which the subject finds himself: those of nature in archaic times that overwhelmed mankind, and then and above all the dependence upon social conditions, dominant groups and cliques. These are hypostasized as internal determinants and thus become a matter of human inwardness." (pg. 221)
 - "Thought couched in terms of absolute origins of the kind we see in the unambiguous thesis, the *undialectical* thesis, of both the freedom of the self and the unfreedom of the self is based on the delusion of a subjectivity that falsely assumes that everything that exists can be said to have derived from it. **Whenever we think we might have discovered such a sphere of absolute origins what we find is that the absence of ambiguity, the identity, that such a sphere assumes, in contrast to whatever is claimed to derive from it or to be subsumed under it, turns out to be no more than the metaphysical hypostasization of the principle of identity, which is what the subject is.** But whether the subject is autonomous in reality, whether it is able to decide one way or the other, as is imagined in the mechanism of the web of delusion, depends on the opposite of this subjectivity that has inflated itself into an absolute in this fashion. That is to say, it depends on objective reality. For it is this, **the organization of the world, the nature of the world, that actually determines the extent to which the subject achieves autonomy,** and the extent to which it is vouchsafed or denied. Detached from this, the subject is a fiction, or else such a thin and abstract principle that it can be of no assistance in telling us about the actual behaviour of human beings." (pg. 221-222)
 - Lecture 25 (pg. 229)
 - **"Without consciousness, there can be no will, that is evident.** And no action that we could describe as an act of will could be an action without consciousness." (pg. 230)
 - "What is happening here, the factor that I should like to show you as being integral to the constitution of what we call will and freedom, is the factor that we refer to in pre-scientific discourse as spontaneous action, or, psychologically perhaps, as impulse - even though psychologists use the phrase 'impulsive characters' to describe people whose entire behaviour is conditioned exclusively by this aspect of their psyche. This impulse is both somatic and mental at the same time, and in all probability these two aspects cannot be separated out entirely. This is because, as I have already told you, **when we act on impulse, we regress to a phase in which the separation between outer and inner is not as clear-cut,** not as definitive as it is today. We might say that, setting aside its rational, modern, bourgeois, unified qualities, the will contains archaic features, to the point where we may legitimately ask whether something like the will is still possible today in a society that has become rationalized through and through. In the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Horkheimer and I wrote at one point, in connection with the problems of the culture industry, that, in the framework of total planning characteristic of the culture industry, human beings regress to the reactions of amphibians. We might say that, **once this archaic aspect of the will has been entirely ousted by planning and rationality, it paradoxically provokes a regressive reaction on the part of human beings.** It means that they are no longer capable of will, impulse or spontaneity, but that they increasingly behave like guinea pigs about to be subjected to vivisection. It is my belief that in our society there are countless symptoms of the most terrible kind that amount to the sort of regression I have in mind - from the concentration camps that deprive people of their will-power down to certain methods of treating mental illnesses, so-called shock treatment. In a radically administered world, that is to say, in a world which, as I hope I have described it to you in the first part of these lectures, really had fallen under the thumb of the universal, undialectically and exclusively, the will would lose all its power. It would be supplanted by human reflex actions, in other words, by that dreadful realm that was first established by Pavlov's experiments. I have told you that **the impulse of which I have been speaking is the same as the will and that its existence is the strongest and most immediate proof that there is such a thing as freedom; it is neither blind nature nor suppressed nature.**" (pg. 235)
 - "With this impulsiveness, freedom extends into the realm of experience. **If we behave spontaneously we are no more simply blind nature than we are suppressed nature.** We feel that we are ourselves. But at the same time we feel we have been released from the spiritual prison of mere consciousness and this impulse enables us to enter, to take a leap - call it what you will - into the realm of objects that is normally barred to us by our own rationality. It is extremely hard for us to find the right expressions with which to describe these very profound matters without instantly reifying them." (pg. 237)
 - "...in yielding to impulse we find that what I have called the Hamlet syndrome has for a moment been overcome. **The sense of being divided, of being between inner and outer, is overcome as in a flash.** Thus we believe that as long as we obey our impulses we shall find ourselves once again in the realm of objects from which we had withdrawn by an absolute necessity, albeit perhaps only in appearance. Thus the phantasm of freedom may be said to be something like a reconciliation of spirit, the union of reason and nature as it survives in this impulse. If I have represented the will or the acts of the will in a peculiarly dualistic way that will appear to many of you as over-mechanical and schematic - and I am well aware of the misunderstandings that can arise from an overly mechanical way of speaking - the fault lies with the way in which the utterances of freedom are tied to a reality full of contradictions. Moreover, these utterances themselves bear the stamp of those contradictions as I have described these two aspects. For - and with this comment I should like to bring this lecture to a close - **you must not forget that both the elements that are needed if freedom is to make its appearance, in other words both reason and impulse, are mutually interdependent.**" (pg. 237-238)
 - Lecture 26 (pg. 239)
 - See text
 - Lecture 27 (pg. 249)
 - See text
 - Lecture 28 (pg. 258)
 - "Because without will there is no consciousness, the idealist view is that will is much the same thing as consciousness" (pg. 259)
 - "we are all ensnared by the false totality, whatever we do; we are all afflicted by the false catastrophic totality" (pg. 262)
 - "The question of freedom does not call for a simple Yes or No, but a theory that rises above society as well as above the individuals existing in it. Instead of applying sanctions to the internalized and entrenched authority of the super-ego, the task of theory should be to make transparent the dialectic of individual and species, a task to which I have devoted these observations on the philosophy of history. The unyielding harshness of the super-ego is no more than a reaction to the fact that such transparency is impossible as long as conditions full of conflict persist. The human subject could be liberated only where it had achieved reconciliation. This would place it above freedom which, as privilege, the inheritance of the feudal lord, primarily involved taking for oneself, and hence nobility. As such, it is in league with its opposite, repression. **The presence of aggression in freedom becomes visible whenever, in the midst of unfreedom, human beings practise the gestures of freedom.** In a state of freedom, the individual would not be too concerned with preserving his old particularity - individuality is both the product of pressure and the focal point of resistance to it - but

neither would that freedom be able to acquiesce in the current conception of collectivity. The fact that, in the countries that monopolize the name of socialism, collectivism is recommended and even prescribed in the shape of a subordination of the individual to the collective gives the lie to their socialism and consolidates the presence of conflict, antagonism. Infected by an irrational cult of community, the term 'alienation' has recently become fashionable in both East and West, thanks to the veneration of the young Marx at the expense of the old one, and thanks to the regression of objective dialectics to anthropology. This term 'alienation' takes an ambivalent view of a repressive society; it is as ambivalent as genuine suffering under the rule of alienation itself. **The self is weakened by a socialized society that tirelessly drives people together and renders them both literally and figuratively incapable of solitude. This weakening of the self manifests itself in complaints about isolation and also in the truly unbearable coldness spread over all things human by the expanding exchange relation. The idea that a union of free human beings should find it necessary constantly to flock together belongs to the mental world of parades, marches, flag-waving and the ceremonial speeches of political leaders of whatever hue. Such methods are needed only as long as society seeks irrationally to cement relations between its members who have no choice but to belong.**" (pg. 264-265)

- "Well, ladies and gentlemen, despite all that, there is a genuine possibility of freedom even in a totality steeped in guilt. **Again and again, human subjects feel intermittently that they are potentially free, even though unfree in reality.** And in tune with our discussions up to now - you see that I am trying to keep my promise not to begin with definitions, but to end with them - **we may say that an action is free if it is related transparently to the freedom of society as a whole.** By way of conclusion, and in a desperate attempt to save time, I should like to read out to you one or two more sentences from something I have written. **Human subjects are free, on the Kantian model, in so far as they are conscious of and identical with themselves; but then again, they are unfree in this identity in so far as it acts as a form of coercion to which they submit. Again: they are unfree as non-identical beings, as diffuse nature, and yet as such they are free, after all, because the impulses that overpower them - and that is what non-identity amounts to - rid them of the coercive character of identity. Personality is the caricature of freedom.** The basis for the aporia is that truth beyond coercive identity would not be its absolute other, but would always pass through that coercive identity and be mediated by it." (pg. 265-266)

d. Further Readings:

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