

Sand, on Late style

الاستراتيجية في تأليفه بشكل المتأخر

Adorno is exceptionally difficult to read,
 and the source of the difficulty is the
 unjournalistic, unacademic,
 unprofessional, unskillful
 unskillful

العشوائية المحيرة بجملة
 unjournalistic
 unacademic
 unprofessional
 unskillful

Lateness is a kind of self-imposed exile from what is
 generally acceptable.

الاستراتيجية في تأليفه بشكل المتأخر

Worldly person = mandarin

Adorno is very much a late figure

منه

The things he writes about seems to have known
 since childhood and were not learned at university
 or by frequenting fashionable parties.

أولاً من قبله كالمعظم، ربما من قبله أو من قبله

Lateness as a theme and style keeps reminding us of death.

Essays on Music

THEODOR W. ADORNO

Selected, with Introduction, Commentary, and Notes

BY RICHARD LEPPERT

New translations by Susan H. Gillespie

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Preface and Acknowledgments

In his text, the writer sets up house. Just as he trundles papers, books, pencils, documents untidily from room to room, he creates the same disorder in his thoughts. They become pieces of furniture that he sinks into, content or irritable. He strokes them affectionately, wears them out, mixes them up, re-arranges, ruins them.

Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia*

Theodor Wiesengrund Adorno (1903–1969) was one of the principal figures associated with the Frankfurt School and the founding of Critical Theory; he wrote extensively on culture, society, the Enlightenment, modernity, aesthetics, literature, philosophy, and—more than any other subject—music. Of all major twentieth-century social theorists none is identified with music more than Adorno, and of all music analysts Adorno is the most widely influential in other fields. To this day, he remains the single most influential contributor to the development of qualitative musical sociology, just as he is by far the most important writer on musical aesthetics—as well as aesthetics generally—in the past century. His nuanced and distinctly interdisciplinary and intertextual readings of musical works, commonly provocative and often controversial, remain both fresh and insightful, all of which gives Adorno broad claim to his increasing force in music studies.

This volume makes available for the first time a general collection in English of Adorno's essays on music that surveys the breadth of his work, and at the same time provides detailed background commentary. The twenty-seven Adorno essays included here—some short, others long—are divided into four major sections, preceded by a general introduction.

The introduction provides a biographical sketch and background to the intellectual tradition within which Adorno's thought developed. Critical Theory and dialectics in particular are highlighted in an account of Adorno's overriding concern with the social and cultural impact of late modernity on the subject. Adorno's paradoxical position on political praxis and the social role of the intellectual is considered, as well as his position—closely related—on history and human suffering. The introduction incorporates consideration of Adorno's famously difficult writing.

Late Style in Beethoven

The maturity of the late works of significant artists does not resemble the kind one finds in fruit. They are, for the most part, not round, but furrowed, even ravaged. Devoid of sweetness, bitter and spiny, they do not surrender themselves to mere delectation. They lack all the harmony that the classicist aesthetic is in the habit of demanding from works of art, and they show more traces of history than of growth. The usual view explains this with the argument that they are products of an uninhibited subjectivity, or, better yet, "personality," which breaks through the envelope of form to better express itself, transforming harmony into the dissonance of its suffering, and disdaining sensual charms with the sovereign self-assurance of the spirit liberated. In this way, late works are relegated to the outer reaches of art, in the vicinity of document. In fact, studies of the very late Beethoven seldom fail to make reference to biography and fate. It is as if, confronted with the dignity of human death, the theory of art were to divest itself of its rights and abdicate in favor of reality.

Only thus can one comprehend the fact that hardly a serious objection has ever been raised to the inadequacy of this view. The latter becomes evident as soon as one fixes one's attention not on the psychological origins, but on the work itself. For it is the formal law of the work that must be discovered, at least if one disdains to cross the line that separates art from document—in which case every notebook of Beethoven's would possess greater significance than the Quartet in C-sharp Minor. The formal law of late works, however, is, at the least, incapable of being subsumed under the concept of expression. From the very late Beethoven we have extremely "expressionless," distanced works; hence, in their conclusions, people have elected to point as much to new, polyphonically objective construction as to that unrestrainedly personal element. The work's ravaged

character does not always bespeak deathly resolve and demonic humor, but is often ultimately mysterious in a way that can be sensed in pieces that have a serene, almost idyllic tone. The incorporeal spirit does not shy away from dynamic markings like *cantabile e compiacevole* or *andante amabile*. In no case can the cliché "subjective" be applied flatly to his stance. For, in general, in Beethoven's music, subjectivity—in the full sense given to it by Kant—acts not so much by breaking through form, as rather, more fundamentally, by creating it. The *Appassionata* may stand here as one example for many: admittedly more compact, formally tighter, more "harmonious" than the last quartets, it is, in equal measure, also more subjective, more autonomous, more spontaneous. Yet by comparison the last works maintain the superiority of their mystery. Wherein does it lie?

The only way to arrive at a revision of the [dominant] view of late style would be by means of the technical analysis of the works under consideration. This would have to be oriented, first of all, toward a particularity that is studiously ignored by the popularly held view: the role of conventions. This is well known in the elderly Goethe, the elderly Stifter,¹ but it can be seen just as clearly in Beethoven, as the purported representative of a radically personal stance. This makes the question more acute. For the first commandment of every "subjectivist" methodology is to brook no conventions, and to recast those that are unavoidable in terms dictated by the expressive impulse. Thus it is precisely the middle Beethoven who, through the creation of latent middle voices, through his use of rhythm, tension, and other means, always drew the traditional accompanying figures into his subjective dynamics and transformed them according to his intention—if he did not indeed develop them himself, for example in the first movement of the Fifth Symphony, out of the thematic material, and thus free them from convention on the strength of their own uniqueness. Not so the late Beethoven. Everywhere in his formal language, even where it avails itself of such a singular syntax as in the last five piano sonatas, one finds formulas and phrases of convention scattered about. The works are full of decorative trill sequences, cadences, and *fiorituras*. Often convention appears in a form that is bald, undisguised, untransformed: the first theme of the Sonata op. 110 has an unabashedly primitive accompaniment in sixteenths that would scarcely have been tolerated in the middle style; the last of the Bagatelles contains introductory and concluding measures that resemble the distracted prelude to an operatic aria—and all of this mixed in among some of the flintiest strata of the polyphonic landscape, the most restrained stirrings of solitary lyricism. No critique of Beethoven, and perhaps of late styles altogether, could be adequate that

شخصية العقل الموحدة

الكتابة النفسية
الذاتية النفسية

تقديم الصناعات
بأن خلقها

مناقشات
رهندها ونقد
وضوح في الذخيرة

رؤية / إدراك / المثل
بما كانت / مستطرفة
للأشياء المتأخر

نظر العقل القديم
الذاتية النفسية القديمة

شخصية غير
مكتسبة
مكتسبة

الذوق

القضاء عليها
القضية

والتحجج خارج

الذاتية النفسية
بما كانت / مستطرفة
للأشياء المتأخر

خبرة
لقد تعلمنا
ليس الذوق

His writing is classically reserved and displays sensitivity to nature and life led simply. See Eric A. Blackall, *Adalbert Stifter: A Critical Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948).

2. Both *Faust II* and *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* are late works. *Faust II* was published posthumously in 1832, the year of Goethe's death; Goethe began *Wanderjahre* in 1821 and completed it in 1829.

Alienated Masterpiece

The Missa Solemnis

Neutralization of culture—the words have the ring of a philosophical concept. They posit as a more or less general reflection that intellectual constructs have forfeited their intrinsic meanings because they have lost any possible relation to social praxis and have become that which aesthetics retrospectively claims they are—objects of pure observation, of mere contemplation. As such they ultimately lose even their own aesthetic import; their aesthetic truth content disappears along with their tension vis-à-vis reality. They become cultural goods, exhibited in a secular pantheon in which contradictions, works which would tend to destroy each other, find a deceptively peaceful realm of co-existence, e.g., Kant and Nietzsche, Bismarck and Marx, Clemens Brentano and Büchner.³ This wax museum of great men finally admits its own disconsolateness in the innumerable ignored pictures of each museum and in the editions of the classics in miserly locked-up bookcases. But no matter how widespread the consciousness of all this has meantime become, it is still as difficult as ever to grasp this phenomenon in its entirety, at least if one ignores the fashion of biographical writing which reserves a niche for this queen and that microbe hunter. For there is no superfluous work of Rubens in which at least the cognoscenti would not admire the incarnate value and no house poet of the Cotta Firm² in whose work there are no non-contemporarily successful verses awaiting resurrection. Every now and then, however, it is possible to name a work in which the neutralization of culture has expressed itself most strikingly; a work, in fact, which in addition is also famous, which occupies an uncontested place in the repertoire even while it remains enigmatically incomprehensible; and one which, whatever else it may conceal, offers no justification for the admiration accorded it. No less a work than Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* belongs in this category. To speak seriously of this