Nietzsche and Adorno on Philosophical Praxis, Language, and Reconciliation

Towards an Ethics of Thinking

PAOLO A. BOLAÑOS

Nietzsche and Adorno on Philosophical Praxis, Language, and Reconciliation: Towards an Ethics of Thinking

Contemporary Studies in Idealism

Series Editor: Paolo Diego Bubbio, Western Sydney University

The *Contemporary Studies in Idealism* series features cutting-edge scholarship in the field of classical German Idealism and its legacy. "Idealism" is considered both in a historical and in a theoretical sense. The series features projects that center upon Kant and the post-Kantian Idealists (including, but not limited to, early German romantic thinkers Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel) or upon other related forms of nineteenth-century philosophy—including those often considered to oppose Idealism, such as those of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. The scholarship also seeks to critically assess the legacy of Idealism in the twentieth and twentieth-first century. The series uses the resources of classical German Idealism to engage in contemporary debates in all subfields of philosophy.

Nietzsche and Adorno on Philosophical Praxis, Language, and Reconciliation

Towards an Ethics of Thinking

Paolo A. Bolaños

I dedicate this book to my mentor and friend
ROMUALDO ESTACIO ABULAD (1947–2019)
in memoriam

Contents

Acknowledgments

The completion of this book has been made possible through the support of various people and institutions. The portions used in this volume are parts of a larger project I have undertaken while I was a postgraduate researcher in Australia during the 2006–2009 period, where I was fortunate enough to have been accorded two grants by Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia: The International Postgraduate Research Scholarship and the International Macquarie University Research Scholarship. My research stint was further supported by a study grant provided by the University of Santo Tomas, Manila, Philippines. Moreover, a one month Visiting Fellowship at the Centre for Applied Philosophy, Politics, and Ethics of the University of Brighton, United Kingdom, in early 2020 allowed me to work on substantial revisions in the manuscript. I take this opportunity to express my profoundest thanks to these institutions for their generosity.

For their astute observations and constructive criticisms on early drafts of this work, I thank my research supervisors from Macquarie University, Robert Sinnerbrink and Jean-Philippe Deranty. With utmost respect, I also thank the people whom I consider my perpetual mentors †Romualdo Abulad, Alfredo Co, Macario Ofilada Mina, Richard S. G. Brown, and Hans-Georg Moeller for inspiring me to develop my very own philosophical pedagogy, which I now share with my students.

Thank you to Jeffry Ocay for the friendship and countless hours of philosophical exchange. My profound gratitude goes to my colleagues from the Department of Philosophy of the University of Santo Tomas: Jovito Cariño, Roland Theaus Pada, Ranier Abegaña, Raniel Reyes, Franz Cortez, Fleurdeliz Altez-Albela, Rhochie Matienzo, John Vincent Ignacio, Peter Mara, and Gian Agbisit. I would also like to express my special thanks to Joyce Arriola, the former director of the Research Center for Culture, Arts, and the Humanities

of the University of Santo Tomas, for effectively providing Thomasian researchers with a conducive research environment fostered in the spirit of true academic freedom.

I wish to mention the names of some of my loyal graduate students who were instrumental, in various capacities, in the completion of the book. For her self-less assistance in various activities and projects of the UST Department of Philosophy while I was the Head, I thank Julia de Castro. For help in sorting out some technical aspects of the manuscript, I thank Anton Rennesland and Raphaela Miranda.

My profoundest gratitude also goes to Paolo Diego Bubbio of the University of Western Sydney and series editor of *Contemporary Studies in Idealism* of Lexington Books for the invitation to publish in this series. I thank the editorial staff of Lexington Books for the opportunity to publish my work in this platform, especially to Jana Hodges-Kluck and Nicolette Amstutz for their gracious patience and professionalism. Thank you also to the anonymous reviewer who provided constructive criticisms, as well as to Karin Bauer, William Franke, John Rundell, and Stefano Marino for commenting on the manuscript. My gratitude also goes to Bob Brecher, Director of CAPPE, for sponsoring my academic visit at the University of Brighton.

I thank my family—my parents Paul and Cora, my siblings Kristoffer and Kristen Paula, and my wife and son Marella and Fritz—for allowing me to experience the gift of becoming human and what makes us human: love.

Finally, I acknowledge that some parts of this book have previously been published as journal articles. The following essays have been incorporated in revised form in chapter 3: "The Battlefield of Theoretical Leverages: Habermas and Early Critical Theory," published in *Social Ethics Society Journal of Applied Philosophy*, 4:2 (2018) and "The Promise of the Nonidentical: Adorno's Revaluation of the Language of Philosophy," published in *Discipline Filosofiche*, 26:2 (2016). Meanwhile, my essay, "From Rigidity to Receptivity: Articulating an Ethics of Thinking via Nietzsche and Adorno," published as a chapter in *Representation and Contestation: Cultural Politics in a Political Century*, ed. by John McSweeney and Ching-Yu Lin (Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi/Brill, 2010), has been incorporated in modified form in chapters 4 and in the Conclusion. I wish to thank the *Social Ethics Society Journal of Applied Philosophy*, *Discipline Filosofiche*, and Koninklijke Brill NV for granting me permission to republish these materials.

List of Abbreviations

Theodor W. Adorno (cited in abbreviation, then page number, except *Minima Moralia* which is cited by section number)

A E	*Against Epistemology*
AP	"The Actuality of Philosophy"
AT	*Aesthetic Theory*
C	"Critique"
CC	*The Complete Correspondence*
CI	*The Culture Industry*
DE	*Dialectic of Enlightenment*
DPAL	"Discussion of Professor Adorno's Lecture 'The Meaning of Working Through the Past'"
EF	"Essay as Form"
IS	*Introduction to Sociology*
JA	*The Jargon of Authenticity*
LND	*Lectures on Negative Dialectics*
M	*Metaphysics: Concept and Problems*
MM	*Minima Moralia: Reflections on a Damaged Life*
ND	*Negative Dialectics*
NL	*Notes to Literature Volume One*
ODS	"Opinion Delusion Society"
P	*Prisms*
PMP	*Problems of Moral Philosophy*
Prog	"Progress"
R	"Resignation"
SO	"Subject and Object"

TLP   "Theses on the Language of the Philosopher"
WSP   "Why Still Philosophy"

Johann Georg Hamann (cited in abbreviation, then page number)

LWTKR   "The Last Will and Testament of the Knight of the Rose-Cross"
MPR   "Metacritique on the Purism of Reason"

Herder (cited in abbreviation, then fragment number, then page number or page number)

LAH   "Letters for the Advancement of Humanity (1793–7)"
NDL   *Über die neuere deutsche Literatur: Fragmente*
PUUBP   "How Philosophy Can Become More Universal and
           Useful for the Benefit of the People (1765)"
TOL   *Treatise on the Origin of Language*

Humboldt (cited in abbreviation, then fragment number, then page number or page number)

KIJ   *Über die Kawi-sprache auf der Insel Java*
L   *On Language*

Friedrich Nietzsche (cited in abbreviation, then by book number, then section number or section number, then page number)

AC   *The Antichrist*
BGE   *Beyond Good and Evil*
D   *Daybreak*
DAR   "Description of Ancient Rhetoric"
HH   *Human, All Too Human: A Book for Free Spirits*
GM   *On the Genealogy of Morals*
TL   "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense"
GS   *The Gay Science*
TP   "The Philosopher: Reflections on the Struggle between Art
          and Knowledge"
WP   *The Will to Power*
Z   *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*
TI   *Twilight of the Idols*
UW   *Unpublished Writings from the Period of* Unfashionable
          Observations

Novalis (cited in abbreviation, then fragment number, then page number or page number)

GD   "General Draft"
LF   "Last Fragments"

Friedrich Schlegel (cited in abbreviation, then fragment number, then page number or page number)

B   "*Blütenstaub*"
AF   "Athenaeum Fragments"
CF   "Critical Fragments"
DP   "Dialogue on Poesy"
FLP   "Fragments on Literature and Poesy"
I   "Ideas"
PLTP   "Philosophical Lectures: Transcendental Philosophy"

Introduction

The Nietzsche-Adorno Relation

The Nietzsche-Adorno relation might appear to be an odd combination to many, especially to those who are predisposed to read Theodor Wisengrund Adorno's (1903–1969) works in terms of Hegelian-Marxism. The influence of Hegelian-Marxism on Adorno's thought is indeed proverbial. The strong sociopolitical dimension of his writings—for instance, his critique of reification, cautionary attitude towards the culture industry, and poignant descriptions of human suffering in a damaged life—is testament to his indebtedness to Hegelian-Marxism, particularly influenced by Georg Lukács.[1] The sociopolitical or materialist dimension of Adorno's thought has been proven to be a stronghold against idealist philosophy. However, there is another dimension to Adorno's oeuvre which could supplement his Hegelian-Marxist appropriation, one that has not yet gained enough attention: Adorno's relation to Nietzsche's philosophy. Beyond Hegelian-Marxism, the insights of Walter Benjamin were profoundly influential for Adorno. It was in the former's *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* that Adorno would discover the critical and interpretative power of conceptual constellations; it is also through this where we find an indirect link to Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche (1844–1900).[2] Adorno writes in his "A Portrait of Walter Benjamin": "The later Nietzsche's critical insight that truth is not identical with a timeless *universal*, but rather that it is solely the historical which yields the figure of the absolute . . . became the canon of his practice."[3] I consider this statement from Adorno to be the fulcrum upon which we could make sense of his relation to Nietzsche. I argue that, in a broad sense, they share this emphatic view of the "historical" basis of knowledge—which they restate as "mimetic" or "somatic," or, put another way, that what we understand as "totality" is not an ethereal transcendent, but, rather, a reflection of individual moments, the particularity of our

xv

sensuous experiences. Here, epistemology and ethics converge, as Nietzsche and Adorno converge. I argue that what Adorno sees in Nietzsche's critical outlook on universal truth is an image of an "ethics of thinking," a kind of thinking that is receptive to the "nonidentical" character of the world of human and nonhuman objects.

In addition to the Nietzsche link found in "A Portrait of Walter Benjamin," Adorno confessed the truth about his reception of Nietzsche in a lecture he gave in 1963 where he says, "of all the so-called great philosophers" he owes Nietzsche "by far the greatest debt—more even than to Hegel."[4] This rather revealing statement from Adorno makes us wonder what it is exactly about the character of Nietzsche's works that was influential for Adorno. He does note that Nietzsche "denounced the presence of the bad in the good . . . from within the positive institutions of society" and, therefore, offered a critique of society that is "far more subtle and specific than . . . Marxist theory" because the latter "has never succeeded in entering into their inner workings, their lies, as deeply as Nietzsche."[5] In other words, Adorno sees in Nietzsche's genealogical approach an effective way in exposing the underlying motivations (or "lies") in societal structures, what Adorno and other critical theorist would typically understand as the underlying motivations of ideological structures.[6]

I trust that it is not at all farfetched to claim that Nietzsche's writings exemplify an implicit ethics of thinking, of which Adorno was also cognizant of but perhaps not in those exact terms. Moreover, Adorno's revelation allows us to paint a picture of an image of Nietzsche as a forerunner of the Frankfurt School critical theory tradition,[7] as the evaluation of the immediate members of the first generation Frankfurt School was generally affirmative.[8] Aside from Adorno, a case in point is Max Horkheimer's critical reception of Nietzsche in his early essay, "Egoism and the Freedom Movement: On the Anthropology of the Bourgeois Era" (1936), where Horkheimer cites Nietzsche extensively.[9] Moreover, this affirmative reception of Nietzsche by the Frankfurt School is corroborated by Rolf Wiggershaus who relates to us an occasion in 1942 in Los Angeles where the self-exiled members of the Frankfurt School (among them were Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Friedrich Pollock, Herbert Marcuse, Ludwig Marcuse, Günther Anders, and Rolf Nürnberg) debated Nietzsche's significance in social critique; in particular a Nietzschean account of the relation between need and culture. Wiggershaus points out that it was Adorno (who was supported by Horkheimer) who dominated the intellectual exchange and who sought "to correct or supplement Marx through the use of Nietzsche as a thinker concerned with the 'totality of happiness (*Glück*) incarnate.'"[10] Allow me to cite here Wiggershaus's recount of Adorno's thoughts on Nietzsche:

Adorno says expressly that he does not want to adopt as positive correctives Nietzschean concepts like "love" and "longing." Indeed, he and Horkheimer

valued Nietzsche above all for his frankness concerning the instinctual nature of cruelty, for his attentiveness to the stirring of repressed instincts without minimizing rationalization. No philosopher had brought such anti-Christian, anti-humanistic furor to his age as the pastor's son Nietzsche, who interacted almost exclusively with the educated, patricians, and petty nobility. Almost no philosopher had attempted so resolutely, without regard for socio-historical trends, to negate and destroy his own origins and training. Almost no philosopher so uncompromisingly and aggressively placed self-unfolding and enhanced life above considerations of personal gain and social success.[11]

Nietzsche's influence on Adorno's thought is perhaps the most subtle of all that inform the latter's complex and difficult work. Nietzsche's influence is also the least explored. Adorno's relation to Nietzsche is itself complex, often drawing inspiration not from any specific Nietzschean idea, but, rather, broadly from the latter's critical spirit.[12] There are, however, episodic moments, such as the ones mentioned earlier, when Adorno demonstrates his full support of Nietzsche, however, not without a full awareness and expression of the possible extreme consequences of the latter's doctrines. For example, in a telling passage from *Minima Moralia*, the most Nietzschean in form among Adorno's books, we read:

> Among the motifs of cultural criticism one of the most long-established and central is that of the lie: that culture creates the illusion of a society worthy of man which does not exist; that it conceals the material conditions upon which all human works lies, and that, comforting and lulling, it serves to keep alive the bad economic determination of existence. This is a notion of culture as ideology, which appears at first sight common to both the bourgeois doctrine of violence and its adversary, both to Nietzsche and to Marx. But precisely this notion, like all expostulation about lies, has a suspicious tendency to become ideology itself.[13]

Instead of dismissing Nietzsche, however, I see Adorno reinventing the image of Nietzsche, in particular, re-appropriating his role in a critique of culture and society. Together with Horkheimer, Adorno sought to consciously and vigilantly rescue Nietzsche from "fascists and racist appropriations"[14] and to reinterpret Nietzsche from the viewpoint of historical materialism, as Wiggershaus points out.[15] Another passage from *Minima Moralia* exemplifies one of Adorno's episodic Nietzschean moments:

> The amoralist may now at last permit himself to be as kind, gentle, unegoistic and open-hearted as Nietzsche already was then. As a guarantee of his undiminished resistance, he is still as alone in this as in the days when he turned the mask of evil upon the normal world, to teach the norm to fear its own perversity.[16]

Adorno's interest in Nietzsche is marked by their shared critical stance toward the whole philosophical enterprise. As mentioned earlier, he sees in Nietzsche an emphatic receptivity to the historical present as the locale of human experience; as such they both share the utopian imagination of the recovery of experience against the backdrop of reason's tendency to repress our receptivity to the objects of experience, viewed as the perversion of our conceptual apparatus. They both present similar versions of the pathogenesis of this perversion; and with the notions of "nihilism" and "reification" as thought images, they fuel their respective prognoses with a relentless condemnation of thought's insensitivity, rendering itself incapacitated by its own obsession with order/universalism/purism—a tendency which translates, in the current form of society, as the institutionalization or standardization of reified normative practices, the necrosis and mummification of the vitality of human relations, and, in the most extreme form, the violent oppression of human and nonhuman others. It is in this very fundamental sense that I construe Nietzsche and Adorno espousing the ethical dimension of thinking.

TOWARDS AN ETHICS OF THINKING

I wish to present this book as my preliminary notes on a philosophical notion of an ethics of thinking. I referred to this earlier as receptivity to the nonidentical. Following the philosophical trope of Adorno, I use the idea of the nonidentical (*das Nichtidentische*) to refer to the ungraspable character of human and nonhuman objects—ungraspable by reason's system of conceptualization. Such receptivity to the nonidentical is, however, not simply the positive identification of the nonidentical. There is no direct access to the nonidentical and it simply refuses to be identified, as the nonidentical itself maintains such epistemic distance. It is, therefore, a receptivity that is epistemologically negative. Drawing on this, the ethics of thinking is another way of describing this epistemic negativity; but while I refer to it here as epistemic negativity, its implications reach far beyond epistemological concerns.

The task of explicating an ethics of thinking requires the gesture of stepping out of the common conception of ethics inasmuch as I would like to construe the ethical as not necessarily constituting a moral system, but something that has real ethical efficacy despite the absence of a transcendental moral system. In this sense, one provisional way of explicating an ethics of thinking is by construing it as a kind of "philosophical praxis." This allows us to think of ethics "outside ethics," that is to say, outside a system of moral code. In order to help me illustrate this point, I borrow from Raymond Geuss

who distinguishes two senses of the word ethics. First is the more common usage as a set of "rules that contain restrictions on the ways in which it is permissible to act toward other people," and the second refers to a "whole way of seeing the world and thinking about it."[17] The second sense has a broader signification, yet one which has less common usage. In attempting to make sense of what I call the ethics of thinking, I would like to follow Geuss's second description of ethics. Philosophical thinking has always been a way of looking at or thinking about the world and the objects within it. It is in this very rough context that I propose the idea of ethics to be construed, that is to say, that philosophy is inextricably related to ethical thinking. It should be clear that I am not making a strict distinction between the words "ethics" and "morality," as I am aware that neither Nietzsche nor Adorno made the distinction. That being said, I have no real issue referring to the ethics of thinking as the "morality of thinking," as Adorno himself does in *Minima Moralia*.[18] Nevertheless, I am going to use the word "ethics" (specifically in the second sense pointed out by Geuss) predominantly throughout this book when I refer to the ethics of thinking.

As a point of departure for explicating what the ethics (or morality) of thinking is, I believe it is worthwhile to revisit an excerpt from fragment 46 of *Minima Moralia*:

> It is just this passing-on and being unable to linger, this tacit assent to the primacy of the general over the particular, which constitutes not only the deception of idealism in hypostasizing concepts, but also its inhumanity. . . . Knowledge can only widen horizons by abiding so insistently with the particular that its isolation is dispelled. This admittedly presupposes a relation to the general, though not one of subsumption, but rather almost the reverse. Dialectical mediation is not a recourse to the more abstract, but a process of resolution of the concrete in itself. . . . The morality of thought lies in a procedure that is neither entrenched nor detached, neither blind nor empty, neither atomistic nor consequential.[19]

We gather from the above excerpt that, for Adorno, the pathological turn in thinking happens when human reason imposes the "primacy of the general over the particular." This could be interpreted as the domineering tendency of human rationality over nature, the subject over the object. Epistemologically, this is reason's hypostatization or reification of concepts that we use to make sense of our natural and social environment. This reification of concepts could also be conveyed as thinking's forgetfulness of its very own material constitution or historical origin—a kind of forgetfulness of the particular, where the particular is substituted by the general or the concrete by the abstract. For Adorno, this has been how we have understood the role of knowledge to be:

thinking's supremacy over nature. Nevertheless, Adorno suggests that the "morality of thought" combats the domineering tendency of reason; this is done, according to him, when a reversal of priority—more specifically when knowledge "abides insistently with the particular." This entails a reinterpretation of the meaning of "dialectical mediation" which is, for Adorno, a shift from the primacy of the general to the primacy of the particular, "a process of resolution of the concrete in itself." Since the morality of thought respects the dialectical relation between subject and object, between thinking and nature, it preserves the dignity of the material world. My main premise is that both Nietzsche and Adorno are brothers in arms in the attempt to preserve the dignity of the material world. This will become clearer in chapter 2 where I discuss Nietzsche's overcoming of the reification of knowledge through his instigation of a shift from "metaphysical thinking" to "metaphorical thinking." Similar to Adorno's critique of the "deception of idealism," Nietzsche admonishes the primacy of the general over the particular through his critique of the "metaphysical bias" or the dissimulation of the material and mediated origin of thinking.

Given the above working description of the ethics of thinking, Nietzsche and Adorno converge in their respective criticisms of philosophical thinking. The ethics of thinking entails a reconfiguration of the practice of philosophical thinking. This is a kind of thinking that is critical of the reifying and rigidifying tendency of the human conceptual apparatus, a tendency of human rationality to dominate, control, and instrumentalize the world of human and nonhuman objects. As opposed to the domineering tendency of human rationality, the ethics of thinking seeks to circumvent conceptual reification via a reorientation in the deeply mimetic and emphatically somatic character of human experience. Here, I do not necessarily interchange the words "mimetic" and "somatic," but rather, I wish to use them together in order to metaphorically describe a "relation of receptivity" between subjective consciousness and the objective world that is radically historical by nature. Adorno hints on this historical experience in his *Lectures on Negative Dialectics* and refers to it as "intellectual experience," a kind of intellectual practice that "does not presume to apprehend the infinity of objects" and "does not reduce itself to the finite," an "undiminished experience in the medium of conceptual reflection."[20] In this context, thinking is ethical if its concepts are able to maintain their "mimetic distance" from their objects, thereby opening up each encounter with objects to new possibilities, as opposed to the rigid subsumption of objects under formalized and fixated categories. While the term "mimetic distance" is inspired by Adorno's use of the word "mimesis," I am aware that he never presented it vis-à-vis distance. Nevertheless, Adorno does say something about "experience," in *Introduction to Sociology*, as the

experience of the "concrete," that is, a "genuine experience" or the "experience of something new,"[21] a kind of experience which is closer to art and, to some extent, philosophy. Therefore, "art," in this context, is an analogue for "mimetic distance," as "Mimetic-constructive art has no argumentatively demonstrable connection to objects."[22] As such, inasmuch as the artwork is a kind of appropriation of, or reconciliation with, nature, it, nevertheless, maintains an *epistemic distance* from nature. Moreover, philosophy shares with art an ambiguous and playful language; while art and philosophy both "mimic" or "identify" with nature (which could also be understood as society), they are also radically *at a distance* from nature, that is to say, that their respective languages—at the same time similar and different—reconcile with, as opposed to dominate, nature. Compared to the language of positivistic science, which is forgetful of its mimetic character,[23] art and philosophy maintain a differential distance from the objects of nature, thereby averting conceptual reification. The mimetic distance of art and philosophy maintains a tension between thought and nature/object/society; as such, mimetic distance pertains to cognitive imitation or adaptation,[24] as well as to a kind of epistemic powerlessness—characterized by undecidability, disruption, or ambivalence—that is responsive to the nonidentical character of nature. In other words, mimetic distance—which is deeply somatic, historical, visceral—operates under a principle of similarity that, at the same time, expresses the *distance*, that is to say, radical *difference* between concept and object or between human consciousness and nature.

In this book, I contend that the works of Nietzsche and Adorno are fecund sources for the articulation of a notion of an ethics of thinking. More specifically, if we pay attention to one of the strongest links between the two philosophers—namely, their shared intellectual indebtedness to the *Frühromantik* tradition (early German Romanticism)[25]—we may be able to locate a philosophical starting point that will allow us to speak about the ethics of thinking. In particular, by highlighting some features of the *Frühromantik* tradition—namely, (1) the unity of philosophy and poetry; (2) the importance of education or *Bildung*; (3) the poetic treatment of nature; (4) freedom in writing style; (5) the constitutive relation between language and thinking; (6) Romantic irony; and (7) philosophical anti-foundationalism—we may be able to conceptualize, albeit idiosyncratically, a form of philosophical praxis akin to an ethics of thinking. This is the fundamental and potent motivation that we can locate in the writings of both Nietzsche and Adorno. Moreover, this prefigures a more elaborate discussion of their individual engagement with language and how both philosophers criticize and redeem philosophical language from metaphysics (Nietzsche) and identity thinking (Adorno). Nietzsche and Adorno's redemptive reading of the language of philosophy

converge in their emphasis on what could be called as their materialist conception of language. The similarity between the *Frühromantik* discernment of language and Nietzsche and Adorno's could not be overemphasized enough, as the latter stress the historical origin of language based on the concreteness of experience. In this sense, language is experiential and material in origin; as such, concepts are neither pre-given nor self-evident in consciousness. On the contrary, as Nietzsche and Adorno show us, it is quite the reverse. Inspired by early German Romanticism's critical outlook on language, Nietzsche and Adorno motivate us to revise our conception of philosophy, that is, a philosophy that responds to a new ethical imperative: a deepened consciousness of the fallibility of its language. As with the early German Romantics, Nietzsche and Adorno's deliberate demonstration of the fallibility of language, which is the same as the demonstration of the fallibility of reason, in their own unsystematic writing styles is one way by which they evince a philosophical-critical-performative stance. In other words, by emphasizing the role of "style" in the activity of philosophy, they are able to manifest, quite concretely, writing as philosophical praxis. Moreover, I consider Nietzsche's reinscription of "metaphorical language" and Adorno's stress on "configurative language" as examples of what Nikolas Kompridis refers to as "receptivity to the new." Via this notion of receptivity, it is possible to recast the Nietzsche-Adorno relation within the context of "philosophical romanticism," which is a contemporary strain of philosophy which rehearses some of the most critically potent and persuasive claims of the *Frühromantik* tradition. By borrowing this notion of receptivity from Kompridis, I wish to claim that Nietzsche and Adorno exemplify precisely the stance of philosophical romanticism, inasmuch as their works characterize the normative challenge of the "new," emphasizing the ability of philosophical language to reconfigure itself in the face of the unfamiliar; not to overcome or dominate the unfamiliar, but, rather, to reconcile with the unfamiliar.

Given the above, I must mention that I am not presenting a conventional comparative study of Nietzsche and Adorno. I would rather figuratively call my approach an *experimentation* with Nietzsche and Adorno—an experimental account of the ethics of thinking, which is to be done by emphasizing and activating, as pointed out earlier, their shared view on how to see and think about the material world. I am, of course, aware that Nietzsche himself warns us against what he calls, in the *Gay Science*, "mediators of resolute thinkers."[26] I am inclined to disobey Nietzsche for a moment and, instead, open my work to what Adorno refers to as "the risk of experimentation,"[27] that is to say, a resolute openness to unregimented modes of reading, writing, and presentation. Experimenting with Nietzsche and Adorno permits me to articulate the ethics of thinking. As mentioned earlier, I follow Geuss in construing ethics in a broad manner, that is, a whole way of seeing the world

and thinking about it. I highlight the inextricable relation between thinking (philosophical thinking in particular) and the ethical way we think about the human and nonhuman objects of the world. I argue that Nietzsche and Adorno's stress on the somatic or material origin of thinking allows us to recast thinking as characteristically "aesthetic," that is to say, that thinking, radically understood, relates to the senses, to one's perception of the world. By reviving thinking's sensibility or receptivity to its somatic origin, it is able to see the object of the world in a new, ethical light. Thinking is ethical if it is able to reconcile or come-to-terms with the nonidentical character of the material world, while at the same time maintaining mimetic distance; it is only through this that thinking overcomes reification and, thus, opens itself and the world to new possibilities.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

I have provisionally mentioned earlier that Nietzsche and Adorno's intellectual inheritance from the *Frühromantik* tradition profoundly shaped their understanding of thinking, in general, and philosophical thinking, in particular. From counter-Enlightenment figures—such as, Johann Georg Hamann, Johann Gottfried Herder, and Friedrich Wilhelm Christian Karl Ferdinand von Humboldt, Johann Christian Friedrich Hölderlin, Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel, August Wilhelm Schlegel, and Novalis—Nietzsche and Adorno inherited a preoccupation with the relationship between thinking and language. This is seen in Nietzsche and Adorno's radicalization of the language of philosophy by emphasizing language's metaphorical and configurative nature. We may provisionally construe the ethics of thinking in this context, emphasizing the inextricable relationship between thinking and language. Another level to the thinking-language relation is the emphasis on the metaphorical and configurative character of language. In view of this, Nietzsche and Adorno recognize the openness of thinking to the nonidentical nature of the human and nonhuman world. As such, thinking, as also pointed out earlier, opens itself to new possibilities. I wish to elaborate on these themes by discussing the following: (1) the movement from early German Romanticism to philosophical praxis, (2) Nietzsche's reinscription of the metaphorical character of language, (3) Adorno's revaluation of the language of philosophy, (4) the recovery of experience in the context of reconciliation and nonidentical thinking, and finally, (5) the articulation of an ethics of thinking.

First, I discuss, in chapter 1 (From Early German Romanticism to Philosophical Praxis), the shared intellectual lineage of Nietzsche and Adorno, synoptically outlining the profound influence of the *Frühromantik* tradition on their basic philosophical orientations. I present this shared intellectual

lineage as the strongest and most philosophically constructive aspect of the Nietzsche-Adorno relation, as they reenact the "anti-foundationalist" stance of the early German Romantics. By discussing some of the main features of early German Romanticism, I show that Nietzsche and Adorno inherited the tradition's preoccupation with the role of language in knowledge formation or in the conceptualizations of our worldviews. This provides the bedrock for my succeeding discussions of the respective philosophies of language of Nietzsche and Adorno. I deem the influence of the early German Romantics central in my articulation of the ethics of thinking. Moreover, by borrowing from Kompridis the ideas of receptivity and philosophical romanticism, this anti-foundationalist stance is recast as philosophical thinking's receptivity to the "new" which entails philosophy's radical reconfiguration of its own language. The early German Romantic spirit in the works of Nietzsche and Adorno activates the practical aspect of their thoughts which allows me to refer to their reenactment of the Romantic spirit in their own writing styles as "philosophical praxis." The critique of language is an important aspect of the Nietzsche-Adorno relation; both philosophers are receptive to the aporetic nature of language. This receptivity to the aporetic nature of language has a performative function in philosophical writing which both Nietzsche and Adorno exemplify in their own writings. As such, the aporetic nature of language, which is performed in the writing style of Nietzsche and Adorno, becomes praxis in the sense that it is a perpetual subversion of the tendency of philosophical thinking (and thinking in general) towards conceptual hypostatization. The recognition of this subversion opens up philosophy to new ways of thinking.

Secondly, prefigured by Nietzsche's indebtedness to early German Romanticism and its dramatization in his works as philosophical praxis, in chapter 2 (Reinscribing Metaphor: Nietzsche's Theory of Language) I reconstruct Nietzsche's theory of language based on his early writings on rhetoric and language, namely, "*Über Wahrheit und Lüge im aussermoralischen Sinne*" ("On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense"), and his lecture notes "*Darstellung der Antiken Rhetorik*" ("Description of Ancient Rhetoric"). I, then, present how Nietzsche's philosophy is prefigured by his preoccupation with language and, moreover, how this preoccupation with language has been profoundly prefigured by the intellectual lineage he inherited from the early German Romantics. Nietzsche's critique of language rests on a denouncement of the reification of knowledge, a reification that is brought about by the transmutation of language into "metaphysical thinking." This nihilistic tendency of metaphysical thinking, for Nietzsche, must be countered by a radical shift to "metaphorical thinking." It is a shift from the "nihilistic worldview" to the "aesthetic worldview," instigating a recovery of the metaphorical dimension of language and thought, while displacing the biases of

metaphysics. For Nietzsche, this radical shift allows philosophy to recalibrate its language, thereby transforming philosophy from a purely conceptual or transcendental discourse to a discourse that is oriented towards the social, historical, and indeterminate. This reorientation activates the "creative" and "human" character of philosophical thinking.

Thirdly, the reinscription of the metaphorical character of language proposed by Nietzsche is echoed by Adorno through his revaluation of the language of philosophy. Nietzsche's critique of metaphysics finds its analogy in Adorno's critique of "identity thinking." In chapter 3 ("Adorno and the Revaluation of the Language of Philosophy"), I map out Adorno's revaluation of philosophical language, leading to an understanding of how we conceive the world of objects, in general, and how philosophy's configurative use of concepts could disclose uncharted possibilities, in particular. In order to elaborate on this, I situate my discussion of Adorno's philosophy of language against the backdrop of the so-called linguistic turn in Frankfurt School critical theory. I revisit Jürgen Habermas's critique of Adorno's alleged performative contradiction and irresponsible aestheticism, after which I offer a response to Habermas. I argue that Habermas downplays the most important aspects of Adorno's work, such as, the mimetic or material origin of language. Moreover, I point out that Habermas's critique of Adorno is a strategic leverage to justify the primacy of a formalized model of communication or deliberation. The unfortunate result is that critical theory is reduced to a "battlefield of theoretical leverages" which is counterintuitive to the practical goals of social philosophy. I, then, show that Adorno was already preoccupied with the subject of language in some of his early essays written in the 1930s, such as "*Thesen über die Sprache des Philosophen*" ("Theses on the Language of the Philosopher") and "*Die Aktualität der Philosophie*" ("The Actuality of Philosophy"). This preoccupation with language is sustained in a much later piece, written for a radio program in 1962, "*Wozu noch Philosophie*" ("Why still Philosophy"). Very similar to Nietzsche's, Adorno's philosophy of language is a critical exposition of the dialectical relationship between language and thinking—something that was already emphasized by the early German Romantics. Adorno, for his part, enacts an immanent critique of the language of philosophy, revealing the genealogical element of conceptual reification, as well as philosophy's self-understanding and receptivity to the nonidentical. I end the third part of the book with a discussion of Adorno's call for philosophy's adaptation of "configurative language," redeeming philosophy from conceptual reification. Configurative language allows philosophy to be receptive to the nonidentical inasmuch as philosophical language becomes open to the praxis of conceptual constellations.

Fourthly, in chapter 4 (Reconciliation and the Nonidentical) I build on the premises laid down in preceding parts and I attempt to enunciate the

possibility of recovering experience through Adorno's ideas of reconciliation and the nonidentical. In order to set the proper ground for discussion, I revisit a couple more criticisms leveled against Adorno, namely, Maeve Cooke's continuation of the Habermasian rejection of the subject-object dialectic and Rüdiger Bittner's allegation that Adorno is guilty of religious foundationalism and a lack of rational or normative ground for his critique of reason. I respond to these criticisms by, firstly, reconstructing Adorno's revision of the subject-object dialectic and argue that Adorno's revised version advocates a theory of reconciliation. Secondly, I argue against Bittner by pointing out two aspects of Adorno's work that Bittner seems to have failed to take into consideration, namely, that the normative basis of Adorno's critique of reason is the material experience of suffering, as opposed to abstract theorems; moreover, Adorno develops a materialist ethics grounded in the experience of suffering which he indirectly evinces via an "inverse theology," a radical negation of the wrong state of social conditions. With the above, I articulate a notion of reconciliation between subject and object which I refer to, following Adorno, as "cognitive utopia." Cognitive utopia is further described as the "recovery of experience" in the sense that it reorients cognition in its somatic origins, wherein the body is construed as the locale of what Adorno calls the "mimetic moment." In this context, I present the reconciliatory gesture of thinking as thinking's ethical dimension. Moreover, the ethical dimension of thinking is further explored via a discussion of the possibility of aesthetic experience as thinking's openness to objects understood against the backdrop of thinking's immersion into what Adorno describes as damaged life.

Finally, I conclude this volume by rehearsing the meaning of the ethics of thinking. My experimentation with the ideas of Nietzsche and Adorno has yielded a, more or less, idiosyncratic notion of philosophical praxis, grounded in the ethical dimension of thinking. In summary, I rehearse Nietzsche and Adorno's critique of metaphysics and ideology, outlining their shared concern for the epistemic relation between language and thinking. By dramatizing the complexity of language, and more specifically the language of philosophy, both philosophers are able to emphasize thinking's struggle to courageously challenge the established order, that is, to go beyond the bounds of the common, the safe. This participation in uncertainty is performed when thinking begins to understand that the tentativeness of concepts is actually an affirmative aspect of knowledge formation. As such, thinking's performative participation in uncertainty broadens the domain of reason, thereby also broadening our conceptual capacities and our receptivity to new emerging "truths." As an ethical praxis, thinking guards itself from the error of solidification. Finally, the revaluation of language and the language of philosophy has its epistemic consequences. More specifically, philosophy is now open to other forms of epistemic relations with the world, for instance, "aesthetic

experience." By doing so, they revive a sensibility peculiar to the Romantic spirit: the bringing together of thinking and feeling. Like the early German Romantics, Nietzsche and Adorno are able to present their works as counterweight to the dispassionate stance of the Western tradition with regard to the nature of thinking.

NOTES

1. For a comprehensive discussion of Lukács's influence on Adorno, see Martin Jay, "Theodor W. Adorno and the Collapse of the Lukácsian Concept of Totality," in *Marxism and Totality: The Adventures of a Concept from Lukács to Habermas* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984), 241–75. On Adorno's relation to Hegelian-Marxism, see Nigel Gibson, "Rethinking an Old Saw: Dialectical Negativity, Utopia, and *Negative Dialectic* in Adorno's Hegelian Marxism," in *Adorno: A Critical Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 2002), 257–91.

2. See, for instance, Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne (London: Verso, 1998), 34–35, also 103–8.

3. *P*, 231.

4. *PMP*, 172.

5. *PMP*, 171–72.

6. David Owen provides an expatiation of the influence of Nietzsche on Adorno (as well as on Horkheimer and Habermas) in "Nietzsche and the Frankfurt School," in *The Routledge Companion to the Frankfurt School*, eds. Peter E. Gordon, Espen Hammer, and Axel Honneth (New York, NY: Routledge, 2019), 251–65.

7. This, of course, is something that orthodox Marxists would not readily welcome. According to Peter Pütz, after 1945, Nietzsche's "fragmentary work seemed unsuited for clearing the rubble. . . He was judged guilty through the actions of those who had appropriated him. The harshest condemnation of Nietzsche has come from the orthodox Marxists' tribunal: they regard him as nothing less than the pre-fascist assassin of reason. Even Lukács has been unable to provide a better judgment." Peter Pütz, "Nietzsche and Critical Theory," *Telos*, 50 (1981–82), 103.

8. Ibid. William Outhwaite extends Pütz's observations by discussing, in more detail than Pütz, the resemblances between the works of Benjamin, Horkheimer, and Habermas, on the one hand, and Nietzsche, on the other. See "Nietzsche and Critical Theory," in *Nietzsche: A Critical Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1995), 203–21. A similar and more recent attempt at outlining the influence of Nietzsche on the Frankfurt School is Owen's "Nietzsche and Frankfurt School." See also Vincent P. Pecora, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, Critical Theory," *New German Critique*, 53 (1991), 104–30.

9. See Max Horkheimer, "Egoism and the Freedom Movement: On the Anthropology of the Bourgeois Era," trans. David J. Parent, *Telos*, 54 (1982), 10–60. Originally published in *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, 3 (1936) as "*Egoismus und Freiheitsbewegung. Zur Anthropologie des bürgerlichen Zeitalters*."

10. Rolf Wiggershaus, "The Frankfurt School's Nietzschean Moment,'" trans. Gerd Appelhans, *Constellations*, 8:1 (2001), 144.

11. Ibid., 145.

12. There are only a handful of essays that deal with the Nietzsche-Adorno relation specifically, to name a few: Yianna Liastos, "An Artist's Choice, an Artist's Commitment: Reconciling Myth and Modern History in Nietzsche and Adorno," *Dialectical Anthropology*, 26 (2001), 137–58; Paolo A. Bolaños, "From Rigidity to Receptivity: Articulating an Ethics of Thinking via Nietzsche and Adorno," in *Representation and Contestation: Cultural Politics in a Political Century*, eds. John McSweeney and Ching-Yu Lin (Amsterdam and New York, NY: Rodopi, 2010), 167–79; Vanessa Lemm, "Critical Theory and Affirmative Biopolitics: Nietzsche and the Domination of Nature in Adorno/Horkheimer," *Journal of Power*, 3:1 (April 2010), 75–95; Ulrich Plass, "Moral Critique and Private Ethics in Nietzsche and Adorno," *Constellations*, 22:3 (2015), 381–92. To a lesser extent, Babette Babich speaks of framing Adorno's notion of nihilism within Nietzsche's own idea of nihilism in "Adorno on Science and Nihilism, Animals, and Jews," in *Symposium: Canadian Journal of Continental Philosophy/Revue canadienne de philosophie continentale*, 14:1 (2011), 1–36.

Meanwhile, there are only a few book length studies dealing specifically with the Nietzsche-Adorno relation worth mentioning here: Martin Endres, Axel Pichler, and Claus Zittel, eds., *Text/Kritik: Nietzsche und Adorno* (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2019); Karin Bauer, *Adorno's Nietzschean Narratives: Critiques of Ideology, Readings of Wagner* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999); Mirko Wischke, *Die Geburt der Ethik: Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Adorno* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1994); and Rüdiger Sünner, *Ästhetische Szientismuskritik: Zum Verhältnis von Kunst und Wissenschaft bei Nietzsche und Adorno* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Peter Lang, 1986).

13. *MM*, 22.

14. Horkheimer writes: "The superman, the problematic concept with which the psychologist left the analytical area he had mastered, has been interpreted according to the philistine bourgeois' wish-dream, and Nietzsche himself mistaken for it." "Egoism and the Freedom Movement," 59.

15. Interestingly, even before the inception of the Frankfurt School, the early reception of Nietzsche's works, especially in the United States and in Germany, has been by socialists, anarchists, and feminists—people who can be seen as inclined towards a Leftist reading of Nietzsche. This is quite remarkable according to Robert C. Hulob because, ironically enough, there are many passages in Nietzsche's oeuvre which suggest that the spirit of his writings is in opposition to precisely socialist, anarchist, and feminist tendencies. *Nietzsche: Socialist, Anarchist, Feminist*, http://learning.berkeley.edu/robertholub/research/essays/American_Nietzsche.pdf. In his outstanding and very informative study, *Left-Wing Nietzscheans*, Seth Taylor argues that prior to the Second World War Nietzsche was embraced by the antipolitical tradition in Wilhelminian Germany, a tradition which was opposed to militarism and conservative revolution. Moreover, Taylor writes, "German Expressionism (1910–1920) represents the climax of this tradition; its significance lies in the fact that young artists

of this movement saw in Nietzsche's antipolitical philosophy the material to combat the militarism, authoritarianism, and illiberalism of German society which Nietzsche is usually credited with engendering" (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1990), 3.

16. *MM*, 60.

17. Raymond Guess, *Outside Ethics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), 6.

18. *MM*, 46.

19. *MM*, 46.

20. *LND*, 82. Harro Müller's explication of Adorno's notion of "intellectual experience" is helpful: "The concept of experience (*Erfahrung*) has the great advantage of combining active and passive moments (experiencing, having an experience). It can be applied to external perceptions and to internal somatic, psychic, and mental events, and it simultaneously marks the place where determinate and indeterminate, immanent and transcendent, prelinguistic and linguistic, intuition and concept, the nonidentical and the identical, the intrasubjective, intersubjective, and transsubjective can rub up against each other productively. Not for nothing does Adorno speak of intellectual experience, thus combining experience and intellect in such a way that spiritual experiences can always also be turned back again onto intellectual experiences, so that something new can emerge." "Mimetic Rationality: Adorno's Project of a Language of Philosophy," trans. Susan H. Gillespie, *New German Critique*, 108 (Fall 2009), 91.

21. *IS*, 51.

22. Müller, "Mimetic Rationality," 96.

23. Cf. Ibid.

24. See Josef Früchtl, *Mimesis: Konstellation eines Zentralbegriffs bei Adorno* (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 1986).

25. While I acknowledge here that the Romantic spirit as such is not exclusive to the Germans, owing to the fact that variants of it emerged in France and England and that significant cross-pollinations exist, I will use "*Frühromantik*," "early German Romanticism," "Romanticism," and "Romantic spirit" interchangeably.

26. *GS*, III, 228: "Those who want to mediate between two resolute thinkers show that they are mediocre; they lack eyes for seeing what is unique. Seeing things as similar and making things the same is the sign of weak eyes." Adorno, himself, quotes this passage in *MM*, 46.

27. *AP*, 132.

Chapter 1

From Early German Romanticism
to Philosophical Praxis

This chapter has a tripartite purpose which will form the initial framework of the volume. As a first step, I will outline the shared intellectual lineage of Nietzsche and Adorno by revisiting the profound influence of the *Frühromantik* movement (early German Romanticism) on their basic philosophical orientations. To do this, I will synoptically discuss some basic features of this tradition, focusing on the following interrelated features: (1) the unity of philosophy and poetry, (2) the importance of education or *Bildung*, (3) the poetic treatment of nature, (4) freedom in writing style, (5) the constitutive relation between language and thinking, (6) Romantic irony, and (7) philosophical anti-foundationalism. My position is that these basic features of the early German Romantic movement were inherited by both Nietzsche and Adorno and that these are the strongest and most philosophically constructive aspects of their writings. Of special focus is the link between early German Romanticism, on the one hand, and Nietzsche and Adorno, on the other, with regard to their preoccupation with the role of language in knowledge formation or in the conceptualizations of our worldviews. I argue that Nietzsche and Adorno's sophisticated understanding of the nature of language, which is already present in the writings of the early German Romantics but curtailed by the rise of scientistic and positivistic philosophies, provides us with an insight into their shared anti-foundationalist stance and their emphasis on the rhetorical and mimetic structure of language and, thus, of knowledge formation. While I present my recount of the influence of German Romanticism on the thoughts of Nietzsche and Adorno synoptically, I, nevertheless, regard this influence as central in the respective developments of their thoughts; as such, my recount must also be considered profoundly central in my articulation of the ethics of thinking.

1

It is important for my task to draw on some insights from recent scholars who have specifically presented their reflections on the relation between Romanticism and philosophy.[1] I, then, present the seven interrelated features of the early German Romantics by reconstructing and bringing together ideas from their writings. Towards the end of the chapter, I recast the Nietzsche-Adorno relation within the context of what Nikolas Kompridis refers to as "philosophical romanticism," a contemporary strain of philosophy which reclaims and revises the most critically potent and persuasive claims of early German Romanticism that, for Kompridis, are able to properly address the challenges that philosophy and critical theory face today. For Kompridis, the new imperative for philosophy is its receptivity to the normative challenge of the "new," that is to say, philosophy's ability to reconfigure its language in the face of the unfamiliar. Recasting the Nietzsche-Adorno relation within the context of philosophical romanticism would, therefore, permit us to construe their philosophical enterprise as precisely responding to the normative challenge of the new. By contextualizing the Nietzsche-Adorno relation within the Romantic spirit, we are able to account for the practical aspect of their writings, the aspect which brings this study closer to Adorno's own reception of Nietzsche. In my attempt to formulate a notion of "philosophical praxis," I argue that by highlighting Nietzsche and Adorno's receptivity to the aporetic nature of language, we are able to gain an insight into how the "performative" aspect of philosophical writing, which is often curtailed by conventional discursive argumentation, is able to manifest itself as praxis; it is praxis in the sense that it is able to subvert the tendency of philosophy towards conceptual hypostatization, thereby opening up philosophy to new or other possibilities. I consider this last point as opening up the discussion for an "ethics of thinking."

INHERITING THE ROMANTIC SPIRIT

The basic stance of the *Frühromantik* tradition is a fundamental motivation that we can locate in the writings of both Nietzsche and Adorno—a link between the two that could very well prefigure my presentation of an ethics of thinking. I argue that if a further development of the ethics of thinking based on the writings of Nietzsche and Adorno is to be made, then it should begin with an inquiry into the role played by early German Romanticism in the development of their thoughts—particularly, the early German Romantic's special attention given to the role of language in the formation of knowledge and, as such, the role of language in philosophical thinking. Inasmuch as this move is seen to be setting the ground upon which a proper appraisal of the relation between Nietzsche and Adorno is to be made, it is

crucial to ask the question about the Romantic tendency or temperament which runs through and animates their works. I reinforce this with a contemporary appropriation of the Romantic disposition in what Kompridis calls "philosophical romanticism," a name which, as I shall explain below, would encapsulate the spirit of the Nietzsche-Adorno partnership; it is, moreover, a name which has consequences in store for the revaluation of the language of philosophy.

Andrew Bowie observes that Adorno's philosophy, especially his aesthetics, is "the most radical attempt to salvage, rather than abandon, the Romantic heritage."[2] The concept of the "work of art" is seen to be threatened by developments in modern rationalism, and Adorno's aim is partly to revive the Romantic question of the role that art plays in modern times.[3] Reification via commodification, which to Adorno is the *Zeitgeist* of our time, presses Adorno to question, and later on retrieve, the redemptive potential of the artwork. Moreover, the anti-foundationalist stance of the Romantics, most notably espoused by Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel, profoundly informs the core of Adorno's mature philosophy.[4] Like the Romantics, "Adorno is concerned . . . with those areas of modern thought that do not think philosophy can provide a final ground for truth, at the same time as he . . . refuses to take an irrationalist path."[5] Meanwhile, Judith Norman asserts that "Nietzsche is frequently and positively compared to Jena Romanticism," a group of intellectuals, as Norman interestingly describes, who did not over-valorize emotion over reason.[6] Norman further notes that both Nietzsche and the early Romantics were skeptical of the "validity of traditional philosophy and traditional notions of truth" and examined the prospect of literary methods as alternative ways of making sense of reality.[7] Another crucial affinity between the Romantics, on the one hand, and Nietzsche and Adorno, on the other hand, is their preoccupation with the problematic nature of language and its relation to philosophy. It is clear that the critique of the rationalistic and foundational language employed by traditional philosophy and science is a central theme in both Nietzsche and Adorno. Ultimately, revisiting the relation of Nietzsche and Adorno to the Romantic spirit would show us how this tradition has profoundly shaped their basic conception of philosophical thinking. Initially framing the subsequent discussion through this lens will help us make sense of the central theme of my project, that is, the "ethics of thinking." The case I am making is that Nietzsche and Adorno inherited the basic temperament of the *Frühromantik* tradition. Perhaps it is useful to stipulate what I understand here as the basic tenets of early German Romanticism and determine whether Nietzsche and Adorno are indeed fitting heirs. For, after all, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy emphatically declare that Nietzsche contributed to "prolonging romanticism,"[8] and I believe that the same could be said of Adorno, as already pointed out by Bowie.

However, this tradition is also characterized by intense contradictions. Some commentators, such as Löwy-Sayre and Lacoue-Labarthe-Nancy, argue that such dissonances between the basic tenets and the authors' particular views form part of what Romanticism is. Romanticism is apparently "an undecipherable enigma," according to Löwy and Sayre,[9]

> because of its fabulously contradictory character, its nature as *coincidentia oppositorium*: simultaneously (or alternately) revolutionary and counterrevolutionary, individualistic and communitarian, cosmopolitan and nationalistic, realist and fantastic, retrograde and utopian, rebellious and melancholic, democratic and aristocratic, activist and contemplative, republican and monarchist, red and white, mystical and sensual.[10]

While Löwy and Sayre acknowledge that the ambiguous use of the term "Romanticism" is itself problematic, they do not endorse a simple purification of the term.[11] For Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy it is in the "equivocity" bequeathed to the term where the problem lies.[12] While acknowledging the importance of the use of the term and its relation to the contradictory tendencies of the Romantic Movement, it is not my intention to discuss this in detail. For my purposes, it is sufficient to mention the problematic status of the term and to shift our focus to some of the more affirmative and potently critical tenets of early German Romanticism. We have to keep in mind that we are locating Nietzsche and Adorno within this tradition, and our main aim of framing a philosophical critique of modernity via an ethics of thinking will be deeply indebted to this contextualization. It is also important to avoid a haphazard or one-sided account of the Romantic spirit, let alone using the term in its over-simplistic vernacular connotation as representing ultra-sentimentalism or emotionalism, which is more of the French variant than the German. Moreover, it is easy to prioritize one aspect at the expense of another, for example, between the literary and the political aspects, which seem to be mutually exclusive.[13] Historiographers of Romanticism aggravate the situation "by focusing exclusively on its conservative, reactionary, and counterrevolutionary aspect while simply ignoring the revolutionary Romantic trends and thinkers."[14] Our conception of Romanticism should, therefore, be more sensitive to the symbiotic relation between the literary and the revolutionary (or political). I agree with Richard Eldridge that the Romantic spirit becomes more "persistent" in our time, he writes:

> It remains with us as a form of scrutiny of our human possibilities, through and after the advents of aestheticism, inwardizing modernism, and wider political awareness, because of its persistence in the open itinerary of thinking about value, embodied in its own resistances to authoritative closure.[15]

From the above passage one can surmise that there is something in the Romantic spirit that is universally philosophical, that is, a resistance to "authoritative closure." This is what is persistent in Romanticism and, ironically, an aspect that is often neglected. Romanticism is often stigmatized as "a poetry of self-indulgence and evasion"[16] that simply disregards historical and social realities. Around 1795, especially in Germany, the name "Romanticism" has become a byword for the fashionable[17]—not at all dissimilar to how the word "postmodernism" nowadays has been used and abused. This unfortunate trend of Romanticism's relegation to "pop culture" (as we also witness happening to postmodernism) obfuscates its critical potential. As the original and highly critical intentions of the early German Romantics, like the Schlegel brothers, have been obscured by the popularity of "romanesque romanticism," we could see, in our own time, how the more philosophically interesting or critical aspects of the writings of Foucault, Deleuze, and Derrida could easily get lost in the plethora of images manufactured by their so-called followers. In other words, the bastardization of the "new" is its own-most possibility and, at the same time, its nemesis. Philosophy could turn (and it already has) into an industry and, in return, industry becomes a philosophy. In this context, what is at stake is the redemptive feature of postmodernist critique. Arguably, a similar thing happened to German Romanticism and the Romantic spirit in general.

Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, despite claiming that the Romantics had no predecessors, trace the critical potential of the Romantic spirit to Kantian aesthetics: "Kant opens up the possibility of romanticism . . . it is because an entirely new and unforeseeable relation between aesthetics and philosophy will be articulated in Kant."[18] Further, Kantian aesthetics articulates a deliberate movement away from the traditional conception of *intuitus originarius* (original intuition) represented by the divine as *arche* or *telos* or through the Cartesian *res cogitans* or Hume's empirical sensibility; what the *intuitus originarius* implies is a basic normative theoretical standpoint from which philosophical argumentation could be based. The notion of *intuitus originarius*, according to Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, previously ensured the possibility of philosophy, and in Kant this philosophical *given* is questioned and abandoned to some extent, but nevertheless replaced by *Vernunft* (Reason). For Kant, as also in Nietzsche and Adorno, the "I" is reduced to a mere logical necessity or grammatical exigency.[19] This weakening of the subject has been regarded as a "crisis in philosophy" and one that prevented Kant from completing his philosophical system; but perhaps it is also this apparent incompleteness of Kant's philosophical anthropology which prompted his closest followers Karl Leonhard Reinhold and Johann Gottlieb Fichte to attempt to reinstate a theory of the subject or representation that resembles that of the Cartesian *Cogito*. It is from this crisis, however, the crisis of

the subject, ultimately the crisis of the *ontology of transcendence* that the early Romantics would spring forth. Another link between Kant and early German Romanticism is the emergence of "aesthetic theory" in *The Critique of Judgment*, where Kant attempts to bridge the divide between "natural necessity" and "subjective autonomy" first dealt with in *The Critique of Pure Reason*.[20] For Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, Romanticism is a kind of response to this philosophical crisis—a path forged *in between* speculative idealism and the poetry of poetry.[21] The early German Romantics attempted to overcome the Kantian aftermath by adapting a Fichtean conversion of the Kantian moral subject through a conception of the subject as "absolutely free" or as *Selbstbewusstsein*.

Europe of the late eighteenth century is marked by extensive social, moral, philosophical, political, and economic challenges which to a large extent prefigured the Romantic spirit. Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy locate a threefold crisis: (1) "the social and moral crisis of the bourgeoisie," (2) "the political crisis of the revolution," and (3) "the Kantian critique."[22] The French Revolution, which marks the eradication of the feudal system, has undermined the complacent aristocracy wherein sons were no longer guaranteed positions in government and, in addition, the promise of lavish lifestyles began to diminish. The revolution also entailed the decentralization of power in government, but not for long. The consequences of the Kantian critique, which meant the reevaluation of the aims and limitations of philosophy itself, was to have a profound impact on the development of early German Romanticism, as mentioned earlier. Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy note, "The characters we will see assembling in Jena participated in this triple crisis in the most immediate manner."[23] Moreover,

> their project will not be a literary project and will open up not a crisis *in* literature, but a general crisis and critique (social, moral, religious, political: all of these aspects are found in the *Fragments*) for which literature or literary theory will be the privileged locus of expression.[24]

This shift from the crisis-laden language of classical philosophy to the more poetic language of literature would also prove paradigmatic for both Nietzsche and Adorno. Ultimately, the Romantic spirit inaugurated a remodeling of the form of the work that "sets the work to work in a different mode"[25] which is in itself a mode of thought that reflects on the form of writing—it is through the Romantic spirit that the "fragment" became significant as a literary genre, "the sign of its radical modernity."[26] Via the *Athenaeum*, the literary journal of the German Romantics first published in 1798, Friedrich Schlegel, in particular, experimented with the fragments on varying themes (from the banal to profound); the brevity of the adventure

with the fragment led to further exploits with other related genres, such as the novel, letter, dialogue, poem, and essay.[27] It is impossible to discuss the exigencies of these different genres in detail here, but suffice it to say that what these experimentations would amount to was the recovery of forms of writing that were considered, since Plato banished the poets from the republic, antithetical to the aims of philosophy.[28] This also meant the recovery of the kinship between art and philosophy. It is not an exaggeration to say that this is precisely the philosophical and literary outlook that both Nietzsche and Adorno inherited from the *Frühromantik* tradition.

The *Frühromantik* tradition is commonly viewed as a movement that emerged in Germany in the late eighteenth century, roughly between 1794 and 1808, first in Jena then in Berlin.[29] From among the proponents of this tradition, I consider the following to be the main figures (this list, however, is by no means exhaustive): Johann Georg Hamann (1730–1788), Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803), and Friedrich Wilhelm Christian Karl Ferdinand von Humboldt (1767–1835), Johann Christian Friedrich Hölderlin (1770–1845), Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling (1775–1854), Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel (1772–1829), August Wilhelm Schlegel (1767–1845), and Georg Philipp Friedrich Freiherr von Hardenberg (1772–1801), otherwise known as Novalis. These were the German intellectuals who responded to the triple crisis that Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy outline, once again: (1) the social and moral crisis of the bourgeoisie, (2) the political crisis of the revolution, and (3) the Kantian critique. In terms of the Kantian critique, the first three early German Romantics, Hamann, Herder, and Humboldt were known to be very critical of Kant's transcendental philosophy because of its self-defeating neglect of the role of language; while the likes of Hölderlin, Schelling, the Schlegel brothers, and Hardenberg were schooled in the Kantian tradition and responded, in their own respective ways, to Reinhold's and Fichte's appropriations of Kant. In addition to the brief historical account above, I believe it is also important to give a schematic reconstruction of the main characteristics of the *Frühromantik* temperament, once again: (1) the unity of philosophy and poetry, (2) the importance of education or *Bildung*, (3) the poetic treatment of nature, (4) freedom in writing style, (5) the constitutive relation between language and thinking, (6) Romantic irony, and (7) philosophical anti-foundationalism.[30]

For the early German Romantics, borderlines vanish that is why their writings are characterized by the unity of religion, philosophy, and art. In fragment 116 of the *Athenaeum*, Friedrich Schlegel writes:

> Romantic poetry is a progressive, universal poetry. Its aim isn't
> merely to reunite all the separate species of poetry and put poetry in
> touch with philosophy and rhetoric. It tries to and should mix and fuse

poetry and prose, inspiration and criticism, the poetry of art and the poetry
of nature; and make poetry lively and sociable, and life and society
poetical; poeticize wit and fill and saturate the forms of art with every
kind of good, solid matter for instruction, and animate them with the
pulsations of humor. . . . Romantic poetry is in the arts what wit is in philosophy,
and what society and sociability, friendship and love are in life.[31]

What Schlegel intimates in the above *Athenaeum* fragment is the universality of the Romantic (*romantisch*) poetic form or *Poesie* (poesy). This universality amounts to the collapse of borders which, for Schlegel, does not mean that there is a singular literary form that could account for life, but, rather, that all the arts—including religion and philosophy—despite their differences, are unified in that they are individual ways of making sense of life. Meanwhile, in his "Fragments to Literature and Poesy," Schlegel writes, "The romantic imperative demands the mixing of all poetic genres. All nature and all science should become art. Art should become nature and science."[32] Then he says in the "Critical Fragments": "The whole history of modern poetry is a running commentary on the following brief philosophical text: all art should become science and all science art; poetry and philosophy should be made one."[33] In other words, the border between poetry and philosophy vanishes; poetry and philosophy, then, are inseparable expressions of life. It is in this context too, that for Schlegel, the respective languages of poetry and philosophy contaminate, therefore enrich, each other. It should be noted, however, that this Romantic fusion of art, philosophy, and the natural sciences is not a simple lumping together of all these disciplines, but, rather, a critical gesture against the over-rationalization that is a propensity of the natural sciences.

The early German Romantics were preoccupied with *Bildung* which, for them, meant "the development of all innate faculties in an approach to infinite perfection"[34] which is realizable only through education or cultural formation. For instance, in his "Philosophical Lectures: Transcendental Philosophy," delivered in Jena between 1800 and 1801, the mature Schlegel speaks of *Bildung* (education) as one of two of the basic concepts of morality (honor being the other), he adds that *Bildung* is the "development of independence."[35] In an *Athenaeum* fragment, he maintains that "unselfish education" aims to develop "each particular power and the combined harmony of all."[36] While in "Ideas," Schlegel declares: "Culture is the greatest good and it alone is useful" because only "by being cultivated does a human being, who is wholly that, become altogether human and permeated by humanity,"[37] Therefore, the early Romantic notion of *Bildung* involves personal cultivation via education as a *summun bonum* and as a responsibility of all members of a society. The education of the members of society, in this context, has ethical, cultural, and political efficacy; it is a type of responsibility that is conscious of community

building. Given this preoccupation with *Bildung*, the motivation of the early German Romantics was not only literary, as Frederick C. Beiser observes, it was also ethical and political, as they espoused an ethics of cultural cultivation and a politics of community.[38] The theme of the ethical and political import of *Bildung* is discussed by Herder in the essay "How Philosophy Can Become More Universal and Useful for the Benefit of the People (1765)";[39] while in "Letters for the Advancement of Humanity (1793–7)," he speaks about human advancement in the context of differences in cultures while espousing a more inclusive cosmopolitan idea of humanity.[40]

While we find in the writings of Schelling the most pronounced philosophical treatment of nature, through what he developed as his *Naturphilosophie*,[41] it is, nevertheless, just one of the manifestations of this interest in nature. Elizabeth Millán notes that the early German Romantics were concerned "with life, with change, and with nature's organic processes . . . for the seeds of eternal growth."[42] Moreover, this concern with nature was "coupled with an embrace of aesthetic experience" that "gave way to a call for a poetry of nature."[43] This call for a poetry of nature may also be viewed as a response to the disenchantment that the early German Romantics experienced against the backdrop of modernity, that is to say, humanity's alienation from nature brought about by the modern engrossment with mastery and instrumental rationality.[44] For instance, Novalis refers to "Philosophical Pathology" or the "absolute drive toward perfection and completeness" as "an illness, as soon as it shows itself to be destructive and averse toward the imperfect, the incomplete."[45] Given this critical outlook on modernity, the early German Romantics sought a rather modest approach in dealing with nature from the *mastery* to the *appreciation* of nature. Schlegel illustrates this appreciation of nature in the following *Athenaeum* fragment:

> A so-called investigation is a historical experiment. The subject and result thereof are a fact. Every fact must have a strict individuality, be both a mystery and an experiment, that is, an experiment of creative Nature. Everything is secretive and mysterious that can only be apprehended by enthusiasm and philosophical, poetical, or moral understanding.[46]

In the above fragment, the Romantic appreciation of nature is exemplified in poetic descriptive language. I understand Schlegel emphasizing the historicity or materiality of the act of investigating nature; the investigation is by no means a total mastery of that which is investigated, but, rather, an openness to the creative essence of nature. In other words, the early German Romantics approached nature both with an enthusiasm to understand nature's essence, but, at the same time, an awareness of its vastness and, therefore, the powerlessness of the human cognitive faculty to comprehend this vastness. As

such, for them, the only "ethical" approach in comprehending or appreciating the "mystery of nature" is through a "poetic gesture." This poetic gesture could further be described as a kind of "epistemic modesty"[47] that restores our enchantment with nature, making possible once again an aesthetic, as opposed to instrumental, sensibility towards nature. The following passage from "Dialogue on Poesy" exemplifies Schlegel's poetic description of nature:

> Just as the core of the earth spontaneously clothed itself in formations and plant life, just as life spontaneously sprang forth from the depths and the world was filled with joyously multiplying creatures, so too does poesy spontaneously blossom forth from the invisible, elemental force of humanity when the warming ray of the divine sun meets and impregnates it.[48]

Schlegel, in the above passage, is not only describing nature poetically, but, interestingly enough, uses a metaphor from nature, "blossom," to describe poetry—"poesy spontaneously blossom forth"—as if the poetic verse is like a flower that blossoms forth as it matures. What is more interesting here is that, for Schlegel, this is not simply characteristic of poetry, but also of philosophy, inasmuch as philosophy and poetry are one, and, hence, characteristic of thinking as a whole. What we must understand here is that, for the early German Romantics, the manner through which we speak about nature reflects the value that we accord it—hence, it is a profoundly ethical way of speaking about nature. In this context, too, since language and thinking are inextricable (as will be shown later), the poetic treatment of nature is, at the same time, the ethical way of thinking about nature. Thinking ethically about nature is also thinking ethically about ourselves (humans) because nature and humans are not necessarily separate realities. Traditionally, we construe nature as the "other" or the "nonself" in contradistinction to the "self." However, Novalis provides us with an alternative relation between the nonself (nature) and the self (human): "One understands the self only in so far as it is represented by the nonself. The nonself is the symbol of the self and serves only for the self-understanding of the self. Conversely, one understands the nonself only in so far as it is represented by the self and as this becomes its symbol."[49] In other words, there is a more dialectical and dynamic relationship between nature and humans, one that is symbiotic. However, it is crucial to understand here that everything, including the human, emanates from nature. This dialectical and dynamic relation results in the emergence of language, which is the symbolic, because the "nonself is the symbol of the self" inasmuch as the nonself "is represented by the self." Ironically, however, this connection with nature does not necessarily mean that human thought has the capacity to apprehend everything about nature, as our obstinate apprehension of nature could result

in instrumental rationality which is characteristic of the destructive tendencies of modernity that Novalis was attempting to counter.[50] Hence, for the early German Romantics, a "poetic distance" remains between nature and humans even if they spring from the same reality. This notion of poetic distance is a precursor to the idea of "mimetic distance" that we find in Adorno.

The poetic treatment of nature is related to the early German Romantics' fondness for freedom in their writing styles. For them, the structure of the written form is analogous to the real form of thinking. They favored a manner of writing that is not only poetic but also open-ended, for open-endedness is less restrictive and, hence, more conducive to possibilities. I must point out, moreover, that this open-endedness is also a recognition of the limitations of thinking—for example, as pointed out above regarding the limitations of human reason to apprehend the fullness of nature. While we cannot necessarily speak of a single early German Romantic genre, proponents of the movement were masters in various genres, such as, poetry, novel, prose, and fragment. Of special interest for us here is their preoccupation with the "fragment" as a form of writing, precisely because it is this specific form that Nietzsche and Adorno consciously employed in their own writings. I have already pointed out earlier that the shift to the fragment was paradigmatic for Nietzsche and Adorno, because this mode of writing reflects on the form of writing, a kind of writing that brings poetry and philosophy closer together. The fragment is, according to Peter Osborne, "the central philosophical concept of early German Romanticism."[51] Once again, I refer to Schlegel on the fragment as a writing style:

> A dialogue is a chain or garland of fragments. An exchange of letters is a dialogue on a larger scale, and memoirs constitute a system of fragments. But as yet no genre exists that is fragmentary both in form and content, simultaneously completely subjective and individual, and completely objective and like a necessary part in a system of all the sciences.[52]

The passage above suggests that, more than a literary apparatus, fragments actually constitute how we use language in general: in our daily conversations (dialogues), exchange of thoughts in letters, memoirs, and, Schlegel adds, the fragment, too, is a "necessary part in a system of all the sciences." This suggests that the fragment, as opposed to simply a "broken off" part of a larger whole, is a system in itself, while it is "subjective and individual," it is, at the same time, "completely objective." Therefore, the fragment is independent, but more complex language systems depend on it.[53] In addition to the autonomy of the fragment, another important philosophical characteristic, which seems at first to counter its autonomy, is its ability to demonstrate the tentativeness or incompleteness of an idea. This is related to what I mentioned

in the Introduction as the "mimetic distance" from nature characterized by undecidability, disruption, or ambivalence; it is, as it were, a kind of "epistemic negativity" which I associate with Adorno's notion of the nonidentical. The nonidentical reminds us of what Novalis refers to as the task of poetry which is to "represent that which cannot be represented."[54] While "that which cannot be represented" might remind us of what Kant termed the "noumenal," which can only be assumed but cannot be represented or cannot be known. Alternatively, I take this statement from Novalis to mean poetry's—and, therefore, philosophy's—ability to represent the objects of nature in a non-positivistic manner. While this entails a notion of literary imagination, I also interpret Novalis's statement to have a deeply epistemic significance. However, much like the fragment, representing that which cannot be represented is, for me, a kind of negative epistemology. What this entails is that the representation is not positively empirical, but, rather, as Novalis puts it, "The sense for poetry has much in common with the sense for mysticism. It is the sense for the particular, personal, unknown, mysterious, for that which is to be *revealed*, what necessarily happens by chance."[55] So as a counterweight to the Enlightenment obsession with clarity and the Modern doctrine of knowing everything (that is to say, measuring and manipulating), the early German Romantics made room for "mystery," "revelation," "chance." This translates into a kind of epistemic negativity that is still open to the unknowable or the mysterious in things. I do not mind calling the unknowable or mysterious as the non-identical character of things. The fragment, then, may be construed as a demonstration of what is *effable* and *ineffable* in things. In this context, the early German Romantics understood very well that language is constitutive of how we engage with the world and with other human beings, but they, at the same time, denied the transparency of language. It is only through this acknowledgment of the non-transparency of language that Novalis's statement makes sense, as representing that which cannot be represented does not entail capturing the totality of a thing, through one's ideas, but, rather, only revealing poetically or fragmentarily some aspects of the object. This allows us to be able to speak about something without subjugating it. Interestingly enough, the early German Romantics anticipated the epistemic negativity that characterizes Adorno's negative dialectics.

   This brings us to the next characteristic of early German Romanticism: the relationship between language and thinking. According to Michael N. Forster, the popular assumption, especially by the tradition of Analytic Philosophy, that the so-called linguistic turn was initiated by Gottlob Frege[56] is utterly false. Rather, contemporary philosophy of language has its roots in the German Romantic tradition, from Herder all the way to Hegel.[57] However, it would be more precise to say that the philosophical preoccupation with the nature of language, in the history of Western philosophy, dates as far back

as the dialogue *Cratylus*, where Plato debates on whether the names we use to refer to objects are conventional or natural.[58] In terms of Nietzsche and Adorno's preoccupation with language, the works of the three H's (Hamann, Herder, and Humboldt) of early German Romanticism are the most direct sources. Cristina Lafont corroborates Forster's observation that the Hamann-Herder-Humboldt triumvirate marked the linguistic turn in German philosophy which is characterized by two main features. First is that Hamann, in particular, began to regard language as constitutive of thought as opposed to the view of language held by the philosophy of consciousness, represented by Kant's transcendental philosophy, as simply a means of expressing pre-linguistic thoughts. Second, and as a result of the first, Reason has been "de-transcendentalized" and has been situated in a plurality of natural languages.[59] This, of course, is partly a critique directed towards the Kantian transcendental subject, instigated by a counter-Enlightenment movement of which Hamann is considered to be the progenitor. Hamann's metacritique of Kant is said to have marked the point at which the tradition breaks away from the philosophy of consciousness. Nevertheless, as Lafont notes, the impact of Hamann's insights were minimal in his lifetime but would rather prove profoundly significant as an anticipation of the critique of language that would transpire a couple of centuries later.[60] On a broader scale, the specific critique directed towards Kant is representative of a larger critique directed against the instrumentalist view of language that has remained unquestioned since the time of Plato. Against the instrumentalist view, Hamann (as well as Herder, Humboldt, and as we have seen the rest of the early German Romantics) argues that language is more than "a mere instrument for fixing and communicating the experience of the world," because our experience of the world is determined "by the character of our own language."[61] In other words, our cognitive relation to the material world is essentially constituted by our normative use of language. Therefore, in opposition to Kant who wanted to secure the autonomy of Reason and thereby separate man from ordinary human speech, Hamann does not distinguish reason from language and emphasized, rather, how reason is normatively constituted by language.[62] This view on language could be referred to as "linguistic constitutivism."[63] It is, however, important to note that Hamann understood the relation between language and the world in theological terms, as he deemed that language is rather imbedded in the world, as God's creation, as opposed to human reason imposing its language unto the world:

> Because the instruments of language, at least, are a gift of the alma mater nature . . . and because in accordance with the highest philosophical probability the creator of these artificial instruments desired and was obliged to implant the use of them too, the origin of human language is therefore certainly divine.[64]

While I am not endorsing here Hamann's theological orientation, I, however, wish to stress the dynamic dialectical character that he bequeathed to language and its relation to human reason. Contra Kant, Hamann emphasizes that thinking (human reason) is only possible through language which is constitutive of human experience and culture. As such, there is no such thing as "pure reason," as reason always relies on "tradition and usage."[65] This metacritique of Kant would prove decisive for subsequent reflections on the relationship between philosophy and language which is obviously related to the overcoming of Kant by the Romantics as outlined earlier—a critical standpoint that would prove profoundly influential for Nietzsche and Adorno. Meanwhile, even more so than Hamann, his student Herder expatiated on a linguistic constitutivism that, to my mind, reinforces that of Hamann.[66] Forster points out three features of Herder's view on language and its relation to thinking: (1) "thought is essentially dependent on and bounded by language";[67] (2) the "denial that *meanings* or *concepts* are to be equated with the sorts of items, in principle autonomous of language, with" external referents;[68] and (3) that "Herder develops a quasi-empiricist theory of concepts according to which sensation is the source and basis of all our concepts."[69] Herder is known to have written in his *Fragments on Recent German Literature*: "*Word* and *ideas* are intimately connected."[70] But while this statement is simple, it has radical implications for how we should understand the relationship between thinking and language. Nietzsche and Adorno's respective views on language have their strongest resemblance to Herder's quasi-empirical theory of language. Not only do Nietzsche and Adorno already presume the constitutive relation between thinking and language, they are also emphatic that words or concepts are not substitutes for material objects. As such, very much like Herder, Nietzsche and Adorno emphasize the material or sensual basis of language and, hence, thinking. Another statement from the *Treatise on the Origin of Language* makes his position clearer: "Without language the human being has no reason, and without reason no language."[71] While, at first glance, this statement seems to be a vicious circle that goes nowhere, it could be interpreted precisely as the very *constitutive relation* between language and thought. In other words, Herder has, indeed, gone beyond the dualistic and instrumentalist reading of the nature of language, as he denies even the distinction between language and thinking. Herder also says in the *Treatise*, "language becomes a natural organ of the understanding,"[72] implying that language is not separate from how thinking functions and that thinking, indeed, depends on language. The above Herderian principles are reiterated, one way or the other, in the writings of Humboldt, who thought "that reflection, or the awareness of objects as distinct from ourselves and our desires, is coeval with our development of language."[73] I take this position by Humboldt as a further accentuation of the materialist conception of language that we already find

in Herder. This linguistic materialism had become the basis for Humboldt's development of empirical linguistics, which is based on the principle that a language is the window to the mind of a people; investigating the diversity of languages will result in the discovery of the diversity in the way human beings think. Beyond Herder, however, Humboldt developed a more holistic view of language. In *On Language: The Diversity of Human Language-Structure and Its Influence on the Mental Development of Mankind*, Humboldt uses the metaphor of the "organism," in the context for instance of the human body, to describe how a language is structured:

> Since language, in direct conjunction with mental power, is a fully-fashioned *organism*, we can distinguish within it not only *parts*, but also *laws* of proce-dure, or rather . . . *directions* and *endeavours*. If we wish to contrast this organ-ism with that of the body, we can compare such tendencies with *physiological* laws, whose scientific consideration also differs essentially from the analytical description of individual parts.[74]

We gather from the above passage that, by using the organism metaphor, Humboldt is able to construe language as an organic system akin to the liv-ing human body whose parts comprise the whole and that the whole does not make sense (or does not function properly) without the parts. However, what is more interesting in Humboldt's account is that, for him, there are various linguistic organisms as there are various languages. *On Language*, which is by itself a lengthy introduction to a larger project *On the Kawi Language on the Island of Java*,[75] aims "to depict languages, in the diversity of their structure, as the necessary foundation for the progress of the human mind."[76] Moreover, a language, according to Humboldt is not a finished product (*Ergon*), but, rather, a continuous activity (*Energeia*).[77] I interpret this as pre-cisely the dialectical dynamic between language and thought, that is to say, the ever-enduring process of language's attempt to make thought intelligible, impressing upon thought a structure from which expression becomes pos-sible. This process is, nevertheless, a continuous activity as language-thought struggle to make sense of the material world.

At this juncture, I thought it helpful to point out another aspect of the Hamann-Herder-Humboldt triumvirate. I do this by rehearsing very briefly some insights from Charles Taylor's recent book, *The Language Animal: The Full Shape of the Human Linguistic Capacity*, where he speaks about his "HHH theory" of language inspired by the ideas of Hamann, Herder, and Humboldt (hence the shorthand "HHH"). Taylor opposes the HHH theory to the "HLC theory" of language based on the ideas of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Étienne Bonnot de Condillac.[78] According to Taylor, the HLC theory, otherwise called "enframing theory," is not necessarily a theory

of language, but, rather, a theory of knowledge that views words as verbal or visual expressions of ideas, whereas ideas are mental representations of things. In this context, language functions primarily as a communicative tool that, at times, could be taken out of context. Meanwhile, the HHH theory, or "constitutive theory," identifies language as a crucial element of human knowledge and goes beyond language's communicative function, as it construes language as constitutive of human experience. In other words, the constitutive approach emphasizes the inextricable relationship between language and meaning that shapes the way we understand the world and how we experience it. As such, in contrast to the enframing approach, language, according to the constitutive approach, functions not simply to create a mirror-like representation of the world or one-to-one correspondence between objects and ideas, but, rather, as a "reflective" process of self-contextualization, self-understanding, and identity formation.[79] It is interesting that Taylor also refers to the constitutive function of language as the "creative power of discourse." He explains that language's "alternation of creation and ratification of meanings . . . is the basis for the continuing generation of cultural differences"[80] and, moreover, that "the telling of stories is a creative or constitutive feature of language."[81]

Central also to the early German Romantics' preoccupation with language is their use of "irony" in their writings. Irony has both a pedagogical-epistemic function and a literary function. The figure of Socrates in the dialogues of Plato exemplifies the pedagogical-epistemic function, in the sense that Socrates presumably attempts to draw out possible answers to difficult philosophical questions by assuming to be ignorant himself. Meanwhile, as a literary device, irony is used by writers when they deliberately say things that they do not mean. In both instances of irony, the apparent discrepancy between the act/writing and the intention of the speaker/writer is expected to create an effect on the listener/reader.[82] Irony affects the listener/reader by provoking thinking as, for instance, in Socratic irony. Meanwhile, irony, specifically for the early German Romantics, is a demonstration of "a self-conscious, self-reflexive, linguistic self-undermining" writing practice.[83] Therefore, irony was for the early German Romantics an important literary device that extended, to some extent, the Kantian attempt to critique human Reason via its own means. In other words, Romantic irony is the literary version of this critique, "the text reflecting on itself to demonstrate the absence of an organizing principle located in some god-like author-subject."[84] In this context, then, Romantic irony sets itself apart from other genres of writing in that it explicitly performs the problematic status or aporetic nature of language itself, that is to say, the epistemic tentativeness of language, either in spoken or written form. By undermining language, the *ironic effect* is that writing becomes more fluid, creative, tentative, and, hence, open to revision

and possibilities. Schlegel was a staunch defender of Romantic irony and, for him, irony was not simply a literary device, but a way of exposing the problematic status of language as it is employed in philosophy, literature, and the sciences. What irony exposes is the "contradictory" nature of language. For instance, Schlegel writes in the *Athenaeum*: "Most thoughts are only the profiles of thoughts. They have to be turned around and synthesized with their antipodes. This is how many philosophical works acquire a considerable interest they would otherwise have lacked."[85] Thoughts, therefore, are "only profiles of thoughts" or, in other words, only provisional expressions which are not final and may only assume some resemblance of completeness vis-à-vis opposite thoughts. Interestingly, in his "Critical Fragments," Schlegel points out the ironic character of both philosophy and poetry:

> Philosophy is the real homeland of irony, which one would like to define as logical beauty: for wherever philosophy appears in oral or written dialogues —and is not simply confined into rigid systems—there irony should be asked for and provided. . . . Only poetry can also reach the heights of philosophy in this way, and only poetry does not restrict itself to isolated ironical passages, as rhetoric does.[86]

We gather from the above fragment that the role of philosophy is to respond to irony by not settling opposite philosophical views, but by stressing precisely these opposite views. The "logical beauty" of philosophy is that it is able to employ reason while being open to possibility as it is not "confined into rigid systems." Both philosophy and poetry share this affinity with irony; they are both self-conscious of their own fallibility and, as such, both are open to thinking's infinite possibilities. Schlegel further notes that irony "contains and arouses a feeling of indissoluble antagonism between the absolute and the relative, between the impossibility and the necessity of complete communication."[87] Irony is the most palpable presentation of the contradictory nature of the language of philosophy, the "antagonism between the absolute and the relative." While philosophy as a manner of expression is necessary, it is also necessary that philosophy is self-conscious of the impossibility of the absolute and final communication of its subject matter. In this context, while philosophy strives to present a subject matter in the most judicious or sagacious manner, there is always something that is not captured by this process. "The principle of contradiction is inevitably doomed," Schlegel declares, "and the only remaining choice is either to assume an attitude of suffering or else ennoble necessity by acknowledging the possibility of free action."[88] Romantic irony is the acknowledgment and the performative contradiction of this double-character of philosophy, thereby emancipating philosophy from the clutches of rigidity and dogmatism—philosophy's obsession with the

principle of contradiction. I wish to argue that both Nietzsche and Adorno exemplify in their respective writing styles the spirit of Romantic irony described above.

Corollary to Romantic irony is the epistemological stance of the early German Romantics. The epistemic function of Romantic irony naturally manifests as an anti-foundationalist position, a claim that has been contended by scholars, such as Manfred Frank and Millán. Frank, for instance, argues emphatically that the anti-foundationalist stance of Novalis and Schlegel is what precisely distinguishes the *Frühromantik* tradition from the purism of Kantian philosophy, most notably propagated by Reinhold and Fichte, and German Idealism that culminates in Hegel and Schelling.[89] For his part, Reinhold offered a corrective reading of Kant that emphasized a theory of representation based on an "evident and absolutely self-determining principle,"[90] one which could be deemed as a foundation for all philosophy or what he refers to as *Elementarphilosophie* ("philosophy of the elements"), whose source "is an actual fact which is suited to yield the last possible foundation for all explanation precisely because . . . it admits of no explanation but is self-explanatory."[91] Meanwhile, taking his cue from Kant's theory of self-consciousness, Fichte developed a theory of the "self-positing subject" or the "absolute I."[92] Very much like Reinhold, Fichte begins his *Wissenschaftslehre* by declaring that his "task is to *discover* the primordial, absolutely unconditioned first principle of all human knowledge," which "can be neither *proved* nor *defined*."[93] Novalis and Schlegel broke away from Reinhold's and Fichte's emphasis on "subjectivity as the principle of a deductively unfolding system of knowledge," replacing it with the "unending longing for the infinite."[94] Frank alternatively refers to this as the movement away from a "philosophy of first principles" or a skepticism of "self-justifying propositions."[95] In the parlance of Nietzsche and Adorno, this is the movement away from metaphysics and identity thinking. Meanwhile, we gather from Millán that the spirit of Schlegel's anti-foundationalism is at the core of his musings about the very nature of philosophizing; echoing what is revealed in Romantic irony, that is, language's incompleteness, for Schlegel, philosophy is "inherently incomplete."[96] But with the incompleteness of philosophy Schlegel also problematizes where philosophy begins, as he moves away from any first principle as the beginning of philosophizing. In the *Athenaeum* fragment 84, he declares, "Viewed subjectively, philosophy, like epic poetry, always begins *in medias res*,"[97] which implies that philosophy neither begins from a first principle *ab initio* nor ends with the *gravitas* of a final answer. In other words, philosophy always finds itself in the middle of things, in the middle of the world, or in the middle of history. More to the point, philosophy finds itself in the middle of its own history, that is, it is always caught up within its own history—as such, there is no such thing as pure philosophy.

For Millán, the double feature of Schlegel's anti-foundationalism is that, on the one hand, it underscores the historicity of philosophy and, on the other hand, philosophy becomes the very critique of philosophy.[98] Schlegel himself begins the *Athenaeum* with the following loaded statement: "Nothing is more rarely the subject of philosophy than philosophy itself."[99] But why should philosophy concern itself with itself? Self-concern, in this context, means philosophy's self-consciousness of the contradictoriness and indefiniteness of its own language. True philosophy, for Schlegel, is only possible when philosophy itself becomes a relentless critique of its tendency to reify its language: "Since nowadays philosophy criticizes everything that comes in front of its nose, a criticism of philosophy would be nothing more than justifiable retaliation."[100] This hyperbole is Schlegel's way of saying that philosophy is only able to survive if it overcomes its bad faith of not looking at itself in the mirror, that it cannot rely on question-begging philosophical truisms that asphyxiate, instead of giving new breath to thinking. In the same vein, this ironic provocation of philosophy, especially its foundationalist tendency, animates the writings of Nietzsche and Adorno.

THE NORMATIVE CHALLENGE OF PHILOSOPHICAL ROMANTICISM

My synoptic presentation of the basic features of the early German Romantics helps me in highlighting their strong connection to Nietzsche's and Adorno's basic philosophical temperament. All seven features presented earlier (1) the unity of philosophy and poetry, (2) the importance of education or *Bildung*, (3) the poetic treatment of nature, (4) freedom in writing style, (5) the constitutive relation between language and thinking, (6) Romantic irony, and (7) philosophical anti-foundationalism), I argue, animate the spirit of Nietzsche's and Adorno's writings. The reception of these features is most palpable in their respective treatments of the nature of language and its relation to how we form our knowledge of the world. It is important to note, however, that while I presented seven features, they should be taken holistically. Another way of expressing this is to say that the anti-foundationalist stance of the early German Romantics presupposes a revaluation of how we must understand language in relation to how we create our knowledge of the world. If language and thought are constitutively related, then, philosophically speaking, we cannot prioritize one over the other. Such linguistic constitutivism allowed the early German Romantics to think of language as a playful and free enterprise, and thereby they were able emancipate philosophy from its self-imposed rigidity by also calling it poetry. In return, poetry is given some level of epistemic import by identifying it also as philosophy. By so doing,

it was necessary for the form of philosophy to change, that is, to break loose from rigidity in the form of fragments. The free-flowing structure (or non-structure) of the fragment, for the early German Romantics, reflected the true form of human thought. It is also in this context that we could construe the proponents of the *Frühromantik* movement as educational ambassadors because they understood the intimate relationship between knowledge and cultural formation; more specifically, the moral education of a given culture.

Given the above context, it is now possible to ask the question: of what use is this Romantic outlook to philosophy today? To be able to answer this question, I turn to a compelling description of "philosophical romanticism" provided by Nikolas Kompridis. He refers to philosophical romanticism as a contemporary strain of philosophy which is profoundly influenced by early German Romanticism. Philosophical romanticism has evolved to become broader and more heterogeneous, "a strain of philosophy that is essentially nonnaturalistic and that identifies closely with the arts and the humanities."[101] Like Elridge, Kompridis is keen about the *persistence* of the Romantic spirit in our time; Kompridis writes:

> I want to think of contemporary philosophical romanticism as not simply continuing in various ways and with varying degrees of awareness the philosophical projects of German romanticism and German idealism, but as reaching back to them, reclaiming and renaming a living romanticism for our time, and for a time that will follow our own.[102]

In framing an image of Romanticism that will welcome and prefigure an analysis of the Nietzsche-Adorno relation, I deem it helpful to appropriate Kompridis's survey of the defining concerns of what he calls philosophical romanticism.[103] Firstly, philosophical romanticism is a response to the problem of modernity as interpreted by the Enlightenment. Kompridis identifies the modern ideals of autonomy, reason, critique, and expressive subjectivity as central to the problem of Enlightenment and, as such, is being problematized by philosophical romanticism. Under what conditions are these ideals possible? This also presupposes the issue of what philosophy *is* under these modern conditions: "The metaphilosophical question of what philosophy is or should be is inseparable from what it means to be modern, from the question of what constitutes philosophy's own modernity."[104] In other words, philosophy should gesture towards an inquiry into its own possibility against the backdrop of modernity. Again, this can very well be associated with the persistence of the Romantic spirit, that is, how the Romantic spirit could inform philosophy as a response to the predicaments of modernity, for as "a protean form of life, open to abrupt, incessant and apparently uncontrollable processes of change, modernity is also a very disorienting form of life."[105] This disorienting feature

of modernity points to the malleable quality of the concept of "identity" and its philosophical problematization. This becomes a serious issue for philosophy, not simply because identity is itself a philosophical concern, but because it also entails "pressing the question of the form and through which philosophy should express itself," that is, "about the nature, sources and limits of its expressivity, of how it can 'speak' in a voice of its own."[106] Since this *self-concern* is only possible through the humanities, that is, of being concerned with the "human," Kompridis argues that philosophy should seriously engage in the possibility and future of the humanities.[107] In light of this, Kompridis rightly maintains that a "normative" critique of culture is at the heart of philosophical romanticism. Normative, in this context, would refer to the fate of philosophy in relation to the culture wherein it is nurtured and cultivated. Later on this normativity will be described as an openness or "receptivity" to the "new" which directs thinking (art, literature, philosophy) and, hence, praxis towards an appraisal and espousal of freedom against the backdrop of the modern form of life and human finitude. "Receptivity," for Kompridis, is an attitude of openness to historical experience or the ability to be affected by historical circumstances. Moreover, receptivity is also understood as a kind of "mindedness" that requires "exposure to human vulnerability—the vulnerability of a being that can be 'marked,' 'struck,' 'impressed' by experience, by what it encounters in the world."[108]

The immanence of the critical attitude of philosophy towards itself guards philosophy from finalizing a definite voice. This opens up philosophy to a plurality of voices, thereby the possibility of various discourses. Indeed, philosophy becomes *itinerant*—it originates and is situated in a particular locale, but it has the impulsion to leave that locale and *rhizomatically* (to use a Deleuzian coinage) spreads itself and visits other exotic locales, leaving its trace as it moves along, and eventually, if it is concerned enough with itself, revisits its birth locale. To put it in a less metaphorical way, immanent critique entails the blurring of the distinction between "narrative" and "apodictic" forms of argumentation, that is to say, philosophy becomes more rhetorically sympathetic to a variety of voices: "Transcendental, dialectical, hermeneutic, deconstructive, genealogical, and narrative forms of argument . . . to get us to see things in a different light."[109] An immanent critique inspired by philosophical romanticism is not necessarily opposed to a "communicative" model of language of the Habermasian sort, but, rather, is wary of the tendency of such a model to reduce communication to a formalistic and proceduralist stance, ignoring, instead of addressing, the aporetic character of language use and totally neglecting the disclosive potential of the mimetic model of language. As a result, the Habermasian position creates an unnecessary tension between communicative language, on the one hand, and mimetic language, on the other; totally downplaying the possibility of the "reconciliatory" aspect of mimesis, in particular, the mimetic-disclosive

power of aesthetic experience. But the expansive horizon that mimetic language opens up is crucial for philosophy. This outlook of "receptivity" opens up the philosophical enterprise to the future by, according to Kompridis, enlarging "the cultural conditions of intelligibility and possibility,"[110] as opposed to the rigidity and homogeneity of modern forms of argumentation. Kompridis further argues that the defining feature of philosophical romanticism, in contrast to artistic modernism, is the centrality of normative critique which he associates with the challenging engagement with the "new."[111] This normative engagement with the new does not mean, for Kompridis, a flight from the everyday or the actual, but rather a reclaiming of the site of the everyday because it is the locale where the recovery must begin.[112]

It was mentioned earlier that the early German Romantics were preoccupied with the precedence of nature in philosophical discourse. Kompridis takes this preoccupation "with the problem of how to recover nature as a source of meaning and orientation"[113] to be also a defining feature of philosophical romanticism. However, the notion of "meaning" in this context should not be construed in an essentialist or intentionalist sense (one states that entities owe their existence to universal forms, while the other states that meaning is primarily determined by an autonomous subject), but, rather, in a normative sense, by which I mean a deeper sensibility to the dialectical and intertwining roles of language, history, and society. Both essentialism and intentionalism are reductive in the sense that they reduce human experience to either formalism or a kind of solipsism, both ignoring the materiality of cognition and the metaphorical or mimetic creation of meaning. This leads us to the questions of whether the world is to be understood purely mechanistically or naturalistically and whether a more mimetic, symbiotic, and reflective relationship between us subjects and the objects in the world exists, and, moreover, whether such relationship would bring us to a more redemptive construal of human experience. Finally, Kompridis emphasizes what he refers to as an overarching concern of philosophical romanticism: "The concern with realizing a form of *freedom* that conditions of modernity make possible and thwart at the same time."[114] This form of freedom is tied to the normative notion of the new and is in constant tension with prevailing social, political, and cultural ideals of the present age; these are institutional relations that inform how we construe our identities as social, political, and cultural agents. This would be philosophy's normative challenge, a challenge that requires philosophy's active involvement which is grounded in immanent critique. In the context of Nietzsche and Adorno, this questioning of freedom is recast in the former's genealogical critique of nihilism in *On the Genealogy of Morals* and the latter's critique of instrumental reason in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.

Against the backdrop of the above discussion, bringing forth a substantive analysis of the Nietzsche-Adorno relation presupposes a revaluation of the

relationship between philosophy and language. To an extent, this is in tune with the normative engagement with the new which can be understood as the *imperative of the new*, an imperative which is immanent within, and imminent for, philosophy itself. Kompridis quotes a passage from Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*, which illustrates philosophy's relation to the new:[115]

> More and more it seems to me that the philosopher, being *of necessity* a man of tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, has always found himself, and *had* to find himself, in contradiction to his day: his enemy was ever the ideal of today. So far all these extraordinary furtherers of man whom one calls philosophers, though they themselves have rarely felt like friends of wisdom but rather like disagreeable fools and dangerous question marks, have found their task, their hard, unwanted, inescapable task, but eventually also the greatness of their task, in being the bad conscience of their time.[116]

The philosopher, for Nietzsche, is someone who anticipates the coming of the future by being the "enemy" of the present, that is to say, being a harbinger of change by constantly questioning the fossilizing tendency of well-accepted thought—"the ideal of today." This is the normative challenge that every philosopher should take, for the emendation of social, political, and cultural conditions involves being at odds with the common. In a similar vein as the early Romantics' concern for the Kantian critique of subjectivity, philosophical thinking's relation to the new becomes a crucial aspect of rethinking its role in our present age amid the crisis it faces.[117] Indeed, part of the crisis that engulfs philosophy in our time, as has been outlined earlier, is its fixation with a singular, and often insular, language that leaves out possibilities while at the same time unconsciously harboring intellectual obscurantism and, indeed, dangerous dogmatism. It is in this context that a rethinking of the language of philosophy is deemed a necessity, for the "language of philosophy," Adorno remarks, "is materially prefigured."[118] Change in perspective entails change in the way we talk about things. This is philosophical language's capacity for a kind of critical disclosure related to its receptivity to possibility brought about by the recovery of aesthetic sensibility or experience.

PHILOSOPHICAL PRAXIS: LANGUAGE AND STYLE AS CRITIQUE OF PHILOSOPHY

For Adorno, this normative engagement with the new, for which philosophy endeavors to strive, is prefigured by a more responsive stance towards the problematic state of philosophical language. To some extent, this entails the re-inheritance and, at the same time, the renewal of the philosophical

tradition. Nevertheless, such a tradition, for Adorno, should always be viewed from a critical or, more specifically, "dialectically negative" stance. Adorno writes, "The intended communicability of philosophical language is today to be unveiled in all aspects as fraud."[119] While it is easy to be misled by this hyperbolic statement, Adorno's intention is rather to stir our slumbering outlook on concepts like "objectivity" or "communicability" and to rethink and revise our conceptions of objectivity and communicability within the contexts of reconciliatory cognition and mimetic communicability, respectively. We usually take for granted the "idealist demand for the adequation of language to object and society" and we fail to realize that this "is the exact opposite of reality."[120] Therefore, Adorno invites us, especially us philosophers, to observe the dialectical relation between objects/society and language, but more specifically, he wants us to be keen to the implications of the disclosure of "damaged life." This means that actual reality does not measure up to our conception of a "good life" and that an ethical response to the "wrong state of things" is made possible by our receptive and honest relation to what surrounds us. The rehabilitation of this receptivity is the new ethical imperative that philosophy, even as an academic discipline, should instigate. This implies that philosophy should always guard itself from slacking off from its "critical" relation towards its own language, more specifically, to philosophy's tendency of hypostatizing its concepts or what Adorno refers to as "reification." This neither entails an abandonment of the philosophical tradition nor does it do away with the use of concepts altogether, but rather, Adorno insists, "conventional terminology—no matter how ruined—is to be preserved, and today the new words of the philosopher are formed solely out of the changed configuration of words."[121] So, even if philosophy is indebted to the tradition and the inevitable repetition of the tradition's language, there should be a conscious effort from among philosophers to reconfigure the tradition's concepts, old concepts are renewed and repeated only via reconfiguration. This is the only way that philosophy is able to circumvent the reification of concepts. Moreover, this change in the configuration of words should "stand in history."[122] In other words, the dialectical nature of philosophical discourse is seen in its normative relation to history, that is to say, how philosophical concepts or metaphors assume new forms and meanings alongside the dialectical movement of history, and how they are enmeshed therein. The philosopher's critical relation to philosophical language welcomes what Adorno calls "configurative language" which he sees as slicing between the "conventional" use of words and "speechless subjective intention."[123] Moreover,

> configurative language represents a third way as a dialectically intertwined and explicatively indissoluble unity of concept and thing. The explicative

indissolubility of such unity, which eludes comprehensive logical categories, today compellingly requires the radical difficulty of all serious philosophical language.[124]

This "indissoluble unity of concept and thing" may also be understood as our receptivity to the subject-object relation, which, for Adorno, could only be understood via a revision of the mimetic process of cognition. This mimetic process of cognition or "cognitive utopia" only makes sense if we consider it as a process occurring within language and, therefore, thought. Hence, it is important to discuss Nietzsche and Adorno's respective theories of language because they provide us with important insights into their respective epistemologies. Ultimately, their basic or general insights about language inform their more particular reflections about the language of science and philosophy. It could be argued that the philosophical study of the nature of language is fundamental to philosophy's self-understanding, for accounting for philosophy's possibilities and limitations largely depends on the philosophers' receptivity to the dialectical or mimetic (Adorno) or metaphorical (Nietzsche) character of language. For both Nietzsche and Adorno the hypostatization and the refusal or failure to renew concepts could mark the end of philosophical thinking. This being said, one could say that philosophy's search for a *voice* is something immanently grounded in philosophical discourse itself. Language or the "formation of metaphors," as Nietzsche puts it,[125] is a fundamental human drive and, thus, fundamental to philosophy. Once philosophy becomes aware and, more importantly, accepts its essential indebtedness to language, then it will be more difficult for philosophy to adhere to and fortify a *purist* notion of argumentation that only the "chosen ones" have access to. For Adorno, as for Nietzsche, not only that a movement from a pure language to configurative language is necessary, but that a reflection on philosophy's relation to language should be seen as a continuous endeavor for philosophy. Materially speaking, a philosophical construct, Adorno maintains, stands "in a formed relationship of tension with its linguistic structure."[126] Max Horkheimer, for his part, hints that "philosophy helps man allay his fears by helping language to fulfill its genuine mimetic function," for "values and ideas are inseparable from the words that express them."[127] My conception of an "ethics of thinking" is in accord with philosophy's self-reflection or self-understanding, a process which is inaugurated by philosophy's sensitivity to its own language. This is a sensibility that, as we have seen, was inaugurated by the early German Romantics' linguistic constitutivism. Moreover, this sensitivity to language is in accord with what I refer to as "philosophical praxis."

Ultimately, a critique of modernity is only possible via a critique of philosophy itself. And, as Adorno points out quite emphatically: "All philosophical

critique is today possible as the critique of language."[128] The purpose of revisiting the early Romantic legacy, in the preceding sections, is to hint on how both Nietzsche and Adorno were brought up within this tradition and how the main thrust of their works is faithful to the basic Romantic spirit: *a philosophical anti-foundationalism resulting from a critique of the nature of language and thought which opens up the possibility of the new, of new ways of thinking and doing.* These two interwoven tendencies, rethinking of language and openness to the new, inaugurate the possibility of talking about the Nietzsche-Adorno relation. This move permits us to put these thinkers in a context from which we could consider their basic and earnest preoccupation with the nature of language to inform the way they present or "perform" their philosophical projects. Nietzschean genealogy and ideology critique via negative dialectics are modes of philosophical critique that are most sensitive to the aporetic nature of language and, hence, our cognitive apparatus; but instead of downplaying these features of language and cognition, I argue, that Nietzsche and Adorno locate "possibility" precisely from our "receptive" and "reflective" stance towards the disclosed aporias of language.

But beyond genealogy and ideology critique, as methodological instances in Nietzsche and Adorno's works, we find that their shared "performative" engagement with philosophical writing, which shows in their use of aphorisms and unsystematic essays, their conscious advocacy of the importance of "style" as a philosophical-critical-performative stance. In this sense, it is through style, particularly, the blend between the fluid and torrential character of their writing style, that their insights are able to slip through the small crevices of our otherwise hardened thoughts and, oftentimes, hammer our ossified worldviews. Nietzsche and Adorno's use of aphorisms and essays can be deemed as a methodological counterweight to the traditional ways of writing philosophy. More specifically, style as mode of critique, Karin Bauer notes, is a "protest against the reduction of thought to logic and systems," and moreover, functions "positively to affirm perspectivism, contradiction, multiplicity, and complexity."[129] In their use of aphorisms and essays, Nietzsche and Adorno, respectively, evince their own styles of writing that are performative and, at the same time, reflexive. In this context, we may construe the aphorism and the essay as instances of the performance of *critique*, which, for me, is a contemporary instance of the performance of the fragment by the early German Romantics. Performatively employed in philosophical discourse, the aphorism and essay are enacted as self-reflexive critique of philosophy, its very own "disclosive-corrective" principle.

Adorno's "The Essay as Form" was written as a critique of scientific positivism wherein he proposes that "the innermost form of the essay is heresy,"[130] that is to say, that the essay is a deliberate, yet profoundly rhetorical, violation of the formal rules of scientific and philosophical discourse. Adorno's

concept of the essay is an obvious rehearsal of the spirit of the Romantic fragment. Adorno describes the essay as both "open" and "closed" inasmuch as it "negates anything systematic" and that "it labors emphatically on the form of its presentation."[131] Hence, the reflexivity of the essay, for Adorno, is manifested in its sensitivity to "the non-identity between presentation and presented material forces the form to make unlimited efforts."[132] In this sense, therefore, the essay resembles the artistic gesture, that is, the impulse to create. Akin to the work of art, the essay is an attempt to articulate significant human experiences that have been wrought through the speculative activity of the intellect. It does this; however, in a way that defies a definitive account of experiences by being aware of the role of "form" or "structure" in writing. In other words, the essay does not pretend to present an unequivocal representation of any subject matter at hand. Far from an outright rejection of concepts, it could not be denied that the essay still depends on concepts as linguistic building blocks. Adorno argues that the essay "takes the matter of presentation more seriously than those procedures that separate out method from material and are indifferent to the way they represent their objectified contents."[133] The essay gropes for sense, and, according to Adorno, it does this only because of its "consciousness of its own fallibility and provisional nature."[134]

Meanwhile, in *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche admonishes: "He who considers more deeply knows that, whatever his acts and judgments may be, he is always wrong."[135] The purpose of Nietzsche's style of writing is basically to *perturb* his readers. It is with the seemingly unsystematic presentation of his writings that the main character of his criticism of philosophy, in general, and modern culture, in particular, comes into full force. Nietzsche's aphoristic style is a protest against the regimented style of traditional philosophical writing. The seeming lack of coherence in Nietzsche's style of writing is itself a gesture of subversion against the established epistemic order, that is to say, a heretical gesture in Adorno's sense. It is, however, important to note that, as a critical stance against the tendency of traditional philosophical writing towards conceptual reification, that is, metaphysics, the deliberate aphoristic presentation of Nietzsche's ideas does not necessarily mean that one cannot configure or reconfigure the aphorisms into a coherent whole. Such reconfiguration, however, involves the *active* involvement of the reader who can tentatively assume the mimetic center of the exegetical process. This is perhaps what Nietzsche means when he writes in *On the Genealogy of Morals*: "An aphorism, properly stamped and molded, has not been 'deciphered' when it has simply been read; rather, one has then to begin its *exegesis*, for which is required the art of exegesis."[136] Doing philosophy, therefore, in this context, will always be open to the new—even Adorno, himself, opines that "the object of the essay is the new as something genuinely

new, as something not translatable back into the staleness of already existing forms."[137]

We can observe that, for both Nietzsche and Adorno, philosophical writing, through the aphorism or the essay, has something to do with critical education, that is to say, self-reflexive education. For Nietzsche, the aphoristic style is at the same time a pedagogical demonstration of suspicion, while for Adorno, the essay becomes a learning experience inasmuch as it is essentially "exposed to error" and pays "for its affinity with open intellectual experience by the lack of security, a lack which the norm of established thought fears like death."[138] It is the "heretical" gesture that the aphorism and essay make that perturbs the established norms of thought. As pedagogical devices, the aphorism and essay gesture towards an emancipatory element in thinking. As such, we could consider Nietzsche and Adorno demonstrating how philosophical writing itself is able to liberate thinking from the regiments of traditional philosophy or the hypostatization of concepts. In this sense, the style or "form" of presentation of philosophical insights, specifically the form of writing, becomes a mode of "philosophical praxis," which launches a critique of the rigidifying tendencies of traditional philosophy. What we can observe Nietzsche and Adorno are doing is an attempt to reinstall the redemptive dimension of doing or writing philosophy, more specifically, philosophy's attunement to the metaphorical or mimetic dimension of writing which is the most sustainable extension of language as a normative basis of thinking.

The above discussion gives us a hint about the philosophical disposition that Nietzsche and Adorno share. To further examine this shared philosophical attitude, specifically how a more nuanced approach to language is ramified in the works of Nietzsche and Adorno, it is necessary to reconstruct how this ramification occurs in each of these philosophers works, that is to say, their engagement with the role of language in philosophical thinking. A couple of Adornoian insights have been already mentioned hitherto, namely, that the critique of philosophy is only possible as a critique of language and philosophy's rethinking of its own voice involves an active movement from conceptual language to figurative language. It goes without saying that there is a strong kinship between these Adornoian propositions and the Romantic shift from the unbending discourse of traditional philosophy to the more literary form. Throughout the history of Western philosophy, we have indeed witnessed the emergence of a plurality of voices (e.g., the plurality of philosophical schools of thought), but we have also witnessed that the rise, and now dominance, of scientisitic and positivistic forms of philosophy has curtailed the Romantic disposition towards the rhetorical or literary aspect of philosophical thinking. And it is the latter, as Nietzsche and Adorno strongly claim, that can better articulate the complexity of thinking and the formation of knowledge—specifically, aspects of thinking that resist a straightforward

discursive conceptualization. Nietzsche and Adorno's examination of the figurative character of language will be accounted for in the succeeding discussions, and when taken together they constitute an attempt to reconstruct the Nietzsche-Adorno metacritique of philosophy and—like Hamann, Herder, and Humboldt—a recovery of the normative role of language in philosophy. This reconstruction is an attempt to corroborate, but not conflate, Nietzsche's and Adorno's thoughts on language with the aim of illustrating what they think is the affirmative feature of language, as well as underscoring their complaint against conventional philosophical language. It is, therefore, necessary to give each philosopher his own space. Given the reconstruction of a critique of language, it will be possible to talk about a new conception of "praxis" that will lead us to a conceptualization of an ethics of thinking.

NOTES

1. Among many others, Andrew Bowie, *From Romanticism to Critical Theory* (London: Routledge, 1997); Judith Norman, "Nietzsche and Early Romanticism," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 63:3 (2002); Claud Sutton, *The German Tradition in Philosophy* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1974); Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Literary Absolute: The Theory of Literature in German Romanticism*, trans. Philip Barnard and Cheryl Lester (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, Albany, 1988); Michael Löwy and Robert Sayre, *Romanticism Against the Tide of Modernity*, trans. Catherine Porter (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001); Richard Eldridge, *The Persistence of Romanticism: Essays in Philosophy and Literature* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Manfred Frank, *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism*, trans. Elizabeth Millán-Zaibert (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 2003); and Elizabeth Millán-Zaibert, *Friedrich Schlegel and the Emergence of Romantic Philosophy* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 2007).

2. Bowie, *From Romanticism to Critical Theory*, 238.

3. It is also worthwhile to mention that the Romantic impulse is also present in materialist philosophy (via Hegel and Marx) of which Adorno is very much indebted. See, for instance, Michael Löwy, "The Romantic and the Marxist Critique of Modern Civilization," *Theory and Society*, 16:6 (November 1987), 891–904, as well as B. M. G. Reardon, "The Romanticism of Karl Marx," *The Downside Review*, 98:322 (1978), 1–12.

4. See Bowie, *From Romanticism to Critical Theory*, 249. For a detailed and compelling account of the anti-foundatinalist character of early German Romanticism, in particular as seen in the works of Friedrich Schlegel, see the following works by Millán-Zaibert, *Friedrich Schlegel and the Emergence of Romantic Philosophy* and "Forgetfulness and Foundationalism Schlegel's Critique of Fichte's Idealism," in *Fichte, German Idealism, and Early Romanticism*, eds. Daniel Breazeale and Tom

Rockmore (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010), 327–42. For a more comprehensive discussion of the philosophical foundations of early German Romanticism, see Frank, *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism*.

    5. Bowie, *From Romanticism to Critical Theory*, 250.

    6. Judith Norman names the Schlegel brothers, Novalis, Tieck, Schleiermacher, and Schelling to be the principal figures of Jena Romanticism. See her "Nietzsche and Early Romanticism," 501–2. Moreover, Claud Sutton notes that the development of German Romanticism was strikingly different from that of French Romanticism. In spite of the fact that "Kant was greatly influenced by Rousseau's conception of freedom, and freedom was a watchword of the pre-Romantic 'storm and stress' school of writers in Germany," Sutton remarks that "to set sentiment and instinct above reason is about the last thing that would have occurred to Kant." *The German Tradition in Philosophy*, 45.

    7. Norman, "Nietzsche and Early Romanticism," 503.

    8. Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, *The Literary Absolute*, 2.

    9. Löwy and Sayre, *Romanticism Against the Tide of Modernity*, 1.

    10. Ibid.

    11. See Ibid., 1–2. We find a similar concern in Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, who even argue for the inadequacy of the term: "As it is usually understood—or not understood—this name is quite inaccurate, both in what it evokes as an aesthetic category (which often amounts to an evocation of evocation, so to speak, to an evocation of flowing sentimentality or foggy nostalgia for the faraway), and in what it pretends to offer as a historical category (in a double opposition to classicism and to realism or naturalism). It is even less appropriate in that the romantics of 'early romanticism' never gave themselves this name. . . . Finally, this name is false, in a very general manner, in that it attempts to set something apart—a period, a school, a style, or a conception—that would belong first and foremost to a certain *past*." Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, *The Literary Absolute*, 1.

    12. Ibid., 1–3.

    13. Löwy and Sayre outline: "One of the most serious limitations of most literary studies is that they ignore the other dimensions of Romanticism, its political forms in particular. In a perfectly complementary fashion—and following the rigorous logic of academic disciplines—political scientists often have a regrettable tendency to neglect the properly literary aspects of Romantcism." Löwy and Sayre, *Romanticism Against the Tide of Modernity*, 5.

    14. Ibid.

    15. Eldridge, *The Persistence of Romanticism*, 11.

    16. Ibid., 5.

    17. Cf. Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, *The Literary Absolute*, 4.

    18. Ibid., 29. In addition to this, Elizabeth Millán-Zaibert notes: "It is important also to keep in mind that the early German Romantics were, in fact, the first generation of Kant readers. Within this first generation of Kant readers, we find, naturally, important challenges to the universal claims of reason and a move towards incorporating history and political issues into philosophy. In German philosophy through Kant, moreover, history and politics were not considered primary areas of concern

for the philosopher. Early German Romantic philosophy was groundbreaking, also, in incorporating these concerns into philosophy, and in the development of the field we know today as the human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*).” “Introduction: ‘What is Early German Romanticism?,’” in *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 2004), 5.

19. Cf. Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, *The Literary Absolute*, 30.

20. Cf. Andrew Bowie, *Aesthetics and Subjectivity: From Kant to Nietzsche* (New York, NY: Manchester University Press, 1990), 15-ff.

21. See Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, *The Literary Absolute*, 32–33.

22. See Ibid., 5.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid., 39.

26. Ibid., 40.

27. For an interesting account of the exigencies of the fragment as literary genre, see Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy in Ibid, especially pages 39–119.

28. Although there also some notable commentators, such as Beiser, who stress the profound influence of Platonism on the early German Romantics. See Frederick C. Beiser, *The Romantic Imperative: The Concept of Early German Romanticism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 56–72. It is worthwhile to point out that emphasizing the aesthetic element in the works of the early German Romantics is not necessarily inimical to Beiser’s position, for, albeit he emphatically considers the Romantics as absolute idealists, on account of their deep Platonism and Spinozism, Beiser does point out, in another work, that the Romantics regarded nature as a piece of art, that natural law is compatible with aesthetic sensibility. See Frederick C. Beiser, *German Idealism: The Struggle Against Subjectivism, 1781–1801* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 374. As such, the Platonic element in early German Romanticism could be understood as a revival of the aesthetic dimension of Plato’s thought.

29. Cf. Millán-Zaibert, “What is Early German Romanticism,” Introduction to Frank’s *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism*, 2.

30. Cf. John C. Blankenagel, “The Dominant Characteristics of German Romanticism,” *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, 55:1 (March 1940), 1–10; Howard Pollack-Milgate, “Romantic Views of Language,” in *Brill’s Companion to German Romantic Philosophy*, eds. Elizabeth Millán Brusslan and Judith Norman (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 37–59; Michael N. Forster, *After Herder: Philosophy of Language in the German Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) and *German Philosophy of Language: From Schlegel to Hegel and Beyond* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); and Millán-Zaibert, “What is Early German Romanticism,” 1–14.

31. *AF*, 116, 31–32.

32. *FLP*, 586, 334.

33. *CF*, 115, 14.

34. Blankenagel, “The Dominant Characteristics of German Romanticism,” 6.

35. *PLTP*, 148.

36. *AF*, 440, 91.

37. *I*, 37, 65, 97–100.

38. Beiser, *The Romantic Imperative*, 24–25. Interestingly, Beiser stresses that the early German Romantics' preoccupation with *Bildung* was a disillusioned response to the destructive consequences of the French Revolution. In other words, they understood social change as only achievable via the patient cultivation of culture as opposed to violence. See Ibid., 88–105.

39. *PUUPBP*, 3–29.

40. *LAH*, 370–424.

41. See, for instance, F. W. J. Schelling, *First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature*, trans. Keith R. Peterson (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 2004).

42. Elizabeth Millán Brusslan, "The Romantic Poetry of Nature: An Antidote to German Idealism's Eclipsing of Natural Beauty," in *Brill's Companion to German Romantic Philosophy*, eds. Elizabeth Millán Brusslan and Judith Norman (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 97.

43. Ibid.

44. Cf. Alison Stone, "Friedrich Schlegel, Romanticism, and the Re-enchantment of Nature," *Inquiry*, 48:1 (2005), 4; Alison Stone, "Alienation from Nature and Early German Romanticism," *Ethical Theory Moral Practice*, 17 (2014), 41–54.

45. *GD*, 33, 131.

46. *AF*, 427, 87.

47. This notion of "epistemic modesty" is discussed by Stone in "Friedrich Schlegel, Romanticism, and the Re-enchantment of Nature," 12–13.

48. *DP*, 181.

49. *GD*, 1, 121.

50. For a detailed discussion of Novalis's contra-modernity philosophy of nature, see Christian Becker and Reiner Manstetten, "You: Novalis' Philosophical Thought and the Modern Ecological Crisis," *Environmental Values*, 13:1 (February 2004), 101–18.

51. Peter Osborne, *Anywhere or Not at All: Philosophy of Contemporary Art* (London: Verso, 2013), 58.

52. *AF*, 77, 27.

53. Cf. Stella Sandford, "The dream is a fragment: Freud, transdisciplinarity and early German Romanticism," *Radical Philosophy*, 198 (July/August 2016), 25–34.

54. *LF*, 40, 162.

55. *LF*, 40, 162.

56. This claim is made by Michael Dummett in *Frege: Philosophy of Language* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1973), 683.

57. Michael N. Foster, *German Philosophy of Language: From Schlegel to Hegel and Beyond* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 1–4. See also the accompanying volume *After Herder*, 1–5.

58. See Plato, *Cratylus*, trans. C. D. C. Reeve, in *Plato: Complete Works* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1997), 101–56. For a discussion

of the conventionalism-naturalism debate in the *Cratylus*, see Rachel Barney, *Names and Nature in Plato's Cratylus* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2001).

59. Cristina Lafont, *The Linguistic Turn in Hermeneutic Philosophy*, trans. Jose Medina (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1999), 3.

60. Hamann's metacritique came out shortly after the publication of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. The "Metacritique on the Purism of Reason" offers us, according to James C. O'Flaherty, "a morphology of the history of the rational method in philosophy." See *MPR*, 85. Hamann, O'Flaherty argues, presents a genealogy of how philosophy has been purified from external forces such as the authoritative church, the authoritative book or creed, the authoritative political system, and eventually from individual experience. Cf. *Unity and Language: A Study in the Philosophy of Johann Georg Hamann* (New York, NY: AMS Press Inc., 1966), 85–86.

61. Lafont, *The Linguistic Turn in Hermeneutic Philosophy*, 7.

62. For a more detailed account of Hamann's relation to Kant, see O'Flaherty, *Unity and Language*, especially pages 81–94.

63. I borrow this from Sonia Sikka, "Herder on the Relation Between Language and the World," *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, 21:2 (April 2004), 183.

64. *LWTKR*, 100.

65. In the "Metacritique," Hamann speaks of a three step purification of philosophy: "The first purification of reason consisted in the partly misunderstood, partly failed attempt to make reason independent of all tradition and custom and belief in them. The second is even more transcendent and comes nothing less than independence from experience and its everyday induction. . . . The third, highest, and, as it were, empirical purism is therefore concerned with language, the only, first, and last organon and criterion of reason, with no credentials but tradition and usage." *MPR*, 207–8. Also see Bowie, *From Romanticism to Critical Theory*, 56–61.

66. Forster reminds us that although Herder was the most vocal advocate of this position, he was not necessarily presenting something original, as it was something of general interest among his contemporaries, including his teacher Hamann, and not only from German contemporaries, but French and English as well. Forster provides a historical account of this in *After Herder*, 59–64.

67. Ibid., 56.

68. Ibid., 64.

69. Forster, "Introduction," in *Herder: Philosophical Writings*, xvi.

70. *NDL*, 177. I am following here the translation of Sonia Sikka in her "Herder on the Relation between Language and the World."

71. *TOL*, 91.

72. *TOL*, 97.

73. Forster, *German Philosophy of Language*, 88.

74. *L*, 90.

75. See *KIJ*.

76. *L*, 90.

77. *L*, 49.

78. See Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. J. C. A. Gaskin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*,

ed. P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975); and Étienne Bonnot de Condillac, *Essay on the Origin of Human Knowledge*, trans. Hans Aarsleff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

79. See Part One, "Language as Constitutive," of Charles Taylor's *The Language Animal: The Full Shape of the Human Linguistic Capacity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

80. Ibid., 288.

81. Ibid., 317.

82. Cf. Bärbel Frischmann, "The Philosophical Relevance of Romantic Irony," in *Brill's Companion to German Romantic Philosophy*, eds. Elizabeth Millán Brusslan and Judith Norman (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 173.

83. Judith Norman, "Romantic Irony," in *The Edinburgh Dictionary of Continental Philosophy*, ed. John Protevi (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), 501.

84. Ibid.

85. *AF*, 39, 23.

86. *CF*, 42, 5.

87. *CF*, 108, 13.

88. *B*, 3, 17.

89. See Manfred Frank, "The Difficult Step into Actuality: On the Makings of an Early Romantic Realism," *Comparative and Continental Philosophy*, 8:2 (2016), 199–215.

90. Karl Ameriks, "Reinhold, History, and the Foundation of Philosophy," in *Karl Leonhard Reinhold and the Enlightenment*, ed. George di Giovanni (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010), 118.

91. Karl Leonhard Reinhold, *The Foundation of Philosophical Knowledge*, in *Between Kant and Hegel: Texts in the Development of Post-Kantian Idealism*, trans. George di Giovanni (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2000), 68, 70.

92. Frederick Neuhouser, *Fichte's Theory of Subjectivity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 66.

93. Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *The Science of Knowledge*, trans. Peter Heath and John Lachs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 93.

94. Frank, "The Difficult Step into Actuality," 199.

95. Frank, *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism*, 191–200.

96. Millán, *Friedrich Schlegel and the Emergence of Romantic Philosophy*, 123.

97. *AF*, 84, 28.

98. Millán, *Friedrich Schlegel and the Emergence of Romantic Philosophy*, 117–31.

99. *AF*, 1, 18.

100. *AF*, 56, 25.

101. Nikolas Kompridis, "Re-Inheriting Romanticism," in *Philosophical Romanticism*, ed. Nikolas Kompridis (London: Routledge, 2006), 2. It is important to note that the term "naturalism" has varied connotations especially in philosophy,

but Kompridis is largely referring to "reductive naturalism" which is the view that all phenomena can be reductively explained through natural causal processes and, hence, that the only justifiable paradigm of knowledge is that defined by the empirical natural sciences. A "non-naturalistic" position is, therefore, at the very least, a critical stance against reductive naturalism or "scientism." Kompridis obviously takes this position. Naturalism, therefore, is not the same with the Romantic preoccupation with nature. See Ibid., 1–2.

102. Ibid., 2–3.

103. Kompridis outlines these ten basic tenets of philosophical romanticism in response to the question "So if it not anything like what it is commonly assumed to be, then what *is* 'philosophical romanticism'?" See Ibid., 3.

104. Ibid.

105. Ibid.

106. Ibid., 4.

107. Cf. Ibid.

108. Nikolas Kompridis, *Critique and Disclosure: Critical Theory between Past and Future* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2006), 206.

109. Kompridis, "Re-Inheriting Romanticism," 4.

110. Ibid., 4.

111. See Nikolas Kompridis, "The Idea of a New Beginning: A Romantic Source of Normativity and Freedom," in *Philosophical Romanticism*, ed. Nikolas Kompridis (London: Routledge, 2006), 33.

112. Kompridis, "Re-Inheriting Romanticism," in Ibid., 5.

113. Ibid.

114. Ibid., 6.

115. See Kompridis, *Critique and Disclosure*, 4.

116. *BGE*, 212.

117. Kompridis remarks, "Once we appreciate the depth of this connection, we well also come to see how complexly enmeshed in the self-understanding if modernity are critique, crisis, and the need to begin anew—how deeply, if I may put it this way, they affect modernity's experience of itself," in *Critique and Disclosure*, 3–4.

118. *TLP*, 2. I will specifically deal with Adorno's vision of revaluating the language of philosophy in Chapter Three. However, for comprehensive surveys of Adorno's take on language, with special focus on his early essay "Theses on the Language of the Philosopher," see Samir Gandesha, "The 'Aesthetic Dignity of Words': Adorno's Philosophy of Language," *New German Critique*, 97 (Winter 2006), 137–58 and Michael K. Palamarek, "Adorno's Dialectics of Language," in *Adorno and the Need in Thinking* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 41–77.

119. *TLP*, 5.

120. *TLP*, 4.

121. *TLP*, 6.

122. *TLP*, 6.

123. *TLP*, 8.

124. *TLP*, 8.

125. *TL*, I, 88.

126. *TLP*, 10.

127. Max Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason* (London: Continuum, 2004), 121.

128. *TLP*, 9.

129. Karin Bauer, *Adorno's Nietzschean Narratives: Critiques of Ideology, Readings of Wagner* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999), 191. Bauer also notes: "By resisting the notions of absolute truth, completeness, and finality in both their manner of writing and argumentation, and by including the reader into their thought processes, Nietzsche and Adorno allow their readers to witness writing as a process of becoming and to appreciate the text as a product that offers no universal, definite, and irrevocable conclusion or insight." Ibid.

130. *EF*, 171.

131. *EF*, 165.

132. *EF*, 165.

133. *EF*, 160.

134. *EF*, 164.

135. *HH*, 518.

136. *GM*, preface, 8. In relation to this, Alexander Nehamas observes: "The connection between Nietzsche's stylistic pluralism and his perspectivism is more subtle and oblique. His many styles are part of his effort to present views without presenting them as more than views of his own and are therefore part of his effort to distinguish his practice from what he considers the practice of philosophers so far." *Nietzsche: Life as Literature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 20–21.

137. *EF*, 169.

138. *EF*, 161.

Reinscribing Metaphor

Nietzsche's Theory of Language

In the previous chapter, I showed how both Nietzsche and Adorno came from a shared intellectual lineage, the *Frühromantik* tradition, which profoundly informed their philosophical anti-foundationalist disposition. It was also pointed out that, like the early German Romantics, Nietzsche and Adorno both had serious preoccupations with the nature of language and, in particular, were influenced by the linguistic constitutivism of Hamann, Herder, and Humboldt. Like the early German Romantics, Nietzsche and Adorno's special attention to the relationship between language and thinking had significant consequences for how they construed philosophical discourse. By continuing the legacy of the early German Romantics, Nietzsche and Adorno understood quite well that there are epistemological repercussions that will result from a revaluation of the language of philosophy, as philosophy shifts from its own self-imposed rigidity to a more open form of expression. The openness of philosophy to the "new" largely depends on how philosophy comes to terms with its own language, that is, how it responds to the limitations and uncharted possibilities of its language. Nietzsche and Adorno insist that it is only through the overcoming of metaphysical or identity thinking that we could redeem philosophy from the reificatory tendency of conceptual thinking. Such overcoming, however, requires a more in-depth examination of the dynamics of language use.

In this chapter, I wish to argue that Nietzsche proposes an overcoming of the reification of knowledge by instigating a paradigm shift from "metaphysical thinking" to "metaphorical thinking." More specifically, Nietzsche supposes that it is a shift from a "nihilistic worldview" to what can be called an "aesthetic worldview." The shift is not straightforward and presupposes an examination of the genealogical foundations of metaphysical thinking. As we shall see in the following, Nietzsche's point of departure is the critique

of the language of metaphysics—a purely conceptual and deceptive language that dissimulates the material and mediated origin of thinking; metaphysics conceals the social and interpretive dimensions of language. The recovery of the metaphorical dimension of language, via the displacement of the ideals of metaphysics, allows philosophy to move from a purely conceptual or transcendent discourse to a discourse that highlights the social, historical, and indeterminate, and thus creative, character of thought—what will be described later as the "human" element in knowledge formation.

My discussion will pass through several steps. First, I present a contextualization of Nietzsche's study of language, that is, how his preoccupation with language generally prefigures his whole philosophy and how his critique of language relates to the early German Romantic tradition he inherited. Second, I will show that Nietzsche's engagement with language circles around his critique of the "truth drive"; hence, a further contextualization is made by presenting a sketch of his critique of metaphysics. As will be seen in more detail later, metaphysics and the drive towards truth are inextricably related. Moreover, I reconstruct Nietzsche's engagement with language, wherein I will focus on the following: (1) the socio-linguistic basis of the truth drive, (2) the dissimulative tendency of a purely conceptual language, and (3) the reification of the concept. Nietzsche's early writings on rhetoric and language are the main sources of my reconstruction, in particular, his "*Über Wahrheit und Lüge im aussermoralischen Sinne*" ("On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense"), and his lecture notes "*Darstellung der Antiken Rhetorik*" ("Description of Ancient Rhetoric"). In the last section of the chapter, I deal with Nietzsche's proposal to reinscribe metaphor in philosophical discourse: the overcoming of the reification of language which is paradigmatic of a shift from metaphysical thinking to aesthetic thinking.

THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE AND
THE CRITIQUE OF NIHILISM

I have pointed out that the linguistic constitutivism of the Hamann-Herder-Humboldt triumvirate was an earlier version of a linguistic engagement with the relationship between language and thinking, one that has important consequences for an alternative conception of philosophy. This linguistic constitutivism was partly provoked by the failure of Kant's transcendental philosophy to account for the role of language in thinking. Hamann, for one, maintains that the Kantian project is oblivious of the role of language in philosophy; such early "linguistic turn" was not only presented as a metacritique of Reason but also paved the way for people like Schlegel and Novalis to emphasize the importance of "literary language" as a counterculture, so to speak, against

representational language. We have enough reason to claim that Nietzsche had a fair amount of exposure to the works of the early German Romantics, especially Hamann's engagement with language. Thomas H. Brobjer documents that during the year 1873—which is partly the period when Nietzsche was working on essays such as "*Vom Nutzen und Nachtheil der Historie für das Leben*" ("On the Uses and Disadvantage of History for Life"), "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense," and his lecture notes "Description of Ancient Rhetoric"—Nietzsche read a number of works by writers such as Hamann, Lichtenburg, Hartmann, Hegel, Schiller, Emerson, and Hume. In particular, Nietzsche borrowed and read Hamann's *Schriften und Briefe* from which references were made in *Die Philosophie im tragischen Zeitalter der Griechen* (*Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*) and "Description of Ancient Rhetoric."[1] Despite the fact that he did not share Hamann's Neoplatonic and theological inclinations, as well as an utter disapproval of Hamann's apparently insipid style,[2] Nietzsche admired the profundity of Hamann's insights on language. Nietzsche's firsthand reading of Hamann means that the former was familiar with the debate on the problem of language during that period.[3] Moreover, the affinity between their engagements with the intimate relation between language and philosophy is undeniable. In addition to Nietzsche's familiarity with Hamann, more direct influences, in varying degrees, would come from intellectuals of the same period—Kant, Arthur Schopenhauer, Friedrich Lange, Nicolai Hartmann, and Gustav Gerber—in relation to Nietzsche's account of the nature of language.[4]

There are also two related challenges regarding the reconstruction of Nietzsche's engagement with language that need to be acknowledged. First is that among his published writings, starting with *The Birth of Tragedy* in 1872 to *Ecce Homo* in 1888, no explicitly systematic treatment of the theme of language was undertaken.[5] This makes it easy to miss out on what is truly original in Nietzsche's inquiry into the nature of language. A, more or less systematic, or at least extensive and explicit, treatment of language is found in his early unpublished writings that were supposedly composed between the years 1869 and 1875. His "Description of Ancient Rhetoric," perhaps delivered in 1872–1873, is Nietzsche's most organized and sustained treatment of the history and nature of rhetoric. This was, however, a lecture course in philology that he did not intend for publication. Another important text of this period, and the more widely known, is "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense" which was originally conceived as the first part of a larger project called *Das Philosophenbuch* (*The Philosophers' Book*), which was intended as an apologetic rejoinder to *The Birth of Tragedy* but, nonetheless, never came to completion and was eventually abandoned.[6] "On Truth and Lies" is, nevertheless, Nietzsche's most straightforward and more original treatment of the nature and role of language. The second challenge is the question whether

there is continuity between these early insights on language and Nietzsche's more mature works. Arthur Danto, in his attempt to make Nietzsche more accessible to analytic philosophers, is skeptical about the general form and logical consistency of "On Truth and Lies."[7] Maudemarie Clark, despite her impressive reconstruction of Nietzsche's early denial of truth based on "On Truth and Lies," claims that Nietzsche later abandoned his early linguistic account of truth to take a more or less neo-pragmatic or common-sense idea of truth.[8] Of course, Clark's position does not remain uncontested.[9] In spite of this general skepticism, there seems to be, at the same time, a consensus among other Nietzsche scholars that Nietzsche's early musings on language and truth should not be taken for granted. As a matter of fact, majority of these scholars agree that what gets eventually infused into Nietzsche's published writings, a claim which he never abandoned, is the inextricable relationship between language and knowledge formation.[10] I wish to argue that this fundamental understanding of language laid bare in the early writings prefigures Nietzsche's mature conception of the task of philosophy.[11]

In order to show Nietzsche's original contribution to the philosophy of language, it is necessary to revisit his critique of metaphysics or a mode of thinking characterized as "nihilistic" and to elucidate how this "metaphysical bias" prefigures how we use language. Sketching this framework provides a theoretical space from which we could present a thoroughly Nietzschean diagnosis of the role that language plays in our valuations, may those be metaphysical or otherwise. I say thoroughly Nietzschean owing to the fact that Nietzsche's analysis of the nature of nihilism is unique in the history of Western thought. Hence, we should give special attention to his treatment of the relationship between metaphysical thinking and nihilism. This framework hopes to reveal that Nietzsche's engagement with language is more sophisticated than usually regarded. While it is important to draw a line between Nietzsche and the larger enterprise of the philosophical or theoretical study of language, my aim, however, is not so much to brood on this issue, but to uncover some elements of Nietzsche's engagement with language that will help set the ground for the development of an ethics of thinking. As a matter of fact, it could also be added that the similarities between Nietzsche and recent philosophy of language could only prove the cogency of the former's early claims about language;[12] but, at the same time, laying this bare could also disclose the radical aspect of the Nietzschean account, which is the emphasis on the "ethical" implications of our use of language. I wish to argue that the Nietzschean concern tends to delve more into the implications of the tension that the nihilistic spirit creates within our linguistic valuations.

Broadly speaking, language could be construed as a way of interacting with the world which involves the eventual creation of conceptual images that function as *conduits* between subjects and world. This does not only

entail a conception of the world, but it also includes ways of *inhabiting* and *acting* in the world. By and large, our transaction with the world would, therefore, entail our activities, the way we use worldly objects, and the way we relate to one another intersubjectively. Language, for Nietzsche, reflects our *intimate* and dialectical (even *technical)* relationship with the world. This does not, however, mean that there is a one-to-one correspondence between language, on the one hand, and the world *qua* world, on the other. Already in the writings of the early German Romantics, especially in Herder, is the radical movement away from the correspondence theory of truth to a conception of truth based on a kind of negative epistemology that emphasizes the poetic or aesthetic dimension of language. Meanwhile, for Nietzsche, there is a tension between the conceptual and the figurative approach of looking at the world. However, despite this tension, a caveat should be made that Nietzsche is not proposing a total eradication of our conceptual apparatus. Rather, what he proposes is a revaluation of our conceptual apparatus and to expose it in its hypostasized form and also to disclose its basic metaphorical structure. In this sense, there is no difference between the conceptual (or literal) and figurative inasmuch as their distinction "is entirely relative—a difference in degree rather than kind."[13] Viewed this way, the tension between conceptual and figurative occurs as a complication of the extreme manifestation of the conceptual, that is, its hypostatization or reification. This point will become clearer in the following discussion of the "metaphysical bias," a symptom of the nihilistic spirit that has, from time immemorial, haunted knowledge formation.

Nietzsche uses various terms or metaphors to describe specific characteristics or expressions of the nihilistic spirit, which to him has grown to be a dominant ideal in the various dimensions of Western culture, for example, the ascetic ideal, *ressentiment*, spirit of revenge, fiction, poison, dogmatism, to list some of the expressions. Ultimately, all these expressions or analogues of the nihilistic spirit are rooted in, philosophically speaking, a conception of truth and value that accepts the Platonic bifurcation of the world into the "true" world of forms and the "false" world of appearance;[14] a worldview which, to Nietzsche, stems from our apprehensive attitude towards the temporal character of existence. Since the successful inception of this mode of thinking, via Platonism, it has become an indispensable bias in the Western philosophical tradition. The devaluation of the material conditions of life—or the metaphysicians' fear of temporality—has become the creed of Western philosophers. For Nietzsche, the alliance between nihilism and philosophy is called "metaphysics." It is important to situate Nietzsche's engagement with the material structure of language within his critique of metaphysics. What I hope to show is that the socio-historico origin of language, which the young Nietzsche attempted to painstakingly expose, is dissimulated by the

metaphysical bias of the Western philosophical tradition. As already been shown in chapter 1, Herder had already underscored the material or sensual origin of language, and this is something that Nietzsche himself attempted to do in his early writings.

With regard to the now popular stance against metaphysics, at least in the tradition of twentieth and twenty-first-century Continental thought, Nietzsche is perhaps the most often quoted source. What this entails, in general, is the attempt of Nietzsche-inspired writers—such as Heidegger, Foucault, Deleuze, Derrida, Adorno, to name a few—to adventurously declare the demise of metaphysics as a gesture of philosophy's departure from the fossilized foundations of what is commonly regarded as Western philosophy—generally regarded as a collective body of knowledge of diverse metaphysical accounts of truth, knowledge, morality, justice, and so on. Although Nietzsche is today regarded by many as the "father of anti-foundationalist" or "anti-metaphysical" thought, this temperament, as we have seen, had been present in the early German Romantics. As such, it would be more accurate to regard Nietzsche as the son or rightful heir of the *Frühromantik* tradition, one who continues a legacy.[15] The fact that Nietzsche used myriad of approaches and genres profoundly affected the form, and thus content, of his works,[16] a characteristic that he shares with the *Frühromantik* tradition. We could observe that, very much like Schlegel and Novalis, Nietzsche takes the freedom of shifting from one genre to another—between poignant analytic observations, destructive polemics, and the most profound metaphorical imageries. This "maverick" style of writing or philosophizing built on the "anti-foundationalist" or "anti-systematic" character of the Nietzschean text has been used by his supporters to warrant his current designation as progenitor of anti-metaphysical philosophy, and, I believe, rightly so. Nevertheless, Nietzsche is a product of his time—philosophically, a product of an intellectual tradition which emerged at the wake of Kantianism and Hegelianism, and in broader terms German Romanticism and German Idealism. Moreover, it is interesting to note that German Idealism and *Systemsphilosophie* began to decline shortly after the deaths of Kant in 1804 and Hegel in 1831. In other words, Nietzsche was nurtured in an intellectual environment where the philosophical practice of system-building grounded in the authoritative presuppositions of metaphysics was already openly dismantled, thanks to the initiative of the early German Romantics. Nietzsche shares with the early German Romantics an ambivalent relation to the philosophy of Kant, and the same can also be said about Nietzsche's reaction to the works of Hegel. Understood within this context, the radicalism of Nietzsche's critique of metaphysics is diminished to some degree, but, at the same time, it becomes less problematic and more benign than is usually regarded. Nevertheless, the critique of metaphysics still has

radical consequences for philosophy as a whole and Nietzsche's designation as the heir of anti-metaphysical thinking is still appropriate inasmuch as he is the most vocal, blunt, and, arguably, most consistent in temperament among anti-metaphysicians. In the following reconstruction of Nietzsche's critique of metaphysics, I will focus on two things: (1) the nihilistic spirit and its relation to the metaphysical notion of truth and (2) Nietzsche's exposure of the linguistic basis of the metaphysical notion of truth.

As mentioned earlier, the theoretical starting point of Nietzsche's critique of metaphysics is the Platonic separation between the true world of forms and the false world of appearance which, according to Nietzsche, is a complication of the existential fear of temporality. A further complication which arose from this separation is the formulation or invention of philosophical distinctions between eternity and finitude, reason and nature, mind and body, knowledge and non-knowledge, true and false. Nietzsche observed two things from the complications of metaphysical thought: first is the privileged status accorded to one category over another, namely, the permanent forms over the world of phenomena, eternity over finitude, reason over nature, mind over body, knowledge over non-knowledge, true over false; and second is the dissimulation of the material conditions that make knowledge acquisition or creation possible. It will become clear in the succeeding sections that the metonymic character of language is the basic structure of language usage; but, at this juncture, it would help to flag the idea that, for Nietzsche, metaphysics is the advanced dissimulation of the linguistic origin of thought. One very common example that Nietzsche offers is the hypostasized or reified notion of the subject; he writes that metaphysicians "think that they show their *respect* for a subject when they de-historicize it, *sub specie aeterni*—when they turn it into a mummy."[17] By getting around the human being of flesh and bone, metaphysicians fantasize about identifying an eternal being, unaffected by human physiology, deemed as the substantial form that guarantees the being of the concrete subject; hence, the ontological notion of the "I" or "ego" (the de-historicized subject) is invented. What this metaphysical model fails to realize, according to Nietzsche, is that the notion of the ego, as opposed to being regarded as a causal principle, is in fact a byproduct of the "seduction of grammar" which runs at the background of thinking, an "unconscious domination and guidance by similar grammatical functions."[18] In other words, the "I" or "ego" is inscribed through thought, and thought through language. We are reminded here by Reinhold and Fichte's respective notions of the "self-explanatory" and "self-positing" subject which they both offer as the absolute principle of all philosophy. This notion of the "absolute I" is conventionally regarded as "something of immediate certainty" and mistakenly construed as "the given *cause* of thought, from which by analogy we understood all other

causal relationships."[19] We, therefore, embellish the naked and frail body with the eternalized and immutable "soul" or "being behind doing, effecting, becoming."[20] Nietzsche is complaining here about something that Schlegel and Novalis already pointed out as the philosophical foundationalism of Reinhold and Fichte. Nevertheless, Nietzsche contributes to the conversation because he points out that we fail to recognize that "the doer is merely a fiction added to the deed—the deed is everything,"[21] that is to say, that the conceptualization of the "absolute I" is a result of the dynamism of language and that such mummification, *eternalization*, or reification of the subject is simply a petrifaction of a grammatical habit.[22] When Nietzsche remarks that "the deed is everything," he is obviously referring here to the primacy of somatic activity and regards thinking as itself a somatic process.

We could further infer from the above that the forgetfulness of the linguistic origin of metaphysics is, for Nietzsche, the denial of the conditions of life, that is to say, resentment towards the temporal and chaotic character of life. By denying the material conditions of its origin and its disgust towards temporality, metaphysics found incumbent upon itself to posit a "beyond" or, in Plato's terms, a world of permanent forms. This, for Nietzsche, is the metaphysician's "lack of historical sense" and "hatred of the very idea of becoming."[23] Positing an "immaterial beyond" required a turning away from life and, as a further step, the suppression of human creative impulses. From the purview of metaphysics, the role of somatic impulses has shifted, at least in principle, from aiding us with our concrete and often perilous struggle with the earth to pacifying our fear of the temporal by assuming that ultimate satisfaction is only found in a beyond. It is through this metaphysical illusion that death, for instance, ceases to be a concrete reality and, in our perennial struggle to conquer this temporal fate, we interpret our demise as the passageway to the peaceful beyond. "There are preachers of death," Nietzsche writes in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, "and the earth is full of those to whom one must preach renunciation of life."[24] Ultimately, the metaphysical illusion has crept into all our valuations; it has become the ground of all human valuations. This is the metaphysical bias of which Nietzsche speaks about at the beginning of *Beyond Good and Evil*:

> This way of judging constitutes the typical prejudgment and prejudice which give away the metaphysicians of all ages; this kind of valuation looms in the background of all their logical procedures; it is on account of this "faith" that they trouble themselves about "knowledge," about something that is finally baptized solemnly as "the truth." The fundamental faith of the metaphysicians is *the faith in opposite values*. It has not even occurred to the most cautious among them that one might have a doubt right here at the threshold where it was surely most necessary—even if they vowed to themselves, "*de omnibus dubitandum*."[25]

Put another way, the metaphysician assumes the role of the harbinger of "truth." The metaphysician follows the Platonic illusion and accepts the premise that the only possible knowledge is the knowledge of universal forms, because, according to this model, it is only when we apprehend universal forms that we are able to ascertain truth. The metaphysician, moreover, devises a method of accessing truth in all its purity and, as mentioned above, this amounts to the denial or negation of the material conditions of knowledge formation. One of the ways through which this compulsion towards purity is enacted is through what Nietzsche refers to as the drive towards truth. In one of its manifestations, the drive towards truth is seen as language's ability to represent an external world via the abstraction of the essential properties of worldly objects and their literal translation into judgments or propositions. For example, in Aristotelian logic, judgment is considered as the logical predication of the essential quality of an object, while the proposition is supposed to be the expression of this essential quality, that is, an expression of the relation between object (referent) and predicate (essential quality).[26] This classical pre-Kantian view of knowledge formation does not problematize the status of the "knowing" subject, but, rather, takes for granted that the subject simply has direct access to so-called essential qualities of objects.[27] In the history of Western thought, since Plato and Aristotle, this cognitive process has been the basis of the philosophical notion of truth. Truth, according to this model, is the correspondence between our propositions and the structure of objective reality; put another way, in order to have knowledge of objective reality, or in order to grasp the truth, our propositions should pass as rationally justified beliefs.[28] Moreover, this model suggests that what we consider as an objective world exists apart from knowledge itself, that is to say, that it is not constituted by the cognitive process itself and that it maintains its fundamental structure beyond our conceptual impositions; this implies that our conceptions arise out of our supposed *literal access* to the ontological structure of reality. Based on this model, the *well-structured* and *stable* reality is the "true" world, as opposed to a world of constant flux. Nietzsche maintains that the metaphysical bias posits that "There must be mere appearance; there must be some deception which prevents us from perceiving that which has being . . . ."[29] Metaphysicians, moreover, find "the senses" to be the culprit—the deceiver—the one that blocks our reception of the true world. The senses lead us to an "immoral" and, thus, false perception of the world, according to the metaphysical model. The supposition that the senses are deceptive is recast in the Judeo-Christian tradition, metaphysics' most successful analogue, as the seat of sin: the body is dirty, weak, and ghastly. The metaphysical bias has indeed lured us away from "the deception of the senses, from becoming, from history, from lies" and to instill in us the "moral" ideals of "monotono-theism" and detestation of the body, "this wretched *idée fixe* of

the senses, disfigured by all the fallacies of logic."[30] The *right* perception
of the true world entails the abandonment of the body, of everything that is
material. The presupposition of a true world is part of the logic that is at play
in denouncing the chaotic character of the material world; the juxtaposition
between the true world and the material world results in the supposition that
the latter is the "false" world on the basis of its *perceived* instability.

According to Nietzsche, the "fundamental faith of the metaphysicians is
the faith in opposite values"—this perhaps entails two things. First is that,
metaphysicians seek truth beyond the realm of experience; they do this by
negating the material world and by positing an a priori structure upon which
all materiality is structured. Second is that, and as a result of the first, the world
is bifurcated into the material world of flux (false world) and the permanent
world of forms (true world). The valuations that ensue are complications of
this bifurcated world: good and evil, courage and cowardice, beautiful and
ugly, and so on. Nietzsche is critical of the metaphysical gesture of seeking
truth beyond the materiality of experience; he finds this gesture as the tendency
of metaphysical thinking to ignore the role of language in the formation of
concepts. The metaphysical faith in opposite values could, moreover, entail the
obliviousness of philosophers/metaphysicians to the metonymic structure of
language—that language, as opposed to the traditional view just outlined, is not
a direct medium for representing what is otherwise known as objective reality.

We see from the foregoing that the metaphysical bifurcation of the world
into true and false is based on the opposition between a stable unified world
and an unstable world of becoming. This already provides a picture of the
relationship between metaphysics and the truth drive, in the sense that the
metaphysical worldview posits a logical, stable, moral, in other words, true
world, yet concealed by our illogical, unstable, immoral, in other words, false
sensuous conception of the world. Metaphysics, in this context, makes at least
two interrelated valuations: (1) the conception of the true world of stability
and (2) the denial of the false world of becoming in order to give way to a
noumenal world of pure essences. The reification of the subject (absolute
I) is characterized above as a variant of this metaphysical double gesture.
Moreover, with the metaphysical belief in opposite values, a privileged sta-
tus is accorded to the Good which creates the logical (true) world above the
illogical (false) world and, thus, the moral against the immoral world. In *On
the Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche calls this goal of positing an idealized
true world as the "ascetic ideal," he writes:

> That which *constrains* these men, however, this unconditional will to truth, is
> *faith in the ascetic ideal itself*, even if as an unconscious imperative—don't be
> deceived about that—it is the faith in a *metaphysical* value, the absolute value
> of *truth*, sanctioned and guaranteed by this ideal alone.[31]

Nietzsche, moreover, claims that "the ascetic ideal expresses a will: *where* is the opposing will that might express an opposing ideal?"[32] The ascetic ideal represents the triumph of the nihilistic spirit. The nihilistic spirit is also understood by Nietzsche as the spirit of revenge, "this hatred of the human, and even more of the animal . . . an aversion to life, a rebellion against the most fundamental presuppositions of life."[33] The spirit of revenge, according to Gilles Deleuze, "is the genealogical element of *our* thought, the transcendental principle of our way of thinking."[34] The spirit of revenge, symptomatic of the ascetic ideal, becomes the genealogical element of our thought inasmuch as it is precisely the metaphysical bias upon which all our anthropological valuations are based. If we accept Deleuze's description of the spirit of revenge, then Nietzsche's genealogical account of nihilism would largely resemble Adorno and Horkheimer's history of Enlightenment "gone wrong" in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. The development of the spirit of revenge (Nietzsche) or domination (Adorno-Horkheimer) has psychosocial implications and should not be seen as simply originating from formal causal principles, but, rather, from natural history. The spirit of revenge, in other words, is a "naturalized" psychological impulse, resulting from a pathological turn in the aforementioned fear of instability or becoming. In the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Adorno and Horkheimer recast this process within the context of the pathological turn of reason resulting in the "naturalization" of domination, also referred to as reification. Meanwhile, Nietzsche sees metaphysics as an expression of this hypostasized nihilistic worldview which takes on the task of devaluing the material conditions of life. However, the true world of the metaphysicians is, for Nietzsche, a "world of pure fiction":

> This *world of pure fiction* . . . falsifies, devalues, and negates reality. Once the concept of "nature" had been invented as the opposite of "God," "natural" had to become a synonym of "reprehensible": this whole world of fiction is rooted in *hatred* of the natural (of reality!); it is the expression of a profound vexation at the sight of reality.[35]

Nietzsche, moreover, points out that human suffering itself, which we associate with the false world of appearance, is the very reason why the metaphysician *lies* his way out of reality. "The preponderance of feelings of displeasure over feelings of pleasure," Nietzsche remarks, "is the cause of this fictitious morality and religion; but such preponderance provides the very formula for decadence."[36] Nietzsche's declaration in *Beyond Good and Evil* that "Christianity is Platonism for the people"[37] reveals that the predominant institutions of spirituality and intellectual life in Western culture (the Judeo-Christian tradition and the Western philosophical tradition) originate from the nihilistic worldview. Nihilism, in a specific Nietzschean sense, could

therefore be understood as a mode of looking at the world—a type of moral-ity or valuation expressed most notably in philosophy and religion—that rips "out life by the root," and thus becomes "*an enemy of life*."[38] Nihilism, in this specific context, is the predominant mode of thinking that has crept into our most fundamental moral valuations and finds its most extreme expression in the ascetic ideal which, in turn, breeds a pathological sense of *ressentiment* towards life. The unfortunate consequence of such resentful outlook on life is our alienation from the richness of our material lifeworld or, in other words, our alienation from experience. Nietzsche's critique of nihilism is inspired by an existential and cultural-historical outlook on life and, as we shall see in later chapters, Adorno also draws inspiration from the normativity of our material lifeworld.

REIFICATION, METAPHOR, AND THE PRAGMATIC NOTION OF TRUTH

The philosopher, the incarnation of the clever beast, according to Nietzsche, is "the proudest of all men" for he "supposes that he sees on all sides the eyes of the universe telescopically focused upon his action and thought."[39] But, nonetheless, to be a philosopher is to be fraught with irony, for "The pride connected with knowing and sensing lies like a blinding fog over the eyes and senses of men, thus, deceiving them concerning the value of existence."[40] As such, this blinding pride carries within itself a *deceptive* estimation of the value of knowledge as the intellect, for Nietzsche, dissimulates.[41] The instinct to maintain oneself from other individuals is symptomatic of the drive towards self-preservation. This, however, is quickly dissimulated and is trans-formed into something more complex: "Man wishes to exist socially and with the herd; therefore, he needs to make peace and strives accordingly to banish from this world at least the most flagrant *bellum omni contra omnes*."[42] The "puzzling truth drive" is, therefore, a byproduct of this "peace treaty" to end the war of each against all which is further translated into social convention. For Nietzsche, truth is, therefore, "a uniformly valid and binding designa-tion" for things legislated through no other than language itself.[43] Language, in this context, is considered as the fabric of social convention and oper-ates, more like a compromise, to sustain the normative foundation of social existence in all its facets. "Language does not desire to instruct," Nietzsche maintains, "but to convey to others a subjective impulse and its acceptance."[44] So, as opposed to functioning as a medium for the attainment of truth via knowledge, language functions as a social lubricant in the guise of truth. The language-truth relation is indeed complex and, at bottom, "there is a tension between their pragmatic origins and the roles which they are destined to play

within society, roles which the dissimulating structure of truth and language themselves determine."[45] A well-organized/rational/true world can only function according to the overarching normative discourse that the dissimulation of language and truth instigates if, in the first place, this discourse, as part of its normative function, hides its social and material origin; this is done by inventing another type of origin, that is, the metaphysical one.

Nietzsche's aim is to recover the concealed material origin of our valuation of truth. Since the invention of truth is structurally a linguistic construction, the recovery of the material, as opposed to the metaphysical, origin of this valuation begins with an inquiry into the structural foundations of language. Nietzsche begins his recovery by asking, "What is a word?" He then answers his own question:

> It is a copy in sound of a nerve stimulus. But the further inference from the nerve stimulus to a cause outside of us is already the result of a false and unjustifiable application of the principle of sufficient reason. If truth alone had been the deciding factor in the genesis of language, and if the standpoint of certainty had been decisive for designations, then how could we still dare to say "the stone is hard," as if "hard" were something otherwise familiar to us, and not merely a totally subjective stimulation![46]

We gather from the above passage that a "word" is a byproduct of a physiological process: "A copy in sound of a nerve stimulus." The presence of a nerve stimulus entails the presence of a corresponding external referent. Nietzsche is, of course, not denying the existence of actual physical objects. Rather, he is critical of the correspondence theory which underlies the conventional way we understand the process of "naming" objects. To make the conjecture that an *adequatio intellectus ad rem* is in place, or that a transcendent truth is encoded in the words that we use apart from the physiology of cognition, by virtue of the nerve stimulus is in itself already a linguistic claim. Nietzsche is questioning the practice of justifying truth claims via transcendental realism that dissimulates the physiological origin of conceptualization. In the example "the stone is hard," Nietzsche shows us how such a statement ends up getting imposed upon an external object we conventionally refer to by the word "stone"; the predicate "hard" is a "subjective stimulation" or another word we conventionally use to describe how the external object *appears* to us. Nietzsche observes that we are not simply *reacting* to an external stimulus, but we are rather *actively* involved in the *creation* of words, albeit this active involvement is not that obvious to us. It is, for Nietzsche, a process through which we "forget" the normative component of language and fancy ourselves to "possess truth."[47] In a sense, because we ignore this normative component of language and truth—our active involvement in the creation

of words—we end up being passive users of language. It is crucial to note that for Nietzsche our "active" or "creative" participation in the cognitive process could be described as an "aesthetic relation" which is a "mediating force."[48]

Behind this "aesthetic relation" that Nietzsche proposes are earlier claims made by Kant, Schopenhauer, and Lange regarding the "intermediate" structure of cognition: we can never ascertain the nature of objects as they are and that what we can only perceive are our own impressions of these objects as they appear to us.[49] While, to some degree, Nietzsche is indeed indebted to these three thinkers, he actually goes beyond them by emphasizing the linguistic constitution of knowledge, specifically, its "metonymic" structure; on this regard, he comes closer to the linguistic constitutivism of Hamann, Herder, and Humboldt. Nietzsche shifts from a purely ontological description of *ideogenesis* to a metonymic description:

> It is not the things that pass over into consciousness, but the manner in which we stand toward them. . . . The full essence of things will never be grasped. Our utterances by no means wait until our perception and experience have provided us with a many-sided, somehow respectable knowledge of things; they result immediately when the impulse is perceived. Instead of a thing, the sensation takes in only a sign.[50]

To some extent this appears as a restatement of the Kantian distinction between phenomena and noumena. But, in contrast to Kant, Nietzsche is not concerned here with a priori "categories of the understanding" that ontologically condition our perception of objects, but rather "the manner in which we stand toward" objects refers to the dynamics of language and how it plays out with the human intellect. The passage also indicates that Nietzsche does not simply deny the external world, but simply observes that the "full essence of things will never be grasped." Once again, he echoes the negative epistemology of the early German Romantics. Perception, as a component of a complex network of symbolic significations, can only provide mediated and indirect access to the objective world: "Language never expresses something completely, but displays only a characteristic which appears to be prominent."[51] Taking again Nietzsche's example of a "hard stone," the description of "hardness" does not totally grasp the totality of what the stone is. It is, at its best, a metaphoric description. This is explained as a twofold metaphoric process in "On Truth and Lies": "A nerve stimulus is transferred into an image: first metaphor. The image, in turn, is imitated in a sound: second metaphor."[52] Here, Nietzsche is describing the linguistic structure of how we experience objects; as opposed to the belief that we know something about objects—stone, trees, flowers, and others—we only possess metaphors that do not correspond to the actual properties of these objects.

We can observe that in both the "Description of Ancient Rhetoric" and "On Truth and Lies" the notions of "metonymy" and "metaphor" take center stage. Metonymy is described in the notes on rhetoric as "the placement of one noun for another"[53] or "the substitution of cause and effect."[54] Nietzsche further remarks: "We attribute to the appearances as their cause that which still is only an effect. The *abstracta* evoke the illusion that they themselves are these essences which cause the qualities, whereas they receive a metaphorical reality only from us."[55] This could be read as Nietzsche's description of the process of reification, where an "effect," in the form of a sign or a concept, gets hypostasized at the expense of the actual object. We mistake the "*abstracta*," the conceptual byproduct of a nerve stimulus, as the cause of the object. Through this process, if we use the "hard stone" example once more, we mistake "hardness" as the defining feature of the stone, hardness and stone become equal: the effect becomes the cause. In other words, "hardness" is actually just an effect that we experience as a nerve stimulus which is projected back to the object.[56] What we usually regard as literal or straightforward is actually just metaphorical—for we tend to forget "that the original perceptual metaphors are metaphors" and take "them to be the things themselves."[57] To say "the stone is hard" is, therefore, to express a metonymic statement, inasmuch as there is a substitution of cause and effect. What interests us here is that Nietzsche does not simply understand metonymy as an embellishment of a literal utterance but, rather, metonymy is constitutive of experience itself. Thus, the tactile feelings of "hardness," "smoothness," and "warmth" are not the immediate experiences of actual properties of external objects "derived from a relationship of identity or correspondence between the world and a sentient subject,"[58] but rather they are occasions of a linguistic process. It is also important to indicate here that, aside from the forgetfulness of the metaphorical structure of language, there is another type of forgetfulness or blindness which arises. The second type of forgetfulness is the forgetfulness of "the unique and entirely individual original experience" as it is subsumed under the hypostasized concept. The concept "is formed by arbitrarily discarding these individual differences and by forgetting the distinguishing aspects." This process is metonymic in the sense that the subsumption of the original experience into the concept is actually a transference from the material to the abstract, wherein abstraction functions as the substitution of a universalized concept for the object or the confusion between cause and effect. The persistence of this confusion, the forgetfulness of the material object, in our linguistic transactions is called reification. Nietzsche writes in *Beyond Good and Evil*:

One should not wrongly reify "cause" and "effect," as the natural scientists do (and whoever, like them, now "naturalizes" in thinking), according to the

prevailing mechanical doltishness which makes the cause press and push until
it "effects" its end; one should use "cause" and "effect" only as pure concepts,
that is to say, as conventional fictions for the purpose of designation and com-
munication—*not* for explanation.[59]

The process of reification could be further characterized as the conven-
tionalization of experience, wherein the unique and singular experience is
sacrificed for the sake of the common and familiar. Conventionalism follows
the logic of the concept, that is to say, the drive towards formalization which
determines and limits material experience. The conventionalization or natu-
ralization results in the reification of the concept: the process of legitimizing
a phantom image over and against the plurality of our concrete drives, affects,
and wills. In other words, in perfect unison with the metaphysical bias, the
reification of the concept functions as a *perspective stabilizer*.

The crucial question that arises from the above discussion is: What is the
implication of reification on knowledge formation, in general, and philoso-
phy, in particular? The question, of course, is not just about the drive towards
formalization, but, rather, involves the whole gamut of Nietzsche's immanent
critique of language. What is laid bare, thus far, is the material ground of
knowledge formation which we have located in Nietzsche's critique of the
epistemological categories of truth, representation via the word, and formal-
ization via the concept. If we gather the above exegetical undertaking into one
coherent theme or argument, we can argue, with Nietzsche, that what all this
amount to is the reification of knowledge via language.

The crucial point to be made here is that our experience of the external
world is linguistically constituted. Again, this is not to say that an external
objective or extra-linguistic world does not exist, but, rather, that our experi-
ence of the objective world is mediated by language, which entails an aes-
thetic relation with the objective world. Our experience of the objective world
is aesthetic for Nietzsche in the sense that, as opposed to representationalist
epistemology, experience is construed as world-disclosive and perspectival-
creative. Such view of experience could only be understood in a more or less
materialist sense, by which I mean a keener regard for the important role of
the body in knowledge formation and world-disclosure. By highlighting the
aesthetic-somatic dimension of our relation to the world, Nietzsche is able to
re-contextualize his epistemology, underscoring the material conditions that
make cognition and world creation possible; this could be further ramified
into how knowledge is socially grounded. The importance of Nietzsche's
genealogical narrative is that it highlights the historical dimension or dialecti-
cal play between language, truth, and knowledge. By exposing this dialectical
structure of knowledge formation, he is able to question the commonly held

belief that knowledge is a straightforward and neutral medium of representing the world of objects.

In the context of language discussed earlier, Nietzsche criticizes the metaphysical view for taking the role of language for granted by simply assuming that grammar functions to capture, ipso facto, the ontological structure of reality. Nietzsche points out that grammar is itself a compulsion towards stability that arises out of our repugnance for the unstable character of reality. Later on, Adorno and Horkheimer would add that this repugnance against becoming is linked to our primitive instinct for survival which develops into the instinct to master nature. Nietzsche observes that the metaphysical model does not view this as a compulsion at all, but, rather, sees it as the very method through which we could ascertain truth by bypassing the temporal world so that we could then focus our attention on the essences of things. Nietzsche, of course, uses the term grammar in both the metaphorical and the conventional sense. On the one hand, grammar is a metaphorical analogue of the precise or *reasonable* description of stability, permanence, unity, goodness, and even God; on the other hand, grammar is also used to refer to its more conventional connotation as the structure of language. These two connotations, the literal and metaphorical, play out in Nietzsche's account of language in quite an interesting way—they are used to illustrate the complex relation between language and reason. The metaphysical bias, for Nietzsche, creeps into even the most conventional language use because we give utmost priority to grammar. In other words, our obsession with grammar is symptomatic of conceptual reification. So, in a way, grammar becomes the analogue of metaphysics, if we consider metaphysics as the hypostatization of supposed a priori categories produced by the dialectical process of cognition-language-conceptualization. It is then held that we possess metaphysical truth if we are able to ascertain these a priori categories. But, according to Nietzsche, what is lost in this tendency to hypostasize a priori categories is the material process through which such worldview is created. For Nietzsche, all perspectives are materially constituted, but his criticism of the metaphysical worldview hinges on metaphysics' tendency to downplay or totally ignore the materiality of knowledge formation. By materiality, Nietzsche is referring to somatic impulses that inform the psychological, social, and historical spheres of life. In other words, the way we know the world or what we regard as "true" about the world is largely dependent on these somatic instances. But this material factor is precisely what the metaphysical worldview neglects. So, taking this into account, it would make more sense to interpret Nietzsche's critique of truth as not simply a denial of truth, but a rethinking of how truth is constituted in the first place. If we are trying to understand the nature of truth based on its material constitution,

then language is an appropriate point of departure. Nietzsche does just this in "On Truth and Lies":

> What then is truth? A movable host of metaphors, metonymies, and anthropomorphisms: in short, a sum of human relations which have been poetically and rhetorically intensified, transferred, and embellished, and which, after long usage, seem to a people to be fixed, canonical, and binding. Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions; they are metaphors that have become worn out and have been drained of sensuous force.[60]

There are two interrelated ways of reading the above passage. Firstly, the passage is clearly a counterclaim against the metaphysical notion of truth. Nietzsche is claiming that language (our use of words) becomes an analogue of the metaphysical bifurcation of the world (the "true" and the "false") and along with this linguistic process that bestows to the hypostasized "true" world a primal value. This bestowal of primal value to the metaphysical world manifests itself in language as the separation of the "conceptual" and the "figurative/rhetorical/metaphorical." Such conceptual-figurative opposition creates, on the one hand, the realm of consciousness and reality and, on the other hand, the realm of language and signification. A further relation between these two realms is that the realm of language has a secondary and even extraneous function of expressing the realm of consciousness and reality. As such, the consciousness-reality sphere does not presuppose the expression of knowledge, since knowledge is simply the correspondence between concept (consciousness) and object (reality) and, further, is not subjected to any material change in its abstract form—the essence, which is considered to be prelinguistic. Nonetheless, if knowledge is to be articulated, then a streamlining of language is necessary, according to the metaphysical model. It is in this context that Nietzsche observes that language becomes a simplifier of the complexity and dynamism of experience. This process of linguistic simplification reduces what is supposedly individual and unique to the common and typical. For Nietzsche, this amounts not only to the simplification of complexity but also the identification of unequal things or, in other words, the conceptual domination of material objects, resulting in the hypostatization or reification of concepts. Secondly, the passage is obviously hyperbolic, but it is not right away clear why. A possible explanation is that Nietzsche is trying to performatively or metareflectively demonstrate the rhetorical use (e.g., "coins which have lost their embossing and are now considered as metal and no longer coins") of language to explain the rhetorical or metaphorical structure of language. Interestingly, through these conceptual metaphors, Nietzsche is able to bring out a concise story of the origin of linguistic reification. The passage abandons neither a concept of truth nor a language per se.

On the contrary, the passage reveals the linguistic, hence material, basis of truth, as well as the limitations of language to capture the complexity of reality.[61] Taking the linguistic reinscription of truth into consideration, Nietzsche presents us an alternative version of truth, in opposition to the metaphysical, that is to say, simplified, hypostasized, grammatical conception of the world.

The metaphysical model ignores the diversity of reality by using language to make all things equal, that is, by lumping all things under the banner of universalized identity; this is done by classifying unequal things into classes and categories, plus the assumption that things under a class are essentially equal: "The belief that something is thus and thus," Nietzsche writes, "is the consequence of a will that as much as possible *shall* be equal."[62] Antedating Adorno, Nietzsche views this imposition of identity as an anthropological reaction to nature or becoming, that is, one of fear of the unknown and need of security through mastery. In a *Nachlass* entry written on the Fall of 1886, we read:

> The inventive force that invented categories labored in the service of our needs, namely of our need for security, for quick understanding on the basis of signs and sounds, for means of abbreviation: "substance," "subject," "object," "being," "becoming" have nothing to do with metaphysical truths. . . . It is the powerful who made the names of things into law.[63]

So, in a sense, conceptual categories, for Nietzsche, are still necessary, but they do not exactly capture the whole of reality. They are necessary "lies." Once more, Nietzsche hyperbolically declares that "All lies are necessary lies." The term "lie" has a special signification for Nietzsche. Lies are necessary for us humans because only belief in some reassuring truth is proper for our survival. In *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche links necessary lying to the aesthetic creation of the world, that is, that the world is only "bearable" as an aesthetic phenomenon.[64] Elsewhere, he refers to lying as "artistic pleasure": "Artistic pleasure the greatest kind because it speaks the truth quite generally in the form of lies."[65] Here, Nietzsche is claiming at least two things. Firstly, in relation to the above quoted *Nachlass* entry, he is claiming that, strictly speaking, there is no essential connection between our conceptual apparatus and the world as it is. The influence of Kantian epistemology, via Schopenhauer, reverberates in this claim. Put another way, the world is indifferent to the language that we use to describe or apprehend it. This, however, neither means that Nietzsche is guilty of solipsism nor is he repeating the old ontological mistake of bifurcating thought and world. One could, at least, safely say that what he is simply claiming is that our conceptual apparatus cannot, or perhaps should not, have a totalized grasp of the world in all its complexity, diversity, and the individuality of its objects. Secondly,

as opposed to solipsism and a dualistic worldview, Nietzsche acknowledges the necessity of what he refers to as "voluntary lies"[66] which could be interpreted as our "artistic" or "aesthetic," and necessarily linguistic, relation to the world. Through this second claim, the rhetorical or metaphorical structure of language, as an experiential intermediary, is emphasized. Moreover, with this insight, Nietzsche is able respond to the objection that considers his critique of the notion of truth as a wholesale denigration of truth. Contrary to this objection, an emphatic view of the metaphorical structure of language reinscribes the possibility of knowing the world without relapsing into the classical epistemological principle of adequation. So, while Nietzsche denounces all attempts to demonstrate that concepts correspond to reality, he, nonetheless, considers concepts in a somewhat pragmatic manner. This strain of pragmatic conception of truth is perhaps an inflection of Schopenhauer's pragmatic notion of human will. Schopenhauer thinks that human will profoundly inform human knowledge which, to some extent, resembles Freud's notion of the id as a drive that motivates human behavior and, in particular, the experience of pleasure.[67] Nietzsche recasts the Schopenhauerian will into the human propensity for power, that is, the anthropomorphic conception or, in its most extreme manifestation, domination of the world. So, as opposed to a straightforwardly representational view of knowledge, common to the metaphysical model, Nietzsche understands knowledge as fundamentality creative or, in its extreme expression, instrumental. Knowledge, in this sense, is "the metamorphosis of the world into man."[68]

I do not find this pragmatic or neo-pragmatic turn in Nietzsche's epistemology necessarily problematic. However, some defenders of this neo-pragmatic turn polemicize on this issue too much or they locate the turn way too late in Nietzsche's corpus, resulting in an unnecessary demarcation between the early and the mature Nietzsche. In particular, Maudmarie Clark argues that Nietzsche abandoned his early musings on the linguistic structure of truth in order to take up the pragmatic position. As a matter of fact, this pragmatic tendency is already evident in the early Nietzsche. According to Clark, Nietzsche abandoned his notion of the metaphorical structure of language because he could not defend it without risking a paradoxical self-contradiction: if all knowledge is metaphorical, then this claim is itself metaphorical and, hence, could not be taken seriously.[69] Clark also returns to the inconsistency of the idea of the Dionysian in *The Birth of Tragedy* as the only possible perspective that can recognize things-in-themselves and dubs this as Nietzsche's version of the correspondence theory. Clark, then, concludes that, the only way Nietzsche could redeem his perspectival theory of truth was to abandon his early musings in *The Birth of Tragedy* and "On Truth and Lies."[70] I argue that Clark misses at least three crucial aspects in Nietzsche's account. First, Nietzsche's insistence on the metaphorical structure of language in "On Truth

and Lies" is meant to disclose a dissimulated feature of language that is itself presented as a counterweight to language's rigid logical form. He is trying to show that the hypostasized logical form of language forgets its roots in metaphor and in the physiology of cognition. Second, his description of the physiological structure of cognition demonstrates the "artistic" or "aesthetic" character of knowledge formation. Third, Clark seems to present a too literal reading of Nietzsche's early view on language which undermines not only its deeply aesthetic implications but also its significance in the development of his more mature works. Clark seems to downplay the fact that Nietzsche's early epistemology formed the basis and general tenor of his more mature critique of reason. For instance, the following passage from "Reason in Philosophy" in *Twilight of the Idols* is seen by Clark as representative of Nietzsche's complete shift from a linguistic notion of truth to a common sense and positivistic notion of truth:[71]

> What we *make* of their testimony [senses], that alone introduces lies; for example, the lie of unity, the lie of thinghood, of substance, of permanence. "Reason" is the cause of our falsification of the testimony of the senses. Insofar as the senses show becoming, passing away, and change, they do not lie.[72]

Meanwhile, in direct opposition to Clark's position, Wayne Klein points out, with reference to the above passage, that Nietzsche's emphasis of the word "make" (*machen*) makes all the difference.[73] As a regulative verb, the word "make" implies the subject's active involvement in the interpretation of the testimony of the senses. Not only is the intermediate structure of knowledge formation highlighted here, but also the creative, indeed, metaphorical structure of our conceptual faculty. Many will see Nietzsche's use of the term "Reason" to refer to the falsification of the testimony of the senses problematic, inasmuch as it raises the question about the validity status of his claim. Is Nietzsche saying the "truth" about "Reason?" Is he prescribing a philosophical doctrine? Is he merely provoking his readers, thus, should not be taken seriously by philosophers? It is not easy to respond to these vexed questions. However, while risking appearing outlandish, it is possible to say that Nietzsche actually does all three: he is saying something "truthful" about Reason, he is prescribing a way of understanding Reason, and he is also provoking or deconstructing the conventional way we construe Reason. The real question, to my mind, is: what for? One could respond to this question by saying that Nietzsche is intending to disclose something about Reason that is usually disregarded by traditional philosophy; more specifically, a disclosure of how the history of human Reason is also the history of the systematic repression of our somatic constitution and simultaneously the dissimulation of the mimetic or metaphorical dimension of human cognition. The term

"Reason," as used by Nietzsche, is of course pre-loaded and it specifically denotes the anthropomorphic tendency to organize and master the world of objects; this is very similar to, if not the same as, Adorno and Horkheimer's use of the term "rationality" in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Klein, moreover, points out that Clark misses the real context of Nietzsche's critique of Reason and its relation to language by not considering Nietzsche's shift of emphasis in Section 5 of "Reason in Philosophy":

> In its origin language belongs in the age of the most rudimentary form of psychology. We enter a realm of crude fetishism when we summon before consciousness the basic presuppositions of the metaphysics of language, in plain talk, the presuppositions of reason. . . . In the beginning there is that great calamity of an error that the will is something which is effective, that will is a capacity. Today we know that it is only a word. . . . "Reason" in language—oh, what an old deceptive female she is! I am afraid we are not rid of God because we still have faith in grammar.[74]

Nietzsche shifts his emphasis from Reason "as the cause of our falsification of the testimony of the senses" to the basic tendency of language towards "crude fetishism" brought about by positing the "presuppositions of the metaphysics of language" or, in other words, reason in the body of hypostasized grammar or conceptual reification. In this sense, as Klein maintains, Nietzsche "locates reason itself within language."[75] This means that reason is itself constituted by language. If such is the case, then this passage from the *Twilight of the Idols* is consistent with Nietzsche's earlier, albeit less refined, critique of the reification of conceptual language and the fundamental aesthetic character of the cognitive process in "On Truth and Lies" noted earlier. If we interpret Nietzsche's project this way, not only is it possible to assume that there is a continuity between his early and mature works, but we are also in a better position to tell a story about the metaphorical structure of Reason itself. Within this context, Nietzsche's critique of language is neither a total negation of language nor of Reason, but, rather, is a condition for the reinscription of metaphorical language. It also becomes clear that what Nietzsche wishes to subvert are the ramifications of a discourse, philosophical or otherwise, that bestows primacy to metaphysical or an austere concept of reason that robs human experience of all its vitality. Beyond Clark, it is, therefore, possible to construe Nietzsche's pragmatic epistemology without making the polemical claim that he abandoned his early aesthetic view of language. On the contrary, his pragmatic epistemology is not only compatible with this aesthetic view of language, but should be read within the context of the latter, that is, that our anthropomorphic conception of the world is fundamentally metaphorical.

THE RECOVERY OF REASON AND THE
REINSCRIPTION OF METAPHOR

As we gather from the preceding sections, the metaphysical notion of truth, as opposed to the pragmatic, is an offshoot of the metaphysical illusion of a beyond or of an "opposite" of life that is taken to be more worthy than life itself. In *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche admonishes that philosophers have "rejected the testimony of the senses because they showed multiplicity and change" and have, instead, created the illusion of "permanence and unity."[76] Nietzsche, moreover, argues that we falsify the testimony of our senses—that is to say, we prioritize permanence over change and unity over multiplicity—because we want to perceive reality as "reasonable."[77] While Nietzsche could be accused, for example by Georg Lukács and Jürgen Habermas, of committing a self-referential paradox by criticizing reason while being ambiguous about the normative basis of his criticism—resulting in either sheer irrationalism or performative contradiction[78]—one could, at least, consider the implications of his critique of nihilism in order to properly interpret the context of his critique of reason. Of course, Nietzsche's tendency to hyperbolize the term "reason" itself makes it quite a challenge to view his project beyond his image as a "destroyer of reason," but the only way to get around this difficulty is to put his critique of Reason within the larger context of his overall enterprise of a critique of nihilism and his theory of knowledge.

If the central argument of Adorno and Horkheimer's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*—that is, "that reason has become irrational precisely because of its attempt to expel every nonrational moment from itself"[79]—is all too familiar, it is because Nietzsche had already declared a similar observation: "That *piece of the world* which we know —I mean our own human rationality—is not so very rational."[80] But what is often neglected is that Nietzsche, like Adorno and Horkheimer, exposes the irrational content of human reason in order to precisely salvage reason from its dangerous ramifications. Perhaps it is worthwhile to note at this juncture that Adorno, when responding to questions in relation to his lecture "The Meaning of Working through the Past," even referenced Nietzsche when he tried to explain the relationship between "rationality" and "irrationalism":

> When I spoke of the need to resist irrationality, I meant irrationality in this repressed, this twisted sense that was first wonderfully described by Nietzsche and then thoroughly analyzed by Freud. I therefore do not mean that people should become merely cold rationalists and shouldn't have affects and passions any more. On the contrary, if they have more affects and more passions, they will have less prejudices. I would like to say, if they allow themselves more of their affects and passions, if they do not once again repeat in themselves the

pressure that society exerts upon them, then they will be far less evil, far less sadistic, and far less malicious than they sometimes are today.[81]

This is a revealing passage from Adorno. Not only is Nietzsche central in his understanding of the relationship between rationalism and irrationalism, but, like Nietzsche, Adorno criticizes irrationality in order to expose its dissimulation in rational acts. It is important to stress, given the passage above, that both Nietzsche and Adorno do not abandon human rationality wholesale, but that a "recovery of reason"[82] meant for them the recovery of "affects" and "passions." The recovery of affects and passions leads to "less prejudices," thereby leading to an outlook that is less evil, sadistic, and malicious. In *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche calls for a "recovery of reason" which implies a reconciliatory relation between human reason and human passions. As opposed to the moralistic supposition that reason curbs the passions, Nietzsche's "recovered reason" views the function of reason as that of regulating the passions. While Nietzsche is conventionally regarded as a philosopher of power, he is nevertheless critical of the sheer infliction of brutal strength (*Kraft*).[83] His analysis of power is more nuanced than usually regarded; for, instance, in *Daybreak*, he distinguishes between strength as "custom of slaves" and the more decisive "*degree of rationality in strength*"—the latter involves the assessment of the extent to which "strength has been overcome by something higher, in the service of which it now stands as means and instrument."[84] In this context, the passions are not reduced to sheer strength since reason takes them into service which renders the reason-passions relation emphatically decisive. But the passions are not simply subordinated to reason; on the contrary, reason remains parasitic to the passions, but also "retroacts" on them. What this implies is that thinking could learn a lot from the passions, and the passions could be more productive through reason's retroaction. This is possible, according to Wolfgang Welsch, because Nietzsche sees the directional relation between reason and passions as "two-way" instead of "one-way."[85] In other words, instead of curtailing the passions, reason should bring the passions to the foreground of thought. One could surmise from this that Nietzsche did not totally abandon a notion of reason, but, rather, attempted to present a revisionist emphatic view of reason. It, therefore, makes sense for Deleuze to paint this aspect of Nietzsche's philosophy in Spinozist terms, more specifically, interpreting Nietzsche's philosophy of the body in terms of Spinoza's concept of the "parallelism" between mind and body or the view that neither the mind nor the body holds primacy over the other.[86] Viewed this way, it makes sense for Nietzsche to wonder in the preface of *The Gay Science* whether "philosophy has not been merely an interpretation of the body and a *misunderstanding of the body*"[87]—which is another way of saying that we have misunderstood the

nature of knowledge because we have misunderstood how our bodies work. According to Christian J. Emden, Nietzsche was certainly a child of his time for emphasizing the inextricable relation between knowledge formation and human physiological organization,[88] but, more than this, Nietzsche's preoccupation with the body is central to his overarching concern in an understanding of what it is to be "human."[89] This aspect of Nietzsche's epistemology is often ignored, and so it has to be highlighted again that describing knowledge formation as a metaphorical process aims to reorient us to the very human aspect of our relation with the world, that is, a recognition of the fragility of our conception of ourselves.

Nietzsche's recognition of the metaphorical, mediatory, structure of cognition leads him to the supposition that the world could only be "interpreted" and could never be known by and in itself. Failure to recognize this fact amounts to our forgetfulness of the dialectical character of knowledge formation—that is, the complexity of our relation to the objective world—which is further complicated by the now reified structure of our conceptual apparatus. The recognition of the materiality of experience also discloses the fact that the act of interpreting or evaluating the world is conditioned by physiological or somatic factors:

> What is the meaning of the act of evaluating itself? Does it point back or down to another, metaphysical world? . . . evaluation is an *exegesis*, a way of interpreting. The exegesis itself is a symptom of certain physiological conditions, likewise of a particular spiritual level of prevalent judgments: Who interprets?—Our affects.[90]

This passage corroborates Nietzsche's claim that the formation of concepts through nerve stimuli has a physiological basis: the senses. The senses, however, do not function to capture the world as it is, but, rather, contribute to the interpretation of the world. This view is opposed to the metaphysical worldview which construes knowledge as the direct representation of the ontological structure of the world. In this specific sense, metaphysics resembles "transcendental" or "dogmatic" realism which considers rationality as having the capacity to overcome its limitations and, hence, is able to understand the world as it is. Nietzsche shares his skepticism towards transcendental realism, as already pointed out several times, with the early German Romantics. Any ontological discourse, for Nietzsche, is partly shaped by the limitations of the human intellect. Language, in this context, could be viewed as a way of overcoming our intellectual handicap; it is a process of making *sense* of naturally occurring phenomena which are otherwise unintelligible. However, this is not to say that language can paint an accurate picture of reality. Linguistic conceptualizations are, at best, mimetic devices we use to make sense of the

world. They are, for Nietzsche, creative and necessary illusions. Nietzsche is critical of metaphysics because it generally shares with transcendental realism the dishonest illusion of an accurate representation of reality and by thwarting or falsifying the structure of reality, that is, by privileging the formal reified categories of conceptual language instead of the emphatic and material structure of language. It is not so much the use of categories or "fictions," as Nietzsche describes them, such as "cause" and "effect," that is the problem, but, rather, the reification of these categories which downplays their linguistic origin and socio-pragmatic purpose. Reification is also described as the enactment into law of fictional images.[91] The metaphysical emphasis on immediacy downplays the mediatory structure of conceptualization that Nietzsche is arguing in his early writings on language. The interpretative character of evaluation, described in *Beyond Good and Evil*, is none other than the metonymic, mediatory, or metaphorical character of language that his early writings seek to elucidate. For Nietzsche, metaphysics or any discourse that oversimplifies or reduces language into conceptual or reified thinking spells the death of the figurative dimension of language. This also means the repression of the creative character of human experience, rendering thinking unresponsive to new possibilities. Nietzsche's critique exhibits an anxiety over this repression.

What Nietzsche ultimately seeks is a revival of the rhetorical force of language; such revival also entails, or perhaps requires, an overcoming of the metaphysical bias, that is, of reification. Such overcoming of metaphysics, of nihilism, presupposes a deeper sense of the nature of language. Nietzsche's qualitative approach to language resembles Taylor's HHH theory of language, outlined in chapter 1, where Taylor does not only emphasize the constitutive nature of language but, more importantly, construes language as demonstrating a reflective process of self-contextualization, self-understanding, and identity formation. Nietzsche's qualitative approach to language stresses the complex relation between language and knowledge formation. In contrast to the analytic emphasis on the formal or representational features of language, Nietzsche would stress the rhetorical, expressive, and poetic aspects of language. A metacritique of the purely conceptual use of language radicalizes our perspectives on metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics. Philosophy, as I have been mentioning, is a way of thinking that does not only take issue with the function of language in general but, more importantly, it also takes issue with its very own language; this also means that philosophy's self-understanding of itself and its limitations should serve as its caveat, if it wishes to survive. Nietzsche's qualitative approach, therefore, highlights a crucial *performative* aspect of philosophical language—that is, of its very own self-reflexivity that lends itself to the self-critique and, thus, self-understanding of philosophy. This is one sense of understanding how Nietzsche carries out an "immanent

critique" of language. It is a "critique" of language because he offers his own analysis of language's relation to knowledge formation and, as such, also reveals philosophy's relation to its own language. In other words, a critique of language lends itself, in this very specific sense, as philosophical praxis.

Nietzsche's aphoristic style is a *conscious* exercise of philosophical praxis—to a certain extent, a continuation of the experimentation with the fragment, as well as other forms of literary genres, carried out by the early German Romantics. Like the German Romantics and Gerber, Nietzsche deliberately goes beyond a common-sense understanding of language and argues that the creative or artistic is a normative element of language; like Hamann, Herder, and Humboldt, Nietzsche operatively mounts his critique by highlighting the normativity of the linguistic apparatus in writing and philosophizing; a gesture that does not end up in the fossilization of form and content or the equation of the two, that is to say, it does not result in the petrifying tendency of identity (it will be shown in succeeding chapters that Adorno makes a very similar move). Ultimately, for Nietzsche, the critique of language presupposes language in all its limitations and possibilities, for a withdrawal from the thrall of a facile outlook on language presupposes a "cosmos of meanings,"[92] an intricately related network of symbolic and metaphorical references that conditions the critique in the first place. This is to say that language is the very space within which an immanent appraisal of language could be intuitively done. For Nietzsche, the self-critique of philosophy entails emphasizing philosophy's indebtedness to language: that the language of philosophy is itself conceptual and, more importantly for Nietzsche, this conceptual language is by nature metaphorical. Jacques Derrida offers the following observation:

> Nietzsche's procedure (the generalization of metaphoricity by putting into *abyme* one determined metaphor) is possible only if one takes the risk of a continuity between the metaphor and the concept, as between animal and man, instinct and knowledge. In order not to wind up at an empiricist reduction of knowledge and a fantastic ideology of truth, one should surely substitute another articulation for the (maintained or erased) classical opposition of metaphor and concept. This new articulation, without importing all the metaphysics of the classical opposition, should also account for the specific divisions that epistemology cannot overlook, the divisions between what it calls metaphoric effects and scientific effects. The need for this new articulation has undoubtedly been called for by Nietzsche's discourse. It will have to provoke a displacement and an entire reinscription of the values of science and truth, that is, of several others too.[93]

Derrida is perhaps suggesting that philosophy is precisely the symbiotic relationship between figurative and conceptual language. He describes

Nietzsche's approach as instigating a new way of "articulating" this relationship; the articulation of such a relationship reduces philosophical language into neither the purely figurative nor the purely conceptual. As noted earlier, following Breazeale, the difference between the literal and the figurative is one of relative degree, for they both come from the same genealogical element, that is, experience. Ultimately, what this amounts to is an overcoming of the reificatory tendency of the metaphysical bias, which is precisely the sheer reduction of philosophical language to the purely conceptual, the purely literal. Such overcoming is the displacement of the well-guarded metaphysical valuations, especially the notion of truth. If we pursue Derrida's suggestion, then we will notice that philosophical discourse amounts to a circular balance between the figurative and the conceptual; but if we follow Nietzsche, alongside Derrida, the dialectical balance between the figurative and conceptual are enclosed within a bigger circle: language as metaphorical, mediated, aesthetic.

The foregoing reconstruction of Nietzsche's engagement with the nature of language in his early works provides a framework whereupon the metaphorical foundation of valuation can be appraised. What underlies this reconstruction is the relationship between the figurative and the conceptual language. From "On Truth and Lies" we witnessed a *genealogical* account of the *origin* of our notion of truth and its relation to knowledge. I agree with Klein that "the text should be considered as a means toward a revaluation of truth, not, as is too often assumed, as a way of rejecting or denying truth."[94] Derrida's observation that Nietzsche's procedure displaces metaphysical valuations and reinscribes the valuations of science and philosophy, sans the metaphysical bias, is in line with Klein's claim. One can say that "On Truth and Lies" does just this: a displacement and reinscription of the notion of truth. This implicit temperament in "On Truth and Lies" is corroborated by claims made by Nietzsche in his more mature works, specifically, *Twilight of the Idols*. As we have seen earlier, commentators, like Clark, are wrong to argue that Nietzsche underwent a radical shift in his account of truth.

If Derrida is not terribly wrong in claiming that Nietzsche's style exemplifies the intertwining of the conceptual and figurative, then one should be able to exhibit this procedure, that is, the metaphorical function of philosophical writing. The new articulation of which Derrida speaks about is, I would argue, precisely the reinscription of metaphor in philosophy. Already at the very beginning of "On Truth and Lies," Nietzsche registers the subtle and tensional relation between the figurative and the conceptual use of language.[95] Nietzsche ridicules the primacy accorded to the human intellect over nature: "One might invent such a fable, and yet he still would not have adequately illustrated how miserable, how shadowy and transient, how aimless and arbitrary the human intellect looks within nature."[96] Nietzsche does not hide the

fact that his genealogical account is a "fable" or an "invention," to be more precise, a fable of an invention. The word "invent," thus, has two overlapping significations in the text which, interestingly, informs the form and content of the text. The essay is, firstly, a creative invention of the author (Nietzsche) which is, secondly, about another invention, namely, the invention of knowledge. Hence, the opening of the essay is complex inasmuch as it attempts to get across several levels of meaning. What Nietzsche is doing, to use Derrida's words, is articulating the continuity between concept and metaphor. To put it another way, Nietzsche is himself using metaphorical images (e.g., the solar system and the clever beast) in order not only to assert an epistemological observation but also to register the unstable and mediated structure of writing. Following Derrida, I would like to maintain that Nietzsche's text carries out the figurative-conceptual circle that is at the heart of philosophical discourse. The figurative-conceptual polarity is blurred out. In this way, the text is itself a testament of the self-reflexivity of language via the process of writing and reading.

But what is the importance of reinscribing metaphor in philosophical discourse? We could gain an appreciation of the recovery of metaphor by invoking Nietzsche's critique of the dissimulative tendency of conceptual thinking. What this dissimulation ultimately entails, for Nietzsche, is the forgetfulness of the "artistic" means by which we construct our conceptualizations of the world. He asserts:

> Only by forgetting this primitive world of metaphor can one live with any repose, security, and consistency: only by means of the petrification and coagulation of a mass of images which originally streamed from the primal faculty of human imagination like a fiery liquid, only in the invincible faith that *this* sun, *this* window, *this* table is a truth in itself, in short, only by forgetting that he himself is an *artistically creating* subject, does man live with any repose, security, and consistency.[97]

What is forgotten is not simply the linguistic function of metaphor (that metaphor is the indirect representation of the world and, thus, does not reflect the ultimate and final truth) but the metaphorical origin of all our valuations—that all conceptualizations of the world (knowledge) are *created* and not discovered. The forgetfulness of metaphor also means the forgetfulness of the social basis of this *artistic creation*. What Nietzsche instigates is, I argue, a shift from an essentialist epistemology to a type of epistemology that is more sensitive to the aesthetic character of human experience. Knowledge is not based on transcendent and immutable truths, but, rather, on socially regulated valuations: "For so far we have heard only of the duty which society imposes in order to exist."[98] I further argue that this shift is

a response to the problem of reification that such forgetfulness effectuates. Hence, the reinscription of metaphor *redeems* our "aesthetic" relation with the objects of the world. The aesthetic dimension of Nietzsche's epistemology maintains that valuations are created out of the metaphoricity of language and that it is this very creation of values, metaphysical or otherwise, from the standpoint of the economy of meaning that the social sphere within which we live is produced. It is only from this standpoint that philosophical discourse is possible.

Inasmuch as the language of philosophy is informed by the economy or constellation of metaphorical tropes, images, symbolisms, then it is situated within the social sphere. What this means is that despite the fact that ordinary language communication can be described as bland, pragmatic, and instrumentalist, Nietzsche considered them metaphorical in the sense that they are "creative" ways of dealing with our day-to-day transactions. It should be noted, however, that it is not part of ordinary language communication's agenda to self-reflectively understand itself as such. The recovery of philosophy's relation to the aesthetic—or put another way, the recovery of reason's relation to aesthetics—redeems the receptive and creative element of philosophical thinking. The recovery of the aesthetic also entails, for philosophy, the overcoming of metaphysical obsession, that is to say, the overcoming of the purely conceptual. This, of course, means emancipation from the dissimulative influence of repose, security, and consistency promised by metaphysics. While this break from metaphysics could be seen as an unsettling break from constitutive meaning, which implies the untenability of meaning or value in our truth claims, it should be pointed out that Nietzsche is not proposing a total abandonment of the possibility of interpretation; as a matter of fact, the importance of interpretation has been pointed out above as having a central role in Nietzsche's genealogical account of value judgments. What the break from metaphysics opens up, and which has direct implications for philosophy, is the revaluation of our value judgments, a reexamination of our overconfidence in the certitude of knowledge. Nietzsche exposes the ultimate struggle of philosophy: its relation to the aesthetic. Nietzsche, however, reinscribes this struggle as philosophy's new imperative—the self-examination of its language. When Nietzsche proclaims, "We now oppose knowledge with art,"[99] he is not calling for the abandonment of knowledge, but, rather, the "Mastery of the knowledge drive! Strengthening of the moral and aesthetic instincts!"[100] Nietzsche hopes, therefore, for philosophy's coming to terms with the aesthetic, that is to say, the creative potential of philosophy's very own language. Such potential is only tenable if philosophy, in the first place, admits its very own limitations. By admitting the limitations of philosophy, we open philosophy to different ways of speaking about the world.

NOTES

1. See Thomas H. Brobjer, *Nietzsche's Philosophical Context: An Intellectual Biography* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 58, 60. Also see Christian Emden, *Nietzsche on Language, Consciousness, and the Body* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press), 94. For Nietzsche's references to Hamann, see *TL* V, 41 and *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, trans. Marianne Cowan (Washington, DC, 1998), 37.

2. Cf. Brobjer, *Nietzsche's Philosophical Context*, 205.

3. An attempt to bring the works of Hamann and Nietzsche together is James C. O'Flaherty's *The Quarrel of Reason with Itself: Essays on Hamann, Michaelis, Lessing, Nietzsche* (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1988).

4. The following are Nietzsche's sources: Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* and *Critique of Judgement*, Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation*, Lange's *The History of Materialism*, Hartmann's *Philosophy of the Unconscious*, and Gerber's *Die Sprache als Kunst*. Claudia Crawford offers an excellent survey of the influences of these works in *The Beginnings of Nietzsche's Theory of Language* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1988).

5. Apart from the more popular books constituting what is regarded as the official canon of his works, Nietzsche, of course, actively published scholarly articles in philology, especially from the years 1867 to 1873.

6. In his introduction to *Philosophy and Truth*, Daniel Breazeale offers a succinct but very informative history of Nietzsche's *Das Philosophenbuch*, from its original conception to its eventual abandonment. See "Introduction," in *Philosophy and Truth: Selections From Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's* (New York, NY: Humanities Press International, 1990), xviii–xxiii.

7. See Arthur Danto, *Nietzsche as Philosopher* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1965), 36–47.

8. See Maudemarie Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 63–125. To a lesser degree of skepticism, Alexander Nehamas notes that *On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense* "has been immensely overestimated." *Nietzsche: Life as Literature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), note 6, 246.

9. For a detailed counter-criticism of Clark's view, see Wayne Klein, *Nietzsche and the Promise of Philosophy* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997), 56–61, 88–95.

10. The following are worth mentioning and the list is by no means exhaustive: J. Daniel Breazeale, "The Word, the World, and Nietzsche," *The Philosophical Forum*, 6:2–3 (Winter–Spring 1974–75), 301–20; Claudia Crawford, *The Beginnings of Nietzsche's Theory of Language* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1988); Paul de Man, "Rhetoric of Tropes," in *Allegories of Reading: Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke, and Proust* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979), 103–18; Roger Hazelton, "Nietzsche's Contribution to the Theory of Language," *The Philosophical Review*, 52:1 (January 1943), 47–60; Klein, *Nietzsche and the Promise of Philosophy*; Sarah Kofman, *Nietzsche and Metaphor*, trans. Duncan

Large (London: The Athlone Press, 1993); Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, "Le detour (Nietzsche et la rhetorique)," *Poetique*, 5 (1971), translated into English by Gary M. Cole as "The Detour," in *The Subject of Philosophy* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 14–36; Tracy B. Strong, "The Epistemology of Nihilism," in *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of Transfiguration* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 53–86; Alan D. Shrift, "Language, Metaphor, Rhetoric: Nietzsche's Deconstruction of Epistemology," *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 23:3 (July 1985), 371–95; Sander L. Gilman et al., "Nietzsche's Lectures on Rhetoric: Reading a Rhetoric Rhetorically," introduction to *Friedrich Nietzsche on Rhetoric and Language* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989), ix–xxvii; Ken Gemes, "Nietzsche's Critique of Truth," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 52:1 (March 1992), 47–65; Charles Bingham, "The Goals of Language, the Language of Goals: Nietzsche's Concern with Rhetoric and its Educational Implications," *Educational Theory*, 48:2 (Spring 1998), 229–40; Douglas Thomas, *Reading Nietzsche Rhetorically* (New York, NY: The Guilford Press, 1999); and Emden, *Nietzsche on Language, Consciousness, and the Body*.

11. This is corroborated by Lacoue-Labarthe's claim that "despite some changes in terminology, Nietzsche's analyses of language will vary little and that he will almost always stick to the knowledge gained in these first years." "The Detour," 15.

12. A good place to start with regard to Nietzsche's relation to Analytic Philosophy—especially on the themes of truth and language—is Babette E. Babich's "On the Analytic-Continental Divide in Philosophy: Nietzsche's Lying Truth, Heidegger's Speaking Language, and Philosophy," in *A House Divided: Comparing Analytic and Continental Philosophy*, ed. C. G. Prado (New York, NY: Humanity Books, 2003), 63–103.

13. Breazeale, "Note on the Text, Translation and Annotation," in *Philosophy and Truth: Selections From Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's*, lix, note 10.

14. In *The Republic*, Plato uses two literary devices to explain the bifurcated world, the Divided Line- and Cave Allegory, books 6 and 7, respectively: "Imagine taking a line which has been divided into two unequal sections, and dividing each section—the one representing the category of the seen and the one representing the category of the understood—again in the same proportion," "The region revealed to us by sight is the prison dwelling, and the light of the fire inside the dwelling is the power of the sun. If you identify the upward path and the view of things above with the ascent of the soul to the realm of understanding, then you will have caught my drift. . . . My own view, for what it's worth, is that the realm of what can be known the thing seen last, and seen with great difficulty, is the form or character of the good." *The Republic*, trans. Tom Griffith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), Book 6 509d–509e, Book 7 571b.

15. Nietzsche's his exact position in the history of Western philosophy, if based on the plethora of varied and often contradicting appropriations, continues to defy a definitive account. Nevertheless, we identify at least three principal assimilations of Nietzschean ideas: (1) the German assimilation, (2) the French assimilation, and (3) the Anglo-American assimilation. For a more comprehensive discussion of these assimilations, consult Peter Sedgwick, "Introduction: Nietzsche Institutions," in

Nietzsche: A Critical Reader (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1995). The following are also important representative works: David B. Allison, ed., *The New Nietzsche: Contemporary Styles of Interpretation* (New York, NY: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1877); Keith Ansell-Pearson, ed., *Nietzsche and Modern German Thought* (London: Routledge, 1991); David Farrell-Krell and David C. Wood, eds., *Exceedingly Nietzsche: Aspects of Contemporary Nietzsche-Interpretation* (London: Routledge, 1988); Clayton Koelb, ed., *Nietzsche as Postmodernist: Essays Pro and Contra* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1990); Manfred Putz, ed., *Nietzsche in American Literature and Thought* (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1995); Laurence A. Rickels, ed., *Looking After Nietzsche* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 1990); Alan D. Schrift, *Nietzsche's French Legacy: A Genealogy of Poststucturalism* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1995); and Robert C. Solomon, ed., *Nietzsche: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Indiana, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1973).

16. Perhaps Nietzsche's style of writing is a way of protecting himself, according to Derrida, "against whatever terrifying, blinding, or mortal threat might present itself or be obstinately encountered: that is, the presence, and, hence, the content, of things themselves, of meaning, of unveiling of difference," which is perhaps the reason why Nietzsche oftentimes parodies the language of academic philosophers. See Jacques Derrida, "The Question of Style," trans. Ruben Berezdivin, in *The New Nietzsche: Contemporary Styles of Interpretation* (New York, NY: Delta Book, 1977), 176-ff.

17. *TI*, III, 1.

18. *BGE*, 20.

19. *WP*, 483.

20. *GM*, I, 13.

21. *GM*, I, 13.

22. Nietzsche further writes in *On the Genealogy of Morals*: "The popular mind in fact doubles the deed; when it sees the lightning flash, it is the deed of a deed: it posits the same event first as cause and then a second time as its effect. Scientists do no better when they say 'force moves,' 'force causes,' and the like—all its coolness, its freedom from emotion notwithstanding, our entire science still lies under the misleading influence of language and has not disposed of that little changeling, the 'subject' (the atom, for example, is such a changeling, as is the Kantian 'thing-in-itself'). . . . The subject (or, to use a more popular expression, the *soul*) has perhaps been believed in hitherto more firmly than anything else on earth because it makes possible to the majority or mortals, the weak and oppressed of every kind, the sublime self-deception that interprets weakness as freedom, and their being thus-and-thus as a *merit*." *GM*, I, 13.

23. *TI*, III, 1.

24. *Z*, I, 9. Nietzsche continues: "The earth is full of the superfluous; life is spoiled by the all-too-many. May they be lured from this life with the 'eternal life'! Yellow the preachers of death wear, or black. . . . They are terrible ones who carry around within them themselves the beast of prey and have no choice but lust or self-laceration. . . . They encounter a sick man or an old man or a corpse, and immediately they say, 'Life is refuted.' But only they themselves are refuted, and their eyes, which

see only this one face of existence . . . . 'Life is only suffering,' others say, and do not lie: see to it, then, that *you* cease! See to it, then, that the life which is only suffering ceases!" *Z*, I, 9.

25. *BGE*, 2.

26. The *Organon* is a collection of several works regarded by scholars to comprise Aristotle's study of logic: *The Categories*, *On Interpretation*, *Prior Analytics*, *Posterior Analytics*, *Topics*, and *On Sophistical Refutations*. The "syllogism," regarded as the hallmark of deductive reasoning of which Aristotle is famous for, is discussed in the first book of the *Prior Analytics*: "The premiss is an affirmative or negative statement of something about some subject," "a syllogistic premiss will be simply the affirmation or negation of some predicate of some subject," "A syllogism is a form of words in which, when certain assumptions are made, something other than what has been assumed necessarily follows from the fact that the assumptions are such." *Prior Analytics*, trans. Hugh Tredennick, in *Aristotle: The Categories, On Interpretation, Prior Analytics* (London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1962), 199–201.

27. I consider as pre-Kantian those epistemological models prior to the so-called Kantian Copernican revolution formulated by Kant in his first *Critique*: "But though all our knowledge begins with experience, it does not follow that it all arises out of experience. For it may well be that even our empirical knowledge is made up of what we receive through impressions and of what our own faculty of knowledge (sensible impressions serving merely as occasion) supplies itself. If our faculty of knowledge makes any such addition, it may be that we are not in a position to distinguish it from the raw material, until with long practice of attention we have to become skilled in separating it." Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 41–42. Kant also writes: "Hitherto it has been assumed that all our knowledge must conform to objects. But all attempts to extend our knowledge of objects by establishing something in regard to them *a priori*, by means of concepts, have, on this assumption, ended in failure. We must therefore make trial whether we may not have more success in the tasks of metaphysics, if we suppose that objects must conform to our knowledge." Ibid., 22.

28. The definition of knowledge as "justified true belief" is commonly attributed to Plato. In the *Theatetus*, Socrates attempts to clarify with Theatetus the definition of knowledge as "true judgment with an account." See Plato, *Theatetus*, trans. M. J. Levett, in *Plato: Complete Works* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1997), 201d–10a.

29. *TI*, III, 1.

30. *TI*, III, 1.

31. *GM*, III, 24.

32. *GM*, III, 23.

33. *GM*, III, 28.

34. Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1983), 35.

35. *AC*, 15.

36. *AC*, 15.

37. *BGE*, preface.

38. *TI*, V, 1. Aaron Ridley rightly observes that Nietzsche's critique of nihilism is directed towards Christian morality inasmuch as Nietzsche regards Christianity to symptomatic of the nihilistic spirit. Ridley notes that "also in the firing line are the various crypto-Christian moralities that have been invented to take its place—self-allegedly post-Christian, but in reality, if unwittingly, trading in Christian presuppositions for whatever force they have" "Guilt Before God, or God Before Guilt?," *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, 29 (Spring 2005), 42. In *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche writes, "God is dead; but given the way of men, there may still be caves for thousands of years in which his shadow will be shown" (*GS*, 108). Deleuze interprets this as a critique of the Modern ethos itself. The usurpation of God's throne by man (see *Z* IV, 13.2) has an ambivalent relation to Nietzsche's critique of nihilism. The death of God does not only imply the rise of the "higher man" but also of the man of *ressentiment*. This means that the same nihilistic values continue to thrive in a post-theistic world. In the Modern world, according to Deleuze, "morals replace religion; utility, progress, even history replace divine values." Gilles Deleuze, *Pure Immanence: Essays on a Life*, trans. Anne Boyman (New York, NY: Zone Books, 2001), 80.

39. *TL*, I, 79.

40. *TL*, I, 80.

41. See *TL*, I, 81.

42. *TL*, I, 81.

43. *TL*, I, 81.

44. *DAR*, III, 21.

45. Klein, *Nietzsche and the Promise of Philosophy*, 65.

46. *TL*, I, 81–82.

47. Cf. *TL*, I, 81.

48. *TL*, I, 86.

49. The following passages are relevant: "Appearances, so far as they are thought as objects according to the unity of the categories, are called *phenomena*. But if I postulate things which are mere objects of understanding, and which, nevertheless, can be given as such to an intuition, although not to one that is sensible . . . such things would be entitled *noumena*." Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 265–66; "all that exists for knowledge, and therefore this whole world, is only object in relation to subject, perception of a perceiver, in a word idea." Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea*, Vol. 1, trans. R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1950), 3; also see Frederick Lange's exposition of the origin of the *Ding-an-sich* in *The History of Materialism and Criticism of its Present Importance*, trans. Ernest Chester Thomas (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1957), 235–94.

50. *DAR*, III, 23. Nietzsche also writes: "Man, who forms language, does not perceive things or events, but *impulses*: he does not communicate sensations, but merely copies of sensations. The sensation, evoked through a nerve impulse, does not take in the thing itself: this sensation is presented externally through an image." *DAR*, III, 21.

51. *DAR*, III, 23.

52. *TL*, I, 82. Nietzsche's use of the term "metaphor" is, of course, idiosyncratic and goes beyond its traditional conception, as simply an exchange based on a similarity, to a carrying over of meaning or transference (*Übertragung*).

53. *DAR*, VII, 59.

54. *DAR*, III, 25.

55. *DAR*, VII, 59.

56. De Man comments: "The outer, objective event in the world was supposed to determine the inner, conscious event as cause determines effect. It turns out however that what was assumed to be the objective, external cause is itself the result of an internal effect. What had been considered to be a cause, is, in fact, the effect of an effect, and what had been considered to be an effect can in its turn seem to function as the cause of its own cause." *Allegories of Reading*, 107.

57. *TL*, I, 86.

58. Klein, *Nietzsche and the Promise of Philosophy*, 68.

59. *BGE*, 21.

60. *TL*, I, 84.

61. In a *Nachlass* note written most probably between 1887 to 1888, Nietzsche observes that "linguistic means of expression are useless for expressing 'becoming'; it accords with our inevitable need to preserve ourselves to posit a crude world of stability, of 'things,' etc." (*WP*, 715). Some commentators think that this passage reveals Nietzsche's major charge against language, for example, Stephen Houlgate in *Hegel, Nietzsche and the Criticism of Metaphysics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 45. However, it is worth pointing out that Nietzsche's intention is not simply to abandon language altogether. Rather, he is emphatically claiming that language cannot capture completely the complexity of the world of becoming; both literal and metaphorical language are powerless before this complexity. Nietzsche goes beyond the Cratylean view that the only option in the face of language's limited power is the total abandonment of language and the lapsing into silence.

62. *WP*, 511.

63. *WP*, 513.

64. *GS*, 107.

65. *UW*, XXIX, 189.

66. *UW*, XXIX, 189.

67. See, for example, R. K. Gupta, "Freud and Schopenhauer," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 36:4 (1975), 721–28 and also Stanley Cavell, "Freud and Philosophy: A Fragment," *Critical Inquiry*, 13:2, The Trial(s) of Psychoanalysis (Winter 1987), 386–93.

68. *TL*, I, 85–86.

69. Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*, 70–78. Similar objections to Nietzsche's use of the metaphorical can be found in Lawrence M. Hinman, "Nietzsche, Metaphor, and Truth," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 43 (1982), 192; Houlgate, *Hegel, Nietzsche and the Criticism of Metaphysics*, 48; and J. P. Stern, "Nietzsche and the Idea of Metaphor," in *Nietzsche, Imagery and Thought: A Collection of Essays* (London: Mathuen, 1978), 74.

70. Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*, 63–125.

71. See Ibid., 106.

72. *TI*, III, 2.

73. See Klein, *Nietzsche and the Promise of Philosophy*, 90.

74. *TI*, III, 5.

75. Klein, *Nietzsche and the Promise of Philosophy*, 92.

76. *TI*, III, 2.

77. *TI*, III, 2.

78. See Georg Lukács, *The Destruction of Reason*, trans. Peter R. Palmer (London: Merlin Press, 1980) and Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, trans. Frederick G. Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1990).

79. Simon Jarvis, *Adorno: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), 13–14.

80. *HH*, II.2, 1.

81. *DPAL*, 299–300.

82. See *TI*, VI, 2.

83. For an interesting and convincing account of the difference between the German words *Kraft* and *Macht* as they are used in Nietzsche's works, see Jacob Golomb, "How to De-Nazify Nietzsche's Philosophical Anthropology?," in *Nietzsche, Godfather of Fascism? On the Uses and Abuses of a Philosophy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), 20–21. Also, for the two senses of the will to power as a "craving for worldly success" and as a deep "psychological drive," see Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974), 178–85.

84. *D*, 548.

85. See Wolfgang Welsch, "Nietzsche über Vernunft, 'Meine *wiederhergestellte* Vernunft,'" in *Rationalität und Prärationalität* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1998), 107–15.

86. Deleuze writes: "It is a matter if showing that the body surpasses the knowledge that we have of it, *and that thought likewise surpasses the consciousness that we have of it.*" *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley (San Francisco, CA: City Lights Books, 1988), 18.

87. *GS*, preface, 2.

88. Emden is here referring to the fact that Nietzsche was writing within the context of the second half of the nineteenth century, when "the problem of language and thought is embedded in a wider intellectual framework marked by the growing influence of something we can described as the 'sciences of the body,'" for instance, debates about "organic electricity" and "psychophysics." It was also during this time when "physiology" and "psychology" as distinct disciplines began to emerge in Germany. *Nietzsche on Language, Consciousness, and the Body*, 82–83.

89. Cf. Ibid., 87.

90. *WP*, 254.

91. See *BGE*, 21–22.

92. Martin Seel uses the phrase "cosmos of meanings" to refer to a Nietzschean conception of the normative character of language. See *Aesthetics of Appearing*, trans. John Farrell (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), 8–9.

93. Jacques Derrida, "White Mythology," in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 262–63.

94. Klein, *Nietzsche and the Promise of Philosophy*, 62.

95. See *TL*, I, 79.

96. *TL*, I, 79.

97. *TL*, I, 86.

98. *TL*, I, 84.

99. *TP*, 43.

100. *TP*, 43.

Adorno and the Revaluation of the Language of Philosophy

My recount in the previous chapter of Nietzsche's proposal of a reinscription of the metaphorical origin of language prefigures my discussion of Adorno's philosophy of language in more ways than one. Similar to Nietzsche and the early German Romantics, Adorno's preoccupation with language is gleaned from the context of his theory of knowledge, particularly, his critique of identity thinking. Both Nietzsche and Adorno tackle the problem of conceptual reification genealogically, that is, they both trace conceptual reification via an analysis of the structure of language. My aim in this chapter is to argue that Adorno's engagement with the nature of language is informed by an implicit attempt at a revaluation of the language of philosophy, a revaluation that has significant consequences for a global understanding of how we conceive the world of objects, in general, and how philosophy's configurative use of concepts could be seen as a way of disclosing uncharted possibilities, in particular.

The succeeding three sections will permit me to narrate this story. I, first, locate Adorno's theory of language within the context of the so-called linguistic turn in critical theory. I specifically argue that such linguistic turn is already found in Adorno's early writings on philosophy and language, as opposed to the conventional view that Jürgen Habermas's theory of communication marks a radical shift from early critical theory. At best, what Habermas offers is merely a shift in emphasis and not a total circumvention of Adorno's earlier project and, at its worst, the Habermasian position represses the most important aspects of Adorno's work—for instance, the downplaying of the role of "mimetic" language which unfortunately ignores the role of "nature" in knowledge formation. I offer a reconstruction of Habermas's dismissive critique of the early Frankfurt School, specifically the charge of "performative contradiction" against Adorno and Horkheimer in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. I consider this a necessary step not only

75

because it prefigures a discussion of Adorno's philosophy of language but because this critique of the early Frankfurt School is done against the backdrop of Habermas's rejection of the early German Romantics, especially their aestheticism. As a response to Habermas, I argue that his overemphasis on performative contradiction is a strategic leverage to justify the primacy of a formalized model of communication or deliberation. The unfortunate result is that critical theory is reduced to a "battlefield of theoretical leverages" which is counterintuitive to the practical goals of social philosophy. I wish to quickly note here that apart from Habermas's charge of performative contradiction, two more criticisms leveled against Adorno need to be addressed, namely, the Habermasian critique of Adorno's use of the subject-object model, echoed in particular by Maeve Cooke, and Rüdiger Bittner's rather disdainful criticism of Adorno's (and Horhkeimer's) use of theological language, charging the latter with religious foundationalism. In this chapter, I will only provide my response to Habermas's charge of performative contradiction, and I will provide my respective responses to Cooke and Bittner in chapter 4. My response to Habermas in the present chapter will allow me to reconstruct Adorno's analysis of the relationship between language and philosophy. I present Adorno's critical analysis of this relationship as his implicit theory of language. Like Nietzsche, Adorno exposes the Janus face of language, that is, its capacity to either "empower" or "imprison" thinking. For Adorno, the critical examination of the language of philosophy should be construed as an immanent feature of philosophy if philosophy is to survive. Such immanent critique not only reveals the genealogical element of conceptual reification but also reminds philosophy of its very own self-understanding and receptivity to the nonidentical. Moreover, I discuss the notion of "configurative language," a notion which could be interpreted as an Adornoian version of the reinscription of metaphor into conceptual language. Philosophy is able to redeem itself from conceptual reification by being more receptive to configurative language, that is, its ability to rethink the nonidentical by constantly reconfiguring the constellation of its concepts in order not to get fixated and to be able to live up to its imperative of accommodating new possibilities. Once more, Nietzsche and Adorno converge and demonstrate the spirit of the *Frühromantik* tradition inasmuch as they both propose philosophy's reorientation to the "aesthetic" dimension of experience, which is more receptive to alternative forms of expression, different ways of saying or describing things.

THE LINGUISTIC TURN IN CRITICAL THEORY: A BATTLEFIELD OF THEORETICAL LEVERAGES

Very much like Nietzsche, Adorno did not leave us with an explicitly systematic study of language. However, and again like Nietzsche, a philosophical

theory of language is implicitly interwoven in Adorno's writings. This is the case despite the fact that the latter emphatically insists in his "Theses on the Language of the Philosopher" that the key in understanding the presuppositions of philosophy, inasmuch as philosophy is indebted to language, is by a reassessment of the role of language in the enterprise of philosophy. While there is evidently a relatively rich body of literature on Adorno's engagement with language,[1] it is still true that his reception is largely that of the neo-Marxist persuasion which focuses on his critique of capitalist society and debated within the context of the theory-praxis relation. While the reading of Adorno that I offer is not inimical to the neo-Marxist appropriation, it is not farfetched to say that the neo-Marxist reading often ignores certain crucial aspects of his philosophy, especially his complex epistemology and his contributions to the philosophy of language. As such, it is not surprising that Habermas is usually regarded as the initiator of the so-called linguistic turn in critical theory. It is well known that Habermas is partly responsible for the current reception of critical theory, in general, and the appropriation of Adorno's work, in particular.[2] This reception is largely informed by Habermas's criticism of the first generation proponents of the Frankfurt School, especially the first generation's front men, Max Horkheimer and Adorno, that resulted in the recasting of critical theory.[3] Habermas reproaches Horkheimer and Adorno for ending in an irrecoverable stalemate in the prospects of critical theory. According to Habermas, "the program of early critical theory foundered not on this or that contingent circumstance, but from the exhaustion of the paradigm of the philosophy of consciousness."[4] The shift from the hard interdisciplinary materialism of the original Institute for Social Research in the 1930s to the immanent critique of instrumental reason instigated by Horkheimer and Adorno in the 1940s marked, for Habermas, the interruption of a more sustainable critical theory of society. Since, in the mind of Habermas, this shift led the original interdisciplinary materialist approach to an impasse, he argues that the only way to redeem critical theory is by another paradigm shift, that is, the shift to the "theory of communication."[5] By refocusing critical theory to the study of the "communicative" domain of language, Habermas abandons the "mimetic" character of language, which Adorno claimed to be the very core feature of language. To redeem critical theory from what Habermas thinks as the impasse reached by the exhaustion of the philosophy of consciousness, he proposes a redefinition of the normative critique of society, that is, by demonstrating the pragmatic and linguistic aspects of social relations. Instead of focusing on the subject-object relation (philosophy of consciousness), that is to say, the relation between the knower and the thing known, Habermas prioritizes intersubjective human relations made possible by *rational communicative language*. This theory of communication sets out to describe the immanent or the concrete structure of social interactions—a phenomenon opposed to the symbolic realm mediated by the

mimetic function of language—while, at the same time, it also maintains that immanent intersubjective communication is governed by a transcendental speech situation.[6] For Habermas, the obscurity of Adorno's notion of mimesis militates against the promise of a critical theory of society and causes the latter's theory of language to backfire, since the "negativity" of a mimetic relation between subject and object does not provide a sympathetic account of reason, on the one hand, and results in a self-contradiction, on the other, since even negative dialectics presupposes a theoretical discussion of the subject-object relation. Habermas abandons the emphasis on mimesis and shifts his emphasis to a counterfactual normative presupposition, the "ideal speech situation," wherein it is assumed that the other is a rational communicative agent that could share a common understanding of the issue at hand, making more plausible the rational coordination of action in response to the issue. Since Habermas's assumed normative standpoint presupposes an abandonment of the subject-object relation, his model of communication cannot account for or accommodate non-rational or nonhuman others. The abandonment of the subject-object relation runs the risk of a reductive model of language that is only able to account for intersubjective communication, while ignoring the fact that human existence goes beyond the intersubjective sphere and involves a broader sphere we call the "world." It is worthwhile to mention at this juncture that Adorno's revisionist account of the subject-object relation takes into consideration not only the communicative sphere but also the world of noncommunicative objects. I also wish to add that Habermas's insistence on communicative rationality is a movement away from the *Frühromantik* view of language, one which problematizes precisely the possibility of communication and, thereby, exploring the other possibilities of language, such as language's poetic and intimate proximity with nature. Important features of the early Romantic spirit—namely, poetic language, the poetic treatment of nature, freedom in writing style, irony, linguistic constitutivism, and an anti-foundationalism based on the problematic state of language—simply vanish in the work of Habermas.[7] Habermas is, of course, very critical of the Romantic tradition which he identifies with the works of the early Marx, Adorno, and Herbert Marcuse.[8] Moreover, it is not a secret that *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* is by far the most adversarial of Habermas's account of the early Frankfurt School, especially Adorno, whom he accuses of irresponsible aesthetic adventurism:

> By way of his *Negative Dialectics*, Adorno tries to circumscribe what cannot be presented discursively; and with his *Aesthetic Theory*, he seals the surrender of cognitive competency to art. The aesthetic experience that springs from romantic art . . . was radicalized in avant-garde art. Adorno summons this to be the single witness against a praxis that in the course of time has buried everything

once meant by reason [*Vernunft*] under its debris. Critique can only exhibit, as a kind of exercise, why that mimetic capacity slips out of our theoretical grasp and finds for the present a refuge in the most advanced works of art.[9]

In addition to Adorno's irresponsible aesthetic adventurism, he is also accused, together with Habermas's other philosophical opponents (e.g., Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Michel Foucault, and Derrida), of proto-fascism, irrationalism, pessimism, and the lack of practical solutions to the problem of miscommunication. Apart from the *Negative Dialectics* and *Aesthetic Theory*, it is perhaps the dramatic and unsystematic presentation of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* that first unsettles Habermas. More than the presentation, however, Habermas is worried that the scathing critique of rationality in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is an irresponsible response to the main practical mission of critical theory: the eradication of social injustice. According to Adorno and Horkheimer, rational discourse often leaves out talks about the pathological consequences of rationality; it is often silent about the destructive tendencies of reason—of how the hopes of the past have sunk "into a new kind of barbarism," that is, into fascism or the commodification of social relations. This is the dreaded unsayable that the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* openly declares in its first pages: that human rationality, instead of ushering in a truly human condition, has morphed into a modern form of barbarism. But this is precisely what is often neglected or downplayed, consciously or not, by its critics, for in saying the unsayable we often learn things about ourselves that we would rather not entertain.

In the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Adorno and Horkheimer paint a grim picture of the history of rationality. This gesture is often interpreted as the authors' enfeebling pessimism. It is also for this reason that Habermas comments, to the effect, that Adorno and Horkheimer have turned from "dark" to "black" writers because of their use of de Sade and Nietzsche to conceptualize the self-destructive tendency of the Enlightenment.[10] Or, in other words, that the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is the "blackest"[11] of Adorno and Horkheimer's books because it does not have anything positive or constructive to say about the Enlightenment. This specious observation is the basis of Habermas's criticism of the book, which appears more like a criticism of—more than anything else in the book and more than the authors themselves—the influence of Nietzsche. Habermas writes in his "Postscript" to the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*: "It is no longer Marx, but Nietzsche who points the way. It is no longer a theory of society saturated with history, but a radical critique of reason denouncing the union of reason and domination."[12] Habermas's tone is telling, as if the shift from Marx to Nietzsche meant an aberration and the revelation that, in its present form, reason successfully manifests itself as destructive domination is sheer trifle with grave political consequences.

Moreover, Habermas questions the "right" of Adorno and Horkheimer to criticize the Enlightenment project on the basis of the Enlightenment's self-destruction,[13] as if saying that Adorno and Horkheimer unwittingly threw out the baby along with the bathwater, and so they mount an "ideology critique that outstrips itself."[14] The philosophical position of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, for Habermas, "slides off into the groundless" or, in other words, are devoid of any normative content.[15] *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* is notorious for its scathing testament against Nietzsche as a "decadent" thinker who ushered in the postmodern sensibility, a sensibility which Habermas, echoing Lukács, equates with politico-philosophical "irra-tionalism."[16] Habermas associates this irrationalism with, as has been pointed our earlier, an irresponsible aesthetic adventurism or "aesthetic modernism," an attitude of "decentered subjectivity liberated from all constraints of cogni-tion and purposiveness and from all imperatives of labor and utility," in other words, anarchism—an attitude he quickly attributes to Étienne Mallarmé, Nietzsche, and Adorno.[17] In forcing the relation between aesthetics and politics, Habermas *strategically* formulates a strange rhetorical "*reductio ad hitlerum*" equation: aesthetics + politics = fascism. While we are not to ques-tion the overall intention of *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, which forms part of its author's noble effort at ideology critique and the recovery of reason via a continuation of the unfinished project of Enlightenment, the specific claims leveled at early critical theory are unnecessarily disputa-tious. Without question, Habermas's polemical treatment of Adorno and the early Frankfurt School has definitely put him and his project in a position from which his predecessors appear to have committed nothing more than a philosophical faux pas. Yet one wonders whether his theory of communica-tion actually squares off with the ideology critique offered in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* or, rather, adding up to his serious criticisms of Adorno and Horkheimer, end up as a controversy-mongering or even a self-aggrandizing tactic,[18] and paradoxically enough by Habermas who is known for cautioning us against "strategic action" or false communication. Unfortunately, in this battle for theoretical leverage, there is much that is sacrificed philosophically and practically. For example, the lumping of aesthetics and politics results in the unwitting abandonment of the philosophical force of the notion of the aesthetic altogether, ignoring one of the central theses of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*—that of the mimetic character of thought predisposed to non-identical thinking that is receptive to somatic, expressive, and communicative modes of relating to the environment. Habermas openly distinguishes between objective knowledge, derived from science and theoretical philosophy, and subjective human activities, derived from literary criticism, literature, and religion; in this quasi-Platonic move, the priority is given to objective knowl-edge.[19] This does not only resemble a purist appeal to objective knowledge

but also, in the process of deliberately downplaying the philosophical importance of the aesthetic, Habermas, according to Robert Hullot-Kentor, paradoxically separates himself from the German Enlightenment tradition and, I must add, most especially from the *Frühromantik* tradition, "especially since Kant, the defense of reason has been conceived not just as inseparable from but ultimately as dependent on the aesthetic."[20] While I have been arguing that Adorno and Nietzsche are rightful heirs to early German Romanticism, a tradition which sprung from the Kantian supposition of the inextricable relation between reason and the aesthetic, it is unfortunate that, as a commonly regarded mouthpiece of Kant, Habermas understates the significance of the Kantian preoccupation with the aesthetic.

With Habermas, the gesture of warning turns into a hypostasized paranoia, in the guise of theoretical sophistication and precision, that disavows the possibility of redemption precisely from the standpoint of crisis, distress, contingency, ambivalence, and the aporetic nature of language. It is from the standpoint of "crisis"—or what Adorno refers to as "the antagonistic entirety" or "the wrong state of things"[21]—where any form of critical theory of society consciously emanates.[22] Perhaps the most unfortunate and vexing spin-off of this "battlefield of endless controversies" which, anyway, would end up in irresolvable antinomies (ala Kant) is the forced decision to choose between Adorno and Habermas, an either/or situation issued at the expense of philosophical creativity, a notion of creativity that should not be confused with or reduced to political adventurism. The unfortunate consequence of the *reductio ad hitlerum* is that it reduces the weight and dynamism that Adorno ascribes to aesthetic experience to a mere political caricature. Owing to his observation of the *bad* influence of Nietzsche, more precisely of irresponsible aestheticism, on Adorno and Horkheimer, Habermas further identifies several problems in the theoretical structure of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*: the lack of cognitive and normative grounding of the authors' arguments, the disconcerting "performative contradiction" in the method, and the absence of a prescriptive practical solution.

Habermas claims that a politically "risky" narrative of the human domination of nature is introduced in the book. The exaggerated picture of the pitfalls of human rationality is seen not only as a performance of methodological contradiction but also a practically irresponsible political gesture, on account of its reductive image of human progress. To put it succinctly, Habermas thinks that Adorno is guilty of a "totalizing self-critique of reason" that "gets caught up in a performative contradiction since subject-centered reason can be convicted of being authoritarian in nature only by having recourse to its own tools."[23] Habermas warns that similar to Nietzsche's risky diagnosis of nihilism, Adorno and Horkheimer "bring abstractions and simplifications into the bargain" that make their own diagnosis of ideology, the dark side

of reason, no less risky.[24] By abstractions and simplifications, Habermas is referring to, on the one hand, the fictionalized presentation of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, a worry which he also feels towards the works of Nietzsche and the ones he regards as poststructuralists, like Foucault and Derrida. On the other hand, Habermas assumes that they are abstractions and simplifications, and hence politically risky, inasmuch as they are not exactly grounded in the normative structures that Habermas has in mind, that is, the primacy of intersubjective validity testing as a way of resolving conflict.[25] According to Martin Jay, the primacy of intersubjective validity is one of the bases of Habermas's *strategic* use—that is, to gain theoretical leverage—of "performative contradiction" as a foil against his opponents, in this case, Nietzsche, the early Frankfurt School, and the poststructuralists. The charge of performative contradiction is used by Habermas to demonstrate the contradictions in the line of argumentation of his opponents, for example Adorno and Horkheimer who present a totalizing critique of reason without acknowledging that such critique is normatively based on a particular logic that presupposes the use of reason. Moreover, Habermas suggests that such performatively contradictory statements are contradictory since they are not based on an earnest attempt to "communicate" valid claims based on intersubjective exchange. In other words, contradictions, for Habermas, rest more on intersubjective miscommunication than on the ontological or structural level.[26] He attempts to propose the normative primacy of communication at the expense of his opponents, whom he thinks are not communicating clearly enough because their statements are not based on actual intersubjective exchange, but, rather, on subjective drivels—hence, they are abstract, simplistic, and risky.

This preemptive move against risk is, however, misleading. Firstly, Habermas himself is guilty of simplifying Nietzsche's diagnosis of nihilism, while warning us of its political ramifications, he ignores the fact that it was not the notion of nihilism that the German fascists appropriated but, rather, the notion of the will to power; for even in the most fundamental Nietzschean interpretation, fascism itself is a nihilistic attitude which, of course, the fascists would not admit to themselves.[27] In any case, we can observe that Habermas is resolved in overstressing the political adventurism of Nietzsche's fascist and neoconservative readers,[28] but what is forfeited here is a treatment of Nietzsche's ideas at a deeper philosophical level. Despite his emphasis on the normativity of communication, Habermas leaves very little room, if at all, for philosophical dialogue or a possible rapprochement. Tracy B. Strong and Frank Andreas Sposito point out that the treatment of philosophers (from Nietzsche, Foucault, Bataille, Adorno, Horkheimer, down to Derrida) offered in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, despite having the characteristics of lucidity and comprehensiveness, is marked by a particular sense of disdain—"an intimation of naiveté, as if his [Habermas]

subjects did not know that they were playing with something dangerous . . . that there is a dark violence to humankind to which these writers . . . are *apprentis sorciers*."[29] The upshot of this is that one can conveniently conclude that the *only* logical consequence of the works of these philosophers is one of catastrophic political paralysis, inasmuch as they are seen too *childish* and lacked the perspicacity to buttress their claims with acceptable normative standards. For Habermas, the skeptical stance against normative standards, or what he would sometimes call "value skepticism,"[30] is traceable back to Nietzsche whose critique of modernity comes by way of unmasking the perversion of the will to power in reason which "sets itself outside the horizon of reason."[31] Nietzsche, according to Habermas, has perfected the skeptical stance, for he shakes "his head over philosophical argumentation as though he were witnessing the unintelligible rites of a strange tribe."[32] This characterization of skepticism is quite strange and, as will be shown shortly, misses the mark of the critical force of Nietzsche's and Adorno's skepticism and philosophical skepticism as a whole. Furthermore, since Habermas can only perceive Nietzsche as a nihilist in the pejorative sense (a characterization that goes against everything that Nietzsche himself stood for), a nihilistic value is ascribed to philosophical skepticism, thereby extending the nihilistic charge to Adorno and the rest of the early Frankfurt School.

The absence of normative standards, which for Habermas are supposed to be standards or "values" for rational intersubjective deliberation, is a practical impediment towards the proper coordination of discourse ethics since it tends towards ethical relativism understood in terms of subjectivism.[33] "Value skepticism," the *other* of discourse ethics, entails the death of philosophy (hence, of morality) and historically results in what Kant calls *Schwärmerei* (enthusiasm or excessive sentiment).[34] We can respond to this Habermasian worry by rehearsing the response of Strong and Sposito,[35] which they make by invoking none other than the very first words of Kant's preface to the *Critique of Pure Reason* that initiate us to the fundamental premise of critical philosophy: "Human reason has this peculiar fate that in one species of its knowledge it is burdened by questions which, as prescribed by the very nature of reason itself, it is not able to ignore, but which, as transcending all its powers, it is also not able to answer."[36] What Kant's statement registers is an "ambivalence" that is conditioned by thinking itself. That thinking is torn between the insistent demand of thought to answer questions that elude its very own powers, on the one hand, and the inability to empirically answer the same questions perhaps on account of thinking's very own powerlessness, on the other hand. Or, as Strong and Sposito maintain, that thinking is torn between "skepticism" and "enthusiasm,"[37] an ambivalence in the very act of thinking itself. While this upsets Habermas, Kant and the German Romantics that followed after him gracefully accepted this intrinsic tension within

thought and construed it as constitutive of human knowledge itself. Neither skepticism nor enthusiasm is abandoned, but, rather, proposing a coalescence of these two tendencies of reason, to steer reason between these two rocks.[38] In other words, this epistemic ambivalence allows the human being to *wander* and lose himself in nature, like Dionysus, but almost simultaneously, the human being maintains a kind of *measured composure* that takes him back to himself, like Apollo. Adorno's radicalized notion of mimesis or thinking's reorientation to the nonidentical precisely falls under the rubric of this epistemic ambivalence: the symbiotic or dialectical exchange between concept and object or, to put it differently, the exchange between art and philosophy, proposed in *Aesthetic Theory*, opens up one to the other, one (art) assuming the form of the other, and one (philosophy) maintaining a deferential distance to the other.

I would like to follow further the proposal of Strong and Sposito that a radical reading of this Kantian and, I would add, Romantic insight should be made to caution us against the Habermasian move of downplaying the philosophical or epistemic status of other discourses, such as literature or poetry, that maintain the tension between the "comprehensible" and the "uncomprehended."[39] The challenge for philosophy posted by this tension—which is already taken up by the early German Romantics—is the unabating reflection on the relation between philosophical language and poetic language. The supposition that skepticism (value skepticism included) necessarily results in irrationalism is simply misleading, since knowledge or the human propensity towards knowledge is conditioned by both the skeptical and enthusiastic tendencies of reason. And if such acts of skepticism lead to exaggerations and outlandish claims, or come in the form of unbridled dithyrambs, "They may just have found us on a road in knowledge,"[40] or, as Adorno himself puts it in "Opinion Delusion Society": "All thinking is exaggeration, in so far as every thought that is one at all goes beyond its confirmation by the given facts."[41] If we radically follow the logic of this Kantian ambivalence, then Habermas's criticism of both Nietzsche and Adorno, of unmasking the dialectics of Enlightenment "outside the horizon of reason" loses its credibility because it denies the capacity of reason to exaggerate beyond the logics of the common and banal, exaggerations that may lead us on a road to a better, albeit sometimes more painful, understanding of ourselves and our surroundings. The suppression of this better half of reason is anathema to literature or poetry, indeed to mimetic practices that maintain the nonidentical in thought. It is hasty on the part of Habermas to assume that an emphasis on the aesthetic dimension of experience would rid of experience's communicative dimension. Of course, Habermas does not deny the existence of aesthetic experience, but he does unnecessarily make a stark opposition between the two, specifically downplaying the

centrality of mimesis in the formation of worldviews. Again, the point of Adorno's refusal to accept a definitive communicative logic, and instead opening up philosophical discourse to a variety of expressions or redescriptions, is not to totally deny the possibility of communication, but, rather, the "recognition that the current social reality . . . renders abnormal the state of performative consistency Habermas wants to instantiate."[42] This goes beyond Habermas's supposition that contradiction is simply linguistic-base and could be resolved via proper communication; as Martin Jay writes in relation to this:

> What speech act theorists like to call the "happy" or "felicitious" outcome of illocutionary acts may be hard to come by in a world not conducive to fulfilling other kinds of happiness. And a fortiori, the intersubjective overcoming of contradiction is even less likely to occur.[43]

What Jay is alluding to here is the persistence of contradiction in a society marred by the wrong state of things. This is not to say that Habermas is simply ignoring the fact that contradictions indeed exist; however, he is wrong to insist that they only happen at the level of intersubjective communication. For instance, in times of natural disasters (massive flooding, earthquakes, fire, etc.) the ensuing confusion is not simply caused by miscommunication alone, but surely the confusion could be worsen, for instance, by faulty judgments or announcements which are meant to deceive the people in order to control panic and reinstall order. There is also a dimension of intersubjectivity that the Habermasian model appears to ignore, that is, the almost instinctual and selfless drive "to put others before oneself" in times of crises which is not simply reducible to sheer heroism or naïve sympathy—but this curious phenomenon surely involves some form of subjective agency which is not always prefigured by formal intersubjective communication. I hasten to add that this might be an ambiguous, yet a more persuasive source of our utopian hopes.

   Given the above response to Habermas's characterization of Adorno's (and Nietzsche's) project, I believe that Habermas's critique is unfair. In order to strengthen this response, it is perhaps best to reconstruct Adorno's philosophy of language in order to find out why the Habermasian interpretation is questionable. Albeit nuanced, Adorno's insights on language remain implicit. Albrecht Wellmer convincingly notes:

> We might speak of an implicit language philosophy or theory of rationality in Adorno. But whatever we decide to call it, I doubt whether the reformulation of Critical Theory in terms of language pragmatics is sufficient to supersede this implicit philosophy of Adorno's.[44]

Wellmer is perhaps referring to two things: (1) that the linguistic turn in critical theory initiated by Habermas does not acknowledge indebtedness to Adorno and (2) that Habermas's attempt at circumventing first generation critical theory was not necessary precisely because his purported linguistic turn could be seen as a continuation rather than a total break from linguistic issues already dealt with by Adorno. It could be said, however, that it was necessary for Habermas to skirt around a notion of mimesis because such notion complicates a supposedly amenable theory of rational communication. While Habermas considers the mimetic character of language as a hindrance to communication and, hence, he ends up juxtaposing the two as if they were binary opposites, the same could not be said of Adorno. Adorno's emphasis on the mimetic character of language does not aim at abandoning the possibility of rational communication but, rather, challenges and complicates it. Hence, it is misleading to conclude, like Habermas does, that Adorno completely abandons a theory of rationality; however, his insights about communicative rationality are precipitated by his general theory of language which, as Wellmer observes, remains a "buried treasure"[45] in Adorno's oeuvre. While Habermas supposes that Adorno's lack of emphasis on communicative rationality is an oversight on the part of the latter, a closer inspection of Adorno's philosophy of language would, however, reveal that there is a more serious oversight, to say the least, on the part of Habermas because he is too quick to ignore the significance of Adorno's predisposition towards a critique of how thought is arrested by our use of language. In other words, what Adorno is proposing is very similar to Nietzsche's proposal intimated in the previous chapter: that the best possible way for philosophy to understand the nature of conceptual reification is via a serious scrutiny of how we use language and how it functions in knowledge formation. More specifically, for Adorno, we could trace the roots of "identity thinking" not in language per se, but in the way we use language to create an acceptable or controllable picture of the world. While Habermas's shift to communicative theory downplays the role played by an analysis of representation, Adorno situates a theory of representation at the center of his critique of conceptual language. This strategy problematizes not only communicative rationality but, ultimately, the language of philosophy as well.

In recent years, there has been another paradigm shift in critical theory, that is, the shift from communicative theory to the "theory of recognition" championed by Axel Honneth, a former student of Habermas. The theory of recognition can be roughly described as the attempt to situate "social theory on the very level of the immanent normativity of social action and interaction."[46] Honneth follows the logic of Habermas's recasting of Frankfurt School critical theory by going beyond the subject-object line and emphasizing the "intersubjective" and "communicative" aspects of social

reproduction. Honneth goes beyond Habermas, however, by rejecting the "pragmatic-linguistic" dimension of communicative theory, as the former asserts that such pragmatic interpretation of communication results in the "reified distinction between material and social reproduction." Honneth insists on the normative features of recognition as transcendental conditions for social interaction; the undermining of these factors precipitates the emergence of individual and social pathologies.[47] Moreover, for a different reason from that of Habermas's, Honneth is critical of Adorno for the latter's failure to emphasize the role of social agents as normative participants in the struggle for recognition. Nevertheless, there has been quite recently a change in the way Honneth reads the first-generation Frankfurt School, especially the works of Adorno. In more recent essays from the past decade or so, Honneth had become more sympathetic to Adorno.[48] In his rereading of Adorno, however, Honneth neither focuses on Adorno's theory of language nor does he aim to rehabilitate the subject-object relation, but, rather, he presents a revisionist reading of Adorno, particularly the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, which aims to defend a "world disclosive" model of critique. Despite the fact that Honneth does not focus on Adorno's philosophy of language, his revised treatment of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, in contradistinction to Habermas, puts Honneth in a better position to reconsider the neglected, yet very crucial, aspects of Adorno's epistemology and theory of language; in particular, the disclosive aspect of Adorno's revaluation of the language of philosophy.

LANGUAGE AND THE IMMANENT
CRITIQUE OF PHILOSOPHY

Adorno's thoughts on language are thematically wide-ranging, which contributes to the difficulty of offering a definitive and succinct presentation that could be called a "philosophy of language." My aim, however, is not to present a definitive reconstruction of Adorno's reflections on language, but it is necessary to be succinct for my own purposes. My reconstruction will, therefore, be guided by one very general theme, which I deem to be the most important aspect of Adorno's critique of language: the relationship between language and philosophy.

   This reconstruction is based on a couple of early essays of Adorno, namely, "*Thesen über die Sprache des Philosophen*" ("Theses on the Language of the Philosopher," written in the 1930s) and "*Die Aktualität der Philosophie*" ("The Actuality of Philosophy," a speech delivered in 1931), as well as the late radio lecture, "*Wozu noch Philosophie*" ("Why still Philosophy," which appeared in print in 1962). The titles of these pieces are, themselves, decisive because they focus precisely on the aforementioned guiding theme:

language's relation to philosophy. Language is not merely a component of thought, but something that is inextricably related to how thinking functions. Language is not only a reflection or analogue of thought but essentially partly determines how we process our claims about the world. By *process* I am referring to the means by which we negotiate with "objective" reality and, concomitantly, how these means of negotiation (rational communication being one) are an apparatus that pathologically fulfils our compulsion towards identity thinking—a process of reified thought in modern capitalist societies, whereby objects and humans are subsumed under abstract concepts, undermining individuality and genuine human interaction. In other words, Adorno views the language-thought process as largely contributing to the process of reification. Adorno is specifically attentive to the reificatory tendency of language. It must be said, however, that he does not criticize language to simply leave it on the lurch. Rather, Adorno's observations on language are set out to demonstrate the Janus face of language: the "imprisonment-empowerment" character of language use. As will become evident later, Adorno's analysis has consequences for philosophy, particularly, the self-understanding of philosophy. Following Wellmer's lead, reconstructing a philosophy of language from the aforementioned essays will aid in digging up Adorno's hidden treasure: a critical philosophy of language that informs his works at a subterranean level and, as such, functions as an immanent critique of philosophy itself. Naturally, this reconstruction attempts to offset the Habermasian position, yet again it is not necessarily an opposition in diametrical terms. However, it will be presented as a counterclaim against Habermas's misleading characterization of Adorno's philosophy as a representative of the philosophy of consciousness.

Being an early piece of work, the "Theses on the Language of the Philosopher" plays a very seminal role in the formulation of Adorno's more mature writings. Similar to Nietzsche and the early German Romantics, Adorno's early musings on language profoundly shaped his general conception, critique, and reconceptualization of ontology and epistemology. At the end of this chapter, it should be clearer why, for Adorno, philosophy should take its own language seriously. Philosophy's awareness of its inextricable relation to language is in itself a form of philosophical praxis which is at the core of the "normativity of the new" understood as self-reflexive critique.

The problem of modernity is an intricately complex subject matter and, as such, spawns a method of analysis that is even more complicated. Adorno, however, finds a focal point in his critique of modernity by making language his point of departure. Again to rehearse Adorno's claim: "All philosophical critique is today possible as the critique of language."[49] We should follow Adorno in endorsing this statement, and we should make it the guiding spirit

of our query on the relationship between language and philosophy. Already in this statement is a strong indication that Adorno took the problem of language seriously and that this seriousness extends towards his very own conception of a philosophy oriented in the normativity of the new. A key to understanding the language-philosophy relation is to first unlock Adorno's cryptic statement. Samir Gandesha observes that one possible explanation is by looking at Adorno's connection with Viennese modernism, specifically the similarity between Adorno's philosophy of language and that of Ludwig Wittgenstein.[50] Gandesha notes:

> Adorno's own understanding of philosophy could be seen . . . as motivated by something like the attack in the *Tractatus* on how, just as clothes disguise the body, "language disguises the thought" that "all philosophy is critique of language" . . . Adorno's statement could be taken as aiming, in an antithetical way, at a conception of critique as a form of "*Destruktion*," not of the history of Being per se but rather as the attempt to think "conceptually beyond the concept."[51]

Indeed, in "Actuality of Philosophy," Adorno is not optimistic about the classical philosophical presupposition "that the power of thought is sufficient to grasp the totality of the real."[52] He surmises that if philosophy continues to be the handmaiden of this rationalist prejudice, then philosophy, he writes, "only veils reality and eternalizes its present condition"[53] because it is illusory to presume the possibility of grasping the essence of reality in a *purist* manner in a situation where "the order and form" of reality "suppresses every claim to reason."[54] Adorno's claim has both epistemological and political implications. On the one hand, akin to Nietzsche, Adorno is referring to the bad faith of philosophy because it still believes that its language has privileged access to the ontological structure of reality. On the other hand, reality also refers to the social and political sphere which, for Adorno, is the sphere of the wrong state of things, wherein crisis is the order and form of reality that gets dissimulated via the proliferation of a philosophical jargon of Being. In this context, philosophical jargon veils the true order and form of reality and further eternalizes it as an "antagonistic entirety." For Adorno, the only proper way to respond to this totalizing antagonism of the real is by unveiling its true order and form as "wrong," that is, as crisis. In this context, Adorno maintains that "Philosophical language transcends dialectically in that the contradiction between truth and thought becomes self-conscious."[55] In a very radical sense, Adorno is insisting here that the language of philosophy must shift from the purity of the jargon of Being to a dialectical language that discloses the totalizing antagonism of the real. In this sense, "dialectics is the ontology of the wrong state of things."[56] Adorno provides an example of a style of philosophizing which, despite its self-proclaimed

radical deconstruction of the history of metaphysics, remains within the pur-
ist tradition:

> The question of being (*Sein*) itself . . . assumes as the possibility of its answer
> that being itself is appropriate to thought and available to it, that the idea of
> existing being (*das Seienden*) can be examined. . . . The idea of being had
> become powerless in philosophy; it is nothing more than an empty form-princi-
> ple whose archaic dignity helps to cover any content whatsoever.[57]

It is obvious from the quotation that Adorno is referring specifically to
Heidegger and his relentless quest for the meaning of Being. Adorno observes
that Heidegger presupposes the concept of Being as a necessary condition for
the proper understanding of reality. In the *Jargon of Authenticity*, which is
Adorno's book-length critique of Heideggerian jargon, he writes:

> The jargon takes over this transcendence destructively and consigns it to its own
> chatter. . . . When it dresses empirical words with aura, it exaggerates general
> concepts and ideas of philosophy—as for instance the concept of being—so
> grossly that their conceptual essence, the mediation through the thinking sub-
> ject, disappears completely under the varnish. Then these terms lure us on as if
> they were the most concrete terms.[58]

Adorno's complaint is not so much about Heidegger's philosophy as it is
about the adoption and vulgarization of his enigmatic philosophical jargon by
his followers. Adorno is concerned that the mysticism of a vulgarized "*jargon
der eigentlichkeit*" actually has political consequences as it could lend sup-
port to an ideological conception of subjectivity, a kind of mythologization
of the subject, apart from what I already mentioned above as the jargon's dis-
simulation of the wrong state of things. Moreover, Adorno wishes to empha-
size that the "concept of Being" is indeed merely a "concept," and as such is
in some way inert, even dead. Therefore, for Adorno, the concept of Being
is nothing more than a philosophical scaffolding, allegedly circumventing
former idealist systems via *phenomenological* means, that denies the function
(consciously or not) of preempting and subsuming the actuality of the real.
Adorno writes in "The Actuality of Philosophy":

> The fullness of the real, as totality, does not let itself be subsumed under the idea
> of Being which might allocate meaning to it; nor can the idea of existing being
> be built up out of elements of reality. It [the idea of being] is lost for philosophy,
> and thereby its claim to the totality of the real is struck at its source.[59]

Adorno tries to show how fundamental ontology fails on its very own
terms,[60] for the "binding order of being" is nothing more than the same

"*autonome ratio*" of the idealists clothed in "trans-subjective" language.[61] This, Adorno laments, is "nothing more than a poor ornamental cover for faulty thinking"[62] which would make the "liquidation of philosophy" into separate sciences sound like a more favorable development. It could, of course, be debated whether Adorno got Heidegger right; since Heidegger is not simply concerned with Being per se, but, rather, with the ontological background that makes the intelligibility of a world of equipmental items (*Zuhandene*) possible. Regardless of the imprecision of Adorno's critique of Heidegger, it is perhaps safe to assume that Adorno's critique is actually directed towards idealist philosophy and, rightly or wrongly, he interprets the philosophical discourse of Being as a representative of the idealist stance.[63] It is important to note that Adorno does not advocate the wholesale liquidation of philosophy, but rather the liquidation of a particular type or attitude of philosophizing. He argues that there is still a fundamental difference between philosophy and the natural sciences with regard to the manner by which each interprets reality.

> Philosophy distinguishes itself from science not by a higher level of generality, as the banal view still today assumes, nor through the abstractness of its categories nor through the nature of its materials. The central difference lies far more in that the separate sciences accept their findings, at least their final and deepest findings, as indestructible and static, whereas philosophy perceives the first findings which it lights upon as a sign that needs unriddling. Plainly put: the idea of science (*Wissenschaft*) is research; that of philosophy is interpretation.[64]

"Interpretation," in this light, could also mean the mimetic character of philosophical language. This notion of philosophy's main task as "interpretation" is compatible with Nietzsche's metaphorical view of knowledge formation and valuation. Interpretation is central to philosophy because we do not have direct access to the external world of objects save our mediatory, metaphorical linguistic apparatus. Within the context of mimesis, interpretation is philosophy's receptivity to the nonidentical structure of reality. However, Adorno thinks that philosophy, because of its compulsion towards objective truth and its desire to resemble the natural sciences, is oblivious of the function of interpretation; as such, philosophy's interpretive or mimetic receptivity has fallen into disrepute. Adorno is nevertheless also critical of the positivistic approach of the so-called analytic philosophers who, in their attempt to circumvent the meaninglessness of traditional metaphysics and epistemology (and here Adorno is referring to the tradition inaugurated by the Vienna Circle otherwise known as the Logical Positivists), err by taking as their "standard of truth the contingently given division of labor, that between the sciences and social praxis . . . and allows no theory that could reveal the division of labor to be itself derivative and mediated and thus strip it of its false authority."[65] The

representatives of logical positivism, Adorno observes, consider this philo-sophical line of thinking to be "the most rigorous faculty of enlightenment, adequate to the so-called technical-scientific age," and far superior to ways of thinking which are deemed "metaphysical" or "mythological."[66] Moreover, Adorno mockingly points out, the "fanatics of logical tidiness" in their unwav-ering support for logical positivism seem to be oblivious to the "mechanism for its own self-legitimation," that is to say, the circularity of philosophy "equating itself with what should in fact first be illuminated by philosophy."[67] Intellectual tyranny in our day, according to Adorno, is championed by two prevailing philosophical tendencies: one is "the ontological intimidation not to think anything that is not pure" and the other is "the scientific intimidation not to think anything that is not 'connected' to the corpus of findings recognized as scientifically valid."[68] The fear that these two types of intellectual tyranny breed among us prohibits us from thinking beyond the frameworks of sheer *purity* and/or absolute *logic*. Phenomenologists and logical positivists alike, according to Adorno, ignore the "primacy of organized method" and, as a result, end up in conceptual "fetishes" or "homemade concepts instead of their longed-for things."[69] What this means for Adorno is the apparent demise of philosophy because it entails the obsolescence of philosophical "self-reflec-tion." Adorno intimates that "thought has been intimidated and no longer dares raise itself, not even in fundamental ontology's devotional submissiveness to Being."[70] But what is it exactly that these movements fail to reflect upon? Given that the notions of purity and logical necessity are still grounded in an obsessive compulsion towards "truth," Adorno claims that there is a failure in these movements to reflect on the "untruth" of the totality that they purport to demystify. Moreover, the blinding arrogance of philosophy prohibits it from recognizing the "untruth" of its very own locutions. Adorno continues in "Why Still Philosophy":

> Philosophy must come to know, without mitigation, why the world—which could be paradise here and now—can become hell itself tomorrow. Such knowl-edge would indeed truly be philosophy. It would be anachronistic to abolish it for the sake of a praxis that at this historical moment would inevitably eternalize precisely the present state of the world, the very critique of which is the concern of philosophy. Praxis whose purpose is to produce a rational and politically mature humanity, remains under the spell of disaster unless it has a theory that can think the totality in its untruth.[71]

Here Adorno wishes to point at the dialectical relation between philoso-phy and the milieu within which it is supposed to operate. It does seem that he wants to highlight the irony that, despite the phenomenologists' mus-ings on historicity, and the sheer empiricism of the logical positivists, these

championing trends are in bad faith since they remain insulated within their very own claims to philosophical truth. In other words, they are not sensitive to the profound dialectical influence of historico-material conditions on thought and they do not factor in normative societal structures that determine thinking, for example, the normativity of the philosophical tradition. Obviously, Adorno is arguing here that "historical critique" and "immanent critique" are wanting in these movements. From this, Adorno pushes for a revaluation of the philosophic sensibility by redeeming philosophy from its own bad faith. A new philosophic sensibility, Adorno urges, "should not be a warmed-over idealism but rather must incorporate societal and political reality and its dynamic."[72] It is clear that such a philosophy resists the gratuitous conceit of closed philosophical systems that force reality to conform to homemade conceptual categories, categories that end up deforming, or "falsifying" as Nietzsche puts it, rather than disclosing the real, and most of the time, wrong state of things. Adorno envisions a type of

> thinking that has no mental sanctuary, no illusion of an inner realm, and that acknowledges its lack of function and power can perhaps catch a glimpse of an order of the possible and the nonexistent, where human beings and things each would be in their rightful place.[73]

This is the new philosophic sensibility that Adorno envisions. It is a type of thinking that does not assume its own legitimation, that is to say, its own "self-justification by self-positing";[74] it should acknowledge its uselessness and untruth amid the fast-changing world, thereby opening itself to *new* forms of framing the world, while, at the same time, adamantly conscious of the temporary nature of conceptual frameworks. This "powerlessness" of philosophy—its *negativity*—should serve as a "corrective" to its very own inherited means of self-justification, its own illusion of royalty, the idea of *philosophia perennis*. Adorno notes, however, that even before the emergence of Heideggerian ontology and logical positivism, the classical conception of philosophy as first philosophy has already been questioned and put into proper perspective by Hegel: "Philosophy is its own time comprehended in thoughts."[75] This definition of philosophy, Adorno adds, has gained "insight into the temporal nucleus of truth" and shows how philosophy is a kind of reflection of totality which is only possible if such thinking expresses "its own stage of consciousness as a necessary aspect of totality, at the same time also expressed the totality."[76] What this means is that thinking can only be earnest when it is conscious of its very own rootedness in its own self-referentiality, that is, its own elliptical nature. This further entails the self-consciousness of a kind of thinking that acknowledges its own "untruth," that this untruth or incompleteness is part of the

expression of a totality. Adorno maintains that a new type of philosophy should advance from the bad faith of closed systems by reflecting on the immanent nature of its archaic categories and by incorporating an awareness of its perpetual incompleteness, thereby blowing up the sanctuary of identity thinking and puncturing the bubble of the language of fundamental ontology. As such, philosophy opens itself to the possibility of nonidentity thinking or the thinking of difference.[77] Ultimately, this shift from close thinking to open thinking entails a prognosis and revaluation of philosophical language.

The revaluation of the language of philosophy entails, a la Heidegger and Derrida, a "*Destruktion*," as Gandesha points out, of the history of Western philosophy.[78] Specifically for Adorno this means the deconstruction of the language of Western philosophy. In stark contrast to the archaic concern of traditional philosophy from Plato to Hegel—the over-valorization of the concept or, in one word, idealism—Adorno outlines in *Negative Dialectics* what he thinks as the immanent concern of philosophy today: the overcoming of idealism. This is a paradoxical challenge for philosophy, since it is itself entangled within the contradictoriness of its tradition, that is, of its own language.

There is a tension between philosophy's use of concepts and the nature of concepts itself. The "naiveté that ails" philosophy consists partly in its obsession with the *idea*, the very motivation of conceptual thinking, and partly in its obliviousness to the arbitrary and reifying nature of concepts. Ever since the Ancient Greeks broke away from mythical language and invented the notion that wisdom is the knowledge of first principles, philosophy's struggle, as we observe its history, has been the preservation of this archaic assumption—it desperately insulates itself from the dynamism of objective or material reality while, *nolens volens*, still dialectically determined by such reality. At the same time, the cognition or apprehension of such material reality depends on the employment of concepts while perpetually *escaping* these concepts. The only redemption available for philosophy, according to Adorno, is the "disenchantment of the concept." He writes:

> All concepts . . . refer to nonconceptualities, because concepts on their part are moments of the reality that requires their formation, primarily for the control of nature. . . . Such a semblance of being-in-itself is conferred upon it by motion that exempts it from reality, to which it is harnessed in turn.[79]

Adorno is here almost repeating Nietzsche's pragmatic conception of "voluntary lies." Adorno wants to point out that concepts are useful for philosophy; as a matter of fact, philosophy is only possible via the concept.

"Necessity compels philosophy to operate with concepts," Adorno declares, "but this necessity must not be turned into the virtue of their priority."[80] The necessity of using concepts to illustrate reality should not reduce reality into mere concepts. Concepts attempt to illustrate what are, in a manner of speaking, diametrically opposed to them—"non-conceptualities" or concrete objects. Adorno, moreover, interestingly points out, "Initially, such concepts as that of 'being' at the start of Hegel's *Logic* emphatically means nonconceptualities . . . the inclusion of nonconceptuality in their meaning makes it tendentially their equal and thus keeps them trapped within themselves."[81]

This is how Adorno would depict the way "concept fetishism" in philosophy begins. It is through the entanglement of the object with the conceptual image or conceptual model used to represent the object that it is reduced or infused within the image or model. As a result of this infusion, object and concept become one or, to put it another way, the object becomes the concept. The invention of "meaning" is always an arbitrary way of enframing the object; the actuality or totality of the object always escapes the meaning enframed in the concept. Concept fetishism ensues when the concept is given priority over the object. In effect, in accounting for the totality of the object, instead of elucidating the reality of the object, the object is effaced. It should be clear, however, that instead of arguing for the wholesale abandonment of the concept, what Adorno proposes is an awareness of the stark fundamental difference between concept and object. To be aware of the disparity between concept and object "is to be able to get rid of concept fetishism."[82] Philosophy's survival, therefore, profoundly depends on this awareness, its new task is its very own self-reflection—the reflection of the nonconceptuality of objects.

It is when concepts become equal to objects that reification takes place, more specifically, when concepts take the place of objects.[83] The challenge that philosophy will have to face, that is to say its new normative imperative, is the use of concepts in unsealing "the nonconceptual with concepts, without making it their equal."[84] With Adorno's meta-philosophical critique of idealist philosophy, he is doing something very similar to Nietzsche's critique of the prejudices of the philosophers in *Beyond Good and Evil*.[85] As a matter of fact, in *Against Epistemology*,[86] Adorno directly quotes the following passage from Nietzsche's *Twilight of the Idols*:

> The other idiosyncrasy of the philosophers is no less dangerous; it consists in confusing the last and the first. They place that which comes at the end-unfortunately! for it ought not to come at all!-namely, the "highest concepts," which means the most general, the emptiest concepts, the last smoke of evaporating reality, in the beginning, as the beginning.[87]

Through the passage above which Adorno cites, it becomes clear that Adorno's critique of the language of philosophy is informed by what Nietzsche refers to as the "prejudice" or "idiosyncrasy" of philosophers—in other words, their metaphysical bias which follows from "confusing the last and the first." More specifically, the metaphysical bias is grounded in the priority given to concepts over objects, thereby confusing concepts to be more real than objects, whereas concepts, for both Nietzsche and Adorno, are "the last smoke of evaporating reality," they come last instead of first. The revaluation of philosophy entails the demolition of the metaphysical bias via the radical reversal of "first" and "last," wherein the real first is the object and the concept comes last. Like Nietzsche, Adorno's revaluation endeavors to reflect on nonidentity by reflecting on the nature of conceptual knowledge.

CONFIGURATIVE LANGUAGE AS PRAXIS

The title of Adorno's essay "Theses on the Language of the Philosopher" is itself telling of the role of the "philosopher" in philosophical language formation. More importantly, however, how the title demonstrates how the philosopher is related to philosophizing as an activity that is fundamentally situated and is shaped by social and historical conditions. In opposition to the classical image of the philosopher as the seeker of the truth of things in their ultimate causes and principles known in the light of human reason alone—the philosopher enamored by the metaphysical bias described above—Adorno urges that the philosopher should instead pose his questions about the objective world and arrive at a "plastic" understanding of reality, as opposed to knowledge of ultimate principles and causes of things. Moreover, the classical view, with its emphasis on human reason, seems to presuppose an autopoetic transcendental subject or an absolute I—a view held by philosophers from Plato to German Idealism, as we have seen in chapter 1. As opposed to the transcendental philosopher, Adorno views the philosopher as an embodied subject who is situated in social and historical conditions, that is to say, normative conditions. Hence, the title of Adorno's essay suggests that philosophy, as a socio-historico activity, is a byproduct of normative linguistic practices within which the philosopher is enmeshed and from which the content of philosophical debates is derived. In this sense, the language of the philosopher (and therefore of philosophy), inasmuch as the philosopher is the creator of philosophic language, is dependent on material conditions as opposed to an ahistorical self-positing subject.

We observe that in the Western philosophical tradition since Plato, the obeisance paid to human reason—or some higher metaphysical principle which has been given various names: *logos*, *eidos*, God, mind, *Geist*, *Cogito*,

the absolute I—is a gesture that guarantees a privileged epistemic position for philosophy. This imagined epistemic guarantor that secures philosophy's privileged position also guarantees philosophy its privileged language—a language that has sole access to the truth or Being. For Adorno, the philosopher's bad faith is his failure or resistance to acknowledge the contradiction involved in blindly accepting this privileged position of philosophical language. In other words, what the traditional philosopher resists is the fact that philosophy is in crisis because, first, that it has been too presumptuous about its purpose and, second, that it feigns indifference towards this presumptuousness. This occurs because, according to Adorno, philosophy gets enmeshed within its own reified language. Being suspicious of the privileged position of philosophy poses a challenge to the philosopher: facing the crisis that is immanent within the philosophical enterprise itself which means facing the crisis of the intelligibility and meaningfulness of its own language.[88] The over-valorization of the assumed *metaphysical presence* in the traditional language of philosophy, that is to say the abstractness of its method and goal, compels the philosopher to draw his attention away from socio-historico-politico conditions. Rather, what traditional philosophy does is to mount its reified and well-knit network of concepts above material conditions which are subordinated to "rational" and "clear" descriptions of these conditions. Through this subordination of reasoned language over material conditions, the philosopher ignores the fact that the language he uses to describe so-called mundane objects is profoundly determined by these objects themselves. The philosophical enterprise is, therefore, an insular activity. Adorno writes in the first volume of his *Notes to Literature*, "language imprisons those who speak it, that as a medium of their own it has essentially failed."[89] This is, indeed, what happened to philosophy—it has become entangled in the bad faith that comes with the failure to address its own meaninglessness and intelligibility. The practice of positing what have been hitherto considered as the "universal" concepts of philosophy—for example, God, freedom, and immortality—has been the underlying and unquestioned norm in traditional philosophy, a praxis which has become the "collective unconscious" of philosophers. What Adorno wants to emphatically remind us is that the self-aggrandizement of the traditional philosopher—his alleged ascension to purity—is a disclosure of his imprisonment in the archaic language of philosophy, as well as its inextricable relation to the society which it endeavors to oversee and, thus, transcend. For Adorno, this illusion of purity is philosophy's regression, its forgetfulness of its material conditions, "the bad conscience of its impurity, its complicity with the world."[90] To the suspicious eye of the "new" philosopher, however, the universal concepts of philosophy that comprise its unconscious are not concepts that were begotten from without; on the contrary, they arise out of the dialectical interaction between thought and the everyday world.

Philosophy can only redeem itself from the bad conscience of its impurity by precisely acknowledging this very impurity, that is, the indebtedness of its language to the philosophical tradition, which is, in itself, philosophical praxis. This is tantamount to pulling philosophy down to its socio-historical and material roots, which is the same thing that Nietzsche means when he proposes a self-reflection of the physiological conditions that make philosophy possible. The rootedness of the philosophical enterprise in social practices, which are themselves rooted in our physiological constitution, could not be emphasized enough and the constant and conscious resistance to succumb to the hubristic purity of conceptual language, notwithstanding some form of "enlightened" discourse, is the challenge of the new philosopher. This challenge entails a decentering of the form that philosophical language took and a reorientation of philosophical discourse in praxis, that is to say, in the mundane or the sphere of the historical, social, and political. At first there will be complaints about the mismatch between universal concepts and particular objects, but this is a necessary step in the reorientation, which is also to say a reorientation in "difference."

Adorno begins the "Theses on the Language of the Philosopher" by declaring that "the distinction between form and content in philosophical language . . . is based on the view that concepts and, with them, words are abbreviations of a multiplicity of characteristics whose unity is constituted solely by consciousness."[91] He, moreover, points out that the separation between form and content is a theoretical practice which belongs specifically to idealist philosophy, which is best represented by both the Platonic and the Cartesian variants of metaphysical dualism. This starting point is also rehearsed in the mature *Negative Dialectics* (although Adorno mentions Kant and Hegel to be representatives of idealist philosophy here): "A relationship of form and content has become the form itself. It is inalienably the form of content—an extreme sublimation of the form-content dualism in detached and absolutized subjectivity."[92] The hitherto mentioned emphasis on an ideal metaphysical substratum has been incarnated in Reinhold's and Fichte's self-sufficient absolute subject, what Nietzsche refers to as the grammatically hypostasized "I." Adorno points out that this subject is the sublimation of the form-content dualism, meaning it is the representation of reification par excellence. Further, this absolutized or reified subject is only possible through language—it is the absolute subject who allegedly hovers over objective reality and, hence, the one who names objects. "It is the sign of all reification," Adorno insists, "through idealist consciousness that things can be named arbitrarily."[93] In this sense, objects are considered to be at the disposal of the formal intellect because thinking, according to Adorno, "seizes the things exclusively as functions of thought, names have become arbitrary: they are free positings of consciousness."[94] Thus, reification is the result of the formal

practice of reducing actual objects into mere names; moreover, in this formalized process, concepts that purport to name objects become interchangeable—meaning that the system of barter occurs at the linguistic level, that is, among concepts, while particulars are shoved aside and forgotten. This is, to some extent, a reversal of Heidegger's reproach of our "forgetfulness of Being" in that Adorno's reproach is philosophy's forgetfulness of objects or, more specifically, the particularity of objects. This move on Adorno's part, therefore, radicalizes the relation between concepts (universals) and objects (particulars). He refers to the "ontic contingency" (as opposed to ontological necessity) of the alleged "unity of concepts," which is disclosed in the exchangeability of names. Hence, universals in this sense "stand only in a representational relation to that which they intend, not in a concretely objective one."[95] This *meta-critical* epistemic outlook is directly opposite to the two versions of representation or epistemic abstractions that have been appropriated in the Western tradition since the Ancient Greeks: the Platonic *eidos* and the Aristotelian *morphe*. These two versions of representation, each to its own, perform a formalization of the object, the Platonic giving priority to the universal cast or idea of the object while relegating the object to the superfluous world of flux, and the Aristotelian making the object the basis of abstract forms but considering the *act of abstraction* the starting point of knowledge, and again leaving the corporeal substance to a nonintelligible realm.

In relation to the above, Gandesha remarks that Adorno is probably trying to "linguistify" the Kantian distinction between "deductive judgments" and "reflective judgments," the former being "transcendental" and the latter being "historical."[96] Adorno's revaluation of the language of philosophy presupposes this important distinction. We have seen his misgivings towards idealist epistemologies whose deductive judgments about the world subsume objects under predetermined universal casts; Adorno wishes to salvage objects from this reificatory process which is immanent in the language of traditional philosophy—what these universal concepts are able to do is merely to make objects their subordinates without enlightening us about the real nature of these objects. The notion of reflective judgments is, therefore, telling for Adorno's purposes; it is, interestingly, a notion that appears in Kant's third *Critique* where aesthetics is at the centerpiece of discussion. What this entails for Adorno is a possibility of making "conceptual" judgments about the world without reducing it to the conceptual, a move which presupposes a reorientation of language to the historical. This reorientation comes in the form of a critical outlook on language.

> This critique of language does not merely have to concern itself with the "adequation" of words to things, but just as equally with the state of the words on their own terms. It is to be asked of the words themselves how far they are

capable of bearing the intentions attributed to them, to what extent their power has been historically extinguished, how far they can be configuratively pre-served. The criterion of this is essentially the *aesthetic* dignity of words.[97]

It is through the aesthetic outlook that a critique of language could ensue. The "aesthetic dignity" of words speaks not of the capacity of words to be true in themselves, but of their capacity to *tell* something true about the objects they represent. In these terms Adorno approaches the critique of language via a reorientation of philosophical critique in experiences which are historically mediated, a space where aesthetics assumes an epistemologi-cal character. If we recall Schlegel's and Novalis's approach to the theory of language and *Poesie*, where the "idealist" notion of the subject as the self-transparent ground of truth is undermined, it becomes obvious that such approach reverberates in Adorno's critique of language.[98] Moreover, in this context, Nietzsche's aesthetic-pragmatic epistemology is confirmed. It could be surmised from this that Adorno's aim is not to abandon a conception of truth, but to reevaluate, à la Nietzsche, our old notion of truth. Like Nietzsche, Adorno is concerned about a reconceptualization of a notion of truth that is immanent in normative practices, an alternative notion of truth that could be sustained after abandoning the traditional or idealist model of truth or, in Nietzsche's sense, after the overcoming of the metaphysical bias. Such a new conception of truth would position itself diametrically to dogmatic (pre-Kantian) and subjectivist (Reinholdian and Fichtean) conceptions of truth.[99] Again, à la Nietzsche, Adorno's revaluation of the language of philosophy involves a radical transmutation of the concept-object dialectic. The idealist practice of subsuming objects under deductive judgments is opposed to and replaced by what Adorno calls "configurative" language. Via this option, it is possible to think of concepts as "materially prefigured" instead of prefiguring the objects. The idealist obsession with clear and definitive propositions is actually an unconscious byproduct of the "material content" of words. This is to say that linguistic expressions and philosophical expressions in particular are dependent on the historical content stored in words. Adorno maintains:

> The conventional terminology—no matter how ruined—is to be preserved, and today the new words of the philosopher are formed solely out of the changed configuration of words, which stand in history; not by the invention of a lan-guage that scarcely recognizes the power of history over the word, but instead strives to avoid it in a private "concreteness" only apparently guaranteed outside history.[100]

We have seen earlier how both fundamental ontology and logical positiv-ism, which to Adorno constitute two sides of the idealist coin, end up being

untruthful to their claims because of their banal acceptance of the inherent meaning of words or concepts and their concealment of the groundedness of philosophy in socio-historico-political practices. The fundamental ontology advanced by Heidegger, although an attempt to overcome the illusory straightforwardness and historical naiveté of the logical positivists, does not precisely ground language in history; rather, Heidegger ontologizes history and views it as "historicity." Adorno remarks,

> Heidegger's language flees from history, yet without escaping it. The places that his terminology occupies are altogether locations of conventional philosophical and theological terminology, which shimmers through and performs the words before they take on a life of their own. At the same time, Heidegger's manifest language fails—in the dialectical relation with the conventional language of philosophy—to uncover completely the latter's disintegration.[101]

In other words, Adorno thinks that Heidegger, because of the latter's ontologization of history as existential historicity, universalizes the historical experiences of actual history. Heidegger's ontological project, a prescientific discourse about objects in the world, flees history inasmuch as it universalizes historical experiences; this turns a deaf ear to the historical relation between concepts and objects. The Heideggerian model, therefore, instead of overcoming the transcendental philosophical tradition, retreats behind the idealist tradition it seeks to circumvent. Or, to say the least, this is the story that Adorno presents. In this sense, fundamental ontology ends up in a blind alley.

Adorno's proposal of a "configurative language" is, to some extent, a hybrid between an empirical outlook on worldly objects and a dramatization of conceptual thinking. If the challenge for philosophy is its openness to the new, then its reorientation in objects and an attempt to invent new ways of talking about these objects should be instigated as philosophy's new normativity. This, for Adorno, calls for a reorientation of philosophy to the "ontic" character of social practices, as opposed to Heidegger's ontological flight. Thus, praxis takes center stage in Adorno's philosophy of language—whereas praxis, in this context, means focusing on the historical situatedness and participation of an agent—that is, a decentering of the unified transcendent subject. Moreover, praxis also entails the philosopher's task of linguistic reconfiguration, based not only on what he inherits from the philosophical tradition itself but from historical contingencies as well. In other words, praxis should open itself to the nonidentical and should refuse any ontologization or reification of the nonidentical.

Configurative language conceives the language of philosophy as "materially prefigured."[102] As such, language is seen to be nonrepresentational in the

sense that it is prefigured by a multiplicity of shifting and malleable contexts. There is active resistance on the part of traditional philosophy to such "risky" conception of language, for it undermines the definiteness of meaning that is supposed to underlie grand philosophical claims. Echoing the early German Romantics, Adorno suggests that philosophy should learn how to open itself up to the risky business of actively using words in new configurations or constellations, while, at the same time, dialectically grounding these configurations in the language of the philosophical tradition and in the contingent sphere of the social, historical, and political. Adorno, in *Notes to Literature*, uses the analogy of the strangeness of learning foreign words—a kind of "exogamy of language, which would like to escape from the sphere of what is always the same."[103] The foreign word—like the Romantic fragment, the Nietzschean aphorism, and Adorno's essay—functions as it were the very epitome of the nonidentical, for it resists a straightforward identification of that which it names—a shaking off of a simple "basically logical world that so perfectly suits the defense of the status quo."[104] As such, the nonidentical provides an insight into the very nature of language. Moreover, the nonidentical also offers us an insight into how language is the very medium through which the creation of the new is carried out within the continuum of tradition or of the old. Adorno points out as well that language can only puncture the obstinate protective fiber of tradition by means of a "shock," for it "may now be the only way to reach human beings through language."[105] This is the shock posed against the status quo; the enigma of the foreign word (and again akin to the nonsystematic form of the essay)—a linguistic instance of the nonidentical—functions to untie the tight knot of conceptual language that prevails in philosophical discourse. Loosening the grip of conceptual language could only mean one thing for philosophy: its reorientation back to history and the disclosure of uncharted constellations.

NOTES

1. Notable examples are the following: Susan Buck-Morss, *The Origin of Negative Dialectics: Theodor W. Adorno, Walter Benjamin, and the Frankfurt Institute* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1979); Früchtl, *Mimesis*; Frederic Jameson, *Late Marxism: Adorno, or, the Persistence of the Dialectic* (London: Verso, 1996); Peter Uwe Hohendahl, *Prismatic Thought: Theodor Adorno* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1995); Shierry Weber Nicholsen, *Exact Imagination, Late Work: On Adorno's Aesthetics* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1997); Albrecht Wellmer, *Endgames: The Irreconcilable Nature of Modernity: Essays and Lectures*, trans. David Midgley (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1998), in particular 239–62; Martin Morris, *Rethinking the Communicative Turn: Adorno, Habermas, and the Problem of Communicative Freedom* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press,

2001); Samir Gandesha, "The 'Aesthetic Dignity of Words': Adorno's Philosophy of Language," *New German Critique*, 97 (Winter 2006), 137–58; the collection of essays put together by Donald A. Burke et al., eds., *Adorno and the Need in Thinking: New Critical Essays* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007); Müller, "Mimetic Rationality"; and Philip Hogh, *Communication and Expression: Adorno's Philosophy of Language*, trans. Antonia Hofstätter (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017).

2. David Held mentions a couple of unfortunate consequences of the over-valorized emphasis on Habermas: (1) the failure of current literature to explicate the "differences in scope of the various types of critical theory" and (2) it is ignored that some of the writings of the Frankfurt School (Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse) "offer alternative positions to those defended by Habermas." Taking these unfortunate turnouts into consideration, we are able to question the general view that Habermas represents the "pinnacle of critical theory." See *Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1980), 379.

3. Honneth critically examines this theoretical shift in his "From Adorno to Habermas: On the Transformation of Critical Social Theory," in *The Fragmented World of the Social: Essays in Social and Political Philosophy* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995), 92–93. Herbert Schädelbach also gives us a critical assessment of Habermas's *The Theory of Communicative Action*, taking issue on whether Habermas's project furthers critical theory or not. See "The Transformation of Critical Theory," in *Communicative Action: Essays on Jürgen Habermas's The Theory of Communicative Action*, trans. Jeremy Gaines and Doris L. Jones (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 7–22. Meanwhile, Albrecht Wellmer defends Habermas's reformulation of the conception of historical materialism via a deliberate reconstitution of reason through linguistic organization, which further entails an overcoming of the alleged vicious circle created by the antinomies of early Marxism and the presuppositions of the Frankfurt School. See "Communications and Emancipation: Reflections on the Linguistic Turn in Critical Theory," in *On Critical Theory*, ed. John O'Neill (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1977), 231–63.

4. Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the Rationalization of Society*, Vol. 1, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), 386.

5. Ibid.

6. For a comprehensive account of the basic tenets of Habermas's critical theory and his relation to the first generation members of the Frankfurt School see Held, *op cit*., 249–400; for a succinct discussion of Habermas's theory of communicative action see Kenneth Baynes, "The transcendental turn: Habermas's 'Kantian Pragmatism,'" in *The Cambridge Companion to Critical Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 194–218; and for a focused discussion of the Adorno-Habermas debate, see Morris, *op cit*., especially 95–191.

7. I am, however, aware that there are attempts to locate some affinities between German Romanticism and Habermas. See, for instance, Michaeal Scrivener, "Habermas, Romanticism, and Literary Theory," *Literature Compass*, 1:1 (2004), 1–18.

8. See, for instance, the debate between Agnes Heller and Habermas in John B. Thompson and David Held, eds., *Habermas: Critical Debates* (London: The Macmillan Press, Ltd., 1982), specifically the essays "Habermas and Marxism" and "A Reply to my Critics."

9. Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, trans. Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), 68–69.

10. Ibid., 106. Habermas's use of "dark" and "black," of course, does not have anything to do with race or skin color. The "dark" writers of the bourgeoisie, such as Machiavelli, Hobbes, Mandeville, and Schopenhauer are contrasted to the "black" writers of the bourgeoisie, such as de Sade and Nietzsche. Habermas remarks that the dark writers were still constructive Enlightenment thinkers while the black writers broke ties with the Enlightenment.

11. Ibid.

12. Jürgen Habermas, "Nachwort von Jürgen Habermas," quoted by Hullot-Kentor in *Things Beyond Resemblance: Collected Essays on Theodor W. Adorno* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2006), 28.

13. "If enlightenment is caught up in an unstoppable process of self-destruction, where then would such a critique, which made this diagnosis, have a right to such a diagnosis." "Nachwort," quoted in Ibid.

14. Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, 125, 127.

15. Ibid., 128.

16. Ibid., 83–105. Before Habermas, Georg Lukács, in his *The Destruction of Reason*, trans. Peter Palmer (London: Merlin, 1980), already exhibited a sweeping condemnation of Nietzsche on similar grounds; Richard Wolin extends the same polemic and even more pungently, for example in *The Seduction of Unreason: The Intellectual Romance with Fascism: From Nietzsche to Postmodernism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004). Interestingly and surprisingly enough, however, the young Habermas was more sympathetic to Nietzsche and in 1968 even wrote a postscript which outlined the merits of Nietzsche's critique of epistemology, see "On Nietzsche's Theory of Knowledge: A Postscript from 1968," trans. James Swindal, in *Nietzsche, Theories of Knowledge, and Critical Theory: Nietzsche and the Sciences I* (London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999), 209–23.

17. Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, 122–23.

18. A similar observation is made by Deborah Cook in "Critical Stratagems in Adorno and Habermas: Theories of Ideology and the Ideology of Theory," *Historical Materialism*, 6 (2000), 67. The Adorno-Habermas relation is, of course, an ongoing dispute in recent scholarship, for example, the heated exchange between Cook and Finlayson. See James Gordon Finlayson's "The Theory of Ideology and the Ideology of Theory: Habermas contra Adorno" and Cook's "A Response to Finlayson," both in *Historical Materialism*, 11:2 (2003), 165–87 and 189–98, respectively. Another promising account of the Adorno-Habermas relation is found in Romand Coles, "Identity and Difference in the Ethical Positions of Adorno and Habermas," in *The Cambridge Companion to Habermas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 19–45; in contrast to Coles, see the early Honneth's "Communication and Reconciliation."

19. Jürgen Habermas, *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*, trans. Christian Lenhardt and Shierry Weber Nicholsen (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1992), 20–28.

20. Robert Hullot-Kentor, *Things Beyond Resemblance: Collected Essays on Theodor W. Adorno* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2006), 32.

21. *ND*, 10–11.

22. Similar points are made in the following: Nikolas Kompridis, *Critique and Disclosure: Critical Theory between Past and Future* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2006), 5; Coles, "Identity and Difference in the Ethical Positions of Adorno and Habermas"; and Stanley Cavell, *In Quest of the Ordinary: Lines of Skepticism and Romanticism* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 32 and 83.

23. Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, 185.

24. Ibid., 110.

25. Cf. Martin Jay, *Force Fields: Between Intellectual History and Cultural Critique* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1993), 29.

26. Ibid., 28.

27. Specific details of this ongoing debate are found in a collection of essays edited by Jacob Golomb and Robert S. Wistrich called *Nietzsche, Godfather of Fascism? On the Uses and Abuses of a Philosophy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002).

28. See, for example, comments made in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* where neoconservatism and aesthetic modernism ("aesthetically inspired anarchism" or "postmodernity," whose proponents are Nietzsche, Heidegger, Bataille, Foucault, Derrida) are lumped together and presented as enemies of the Enlightenment. *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, 4–5. Also see Thomas McCarthy's "Introduction," in Ibid., xi. The relationship between aesthetic modernism and neoconservatism is further explored by Habermas in *The New Conservatism: Cultural Criticism and the Historians' Debate*, trans. Shierry Weber Nicholsen (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989).

29. Tracy B. Strong and Frank Andreas Sposito, "Habermas' Significant Other," in *The Cambridge Companion to Habermas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 279.

30. See Habermas, *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*.

31. Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, 96.

32. Habermas, *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*, 99.

33. See Ibid., 76 and 184.

34. See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 128.

35. See Strong and Sposito, "Habermas' Significant Other," 281–82.

36. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 7.

37. "From this reading," they argue, "one would say that the task of the *First Critique* (and that of genius) was not to establish rationality at the *expense* of sense with its doubt and certainties, but to establish rationality as a *balance* between the subjective and the objective, denying any of them." Strong and Sposito, "Habermas' Significant Other," 282. Cavell also echoes this Kantian insight and interprets it as

an expression of the romantic temperament: "It is expressed in Kant's portrait of the human being as living in two worlds, in one of them determined, in the other free, one of which is necessary to the satisfaction of human Understanding, the other to the satisfaction of human Reason. One romantic use for this idea of two worlds likes in its accounting for the human being's dissatisfaction with, as it were, itself. It appreciates the ambivalence in Kant's central idea of limitation, that we simultaneously crave its comfort and crave escape from its comfort, that we want to be lawfully wedded to the world and at the same time illicitly intimate with it, as if the one stance produced the wish for the other, as if the best proof of human existence were its power to yearn, as if for its better, or other, existence." *In Quest for the Ordinary*, 31–32.

38. "We now propose to make trial whether it be not possible to find for human reason safe conduct between these two rocks, assigning to her determinate limits, and yet keeping open for her the whole field of her appropriate activities." Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 128. The "two rocks" is perhaps an allusion to the mythic images of the mythic monsters Scylla and Charybdis.

39. Strong and Sposito, "Habermas' Significant Other," 283.

40. Ibid., 282.

41. *ODS*, 108.

42. Jay, *Force Fields*, 37.

43. Ibid.

44. Wellmer, *Endgames*, 259.

45. Ibid., 261.

46. Jean-Philippe Deranty, "Injustice, Violence and Social Struggle: The Critical Potential of Axel Honneth's Theory of Recognition," *Critical Horizons*, 5 (2004), 298.

47. Cf. Ibid., 299–302.

48. See, for example, the collection of essays by Honneth in the following volumes: *The Fragmented World of the Social: Essays in Social and Political Philosophy* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995); *Disrespect: The Normative Foundations of Critical Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007); and *Reification: A New Look at an Old Idea* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008).

49. *TLP*, 9.

50. See Gandesha, "The "Aesthetic Dignity of Words,'" 140. Moreover, Wellmer provides us with a riveting comparison between the philosophical attitudes of Wittgenstein and Adorno in "Ludwig Wittgenstein: On the Difficulties of Receiving His Philosophy and Its Relation to the Philosophy of Adorno," in *Endgames*, 239–49.

51. Gandesha, "The "Aesthetic Dignity of Words,'" 140.

52. *AP*, 120.

53. *AP*, 120.

54. *AP*, 120.

55. *JA*, 12.

56. *ND*, 11.

57. *AP*, 120.

58. *JA*, 12.

59. *AP*, 120.

60. Adorno writes: "The claim to totality made by thought is thrown back upon thought itself, and it is finally shattered there too." *AP*, 124.

61. *AP*, 121.

62. *AP*, 125.

63. Jarvis writes on the Adorno-Heidegger relation: "Adorno's intense antipathy toward Heidegger is prompted in part by his awareness of deep convergences between his thought and Heidegger's. Each wishes to insist on the temporal-historical character of truth without taking this as an excuse for relativism; each resists reducing philosophy either to a method or to a doctrine. Most importantly, each is deeply concerned with a critique or questioning of modernity—as especially of the conversion of production into an absolute—without offering any simple return to tradition. Yet these convergences are accompanied by ineradicable political differences." *Adorno: A Critical Introduction*, 199. Jarvis is, of course, referring to Heidegger's involvement with the National Socialists and Adorno's ethical commitment to upbraid a phenomenology that, he assumes, has tacitly contributed to, or at least consented to, the totalitarian worldview that so characterized the Nazi regime. For recent studies on the Adorno-Nietzsche relation, see Alexander Garcia Düttmann, *The Memory of Thought: An Essay on Heidegger and Adorno*, trans. Nicholas Walker (London: Continuum, 2002) and Iain Macdonald and Krzysztof Ziarek, eds., *Adorno and Heidegger: Philosophical Questions* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008).

64. *AP*, 126.

65. *WSP*, 10.

66. *WSP*, 8.

67. *WSP*, 10.

68. *WSP*, 13.

69. *WSP*, 13.

70. *WSP*, 15.

71. *WSP*, 14.

72. *WSP*, 14.

73. *WSP*, 15.

74. *WSP*, 15.

75. G. W. F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 21. Adorno cites this in "Why Still Philosophy," see *WSP*, 15.

76. *WSP*, 16.

77. See *WSP*, 16.

78. The idea that Adorno is a proto-deconstructionist is not such an outlandish view. There are a number of commentators who support this claim. See, for example, Martin Jay, *Adorno* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984); Christoph Menke, *The Sovereignty of Art: Aesthetic Negativity in Adorno and Derrida*, trans. Neil Solomon (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1999); Jean-Philippe Deranty, "Adorno's Other Son: Derrida and the Future of Critical Theory," *Social Semiotics*, 16:3 (September 2006), 421–33; and Gandesha, "The 'Aesthetic Dignity of Words,'"

140–41. Moreover, Gandesha also discusses the relation of Adorno's proto-decon-structionism to Heidegger, a relationship characterized by a "strange proximity" and "fundamental distance." See "Leaving Home: On Adorno and Heidegger," in *The Cambridge Companion to Adorno* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 101–28.

79. *ND*, 11.

80. *ND*, 11.

81. *ND*, 12.

82. *ND*, 12.

83. Cf. *ND*, 12.

84. *ND*, 10.

85. See Part One of *BGE*.

86. *AE*, 18.

87. *TI*, III, 4.

88. Cf. Gandesha, "The 'Aesthetic Dignity of Words,'" 150.

89. *NL*, I, 189.

90. *Prog*, 148.

91. *TLP*, 1.

92. *ND*, 333.

93. *TLP*, 1.

94. *TLP*, 1.

95. *TLP*, 1.

96. Gandesha specifically writes: "The 'Theses' could be said, then, to, as it were, linguistify Kant's differentiation between deductive judgments that subsume particulars beneath preexisting universals and reflective judgments that generate universals out of particulars. The former is transcendental; the latter, historical." Gandesha, "The 'Aesthetic Dignity of Words,'" 152.

97. *TLP*, 9.

98. Cf. Bowie, *From Romanticism to Critical Theory*, 259.

99. Cf. Ibid., 258.

100. *TLP*, 6.

101. *TLP*, 6. "Heidegger's philosophy," writes Adorno in *The Jargon of Authenticity*, "which takes so much advantage of its ability to listen, renders itself deaf to words. The emphatic nature of this philosophy arouses the belief that it fits itself into the words, while it is only a cover for arbitrariness." *JA*, 47.

102. *TLP*, 3.

103. *NL*, I, 187.

104. *EF*, 163.

105. *NL*, I, 192.

Chapter 4

Reconciliation and the Nonidentical

In addition to my response to Habermas's critique of Adorno's (and Horkheimer's) alleged performative contradiction and irresponsible aestheticism in the previous chapter, in this chapter, I will offer a follow-up to the Habermasian critique. More specifically, I will offer a response to Maeve Cooke who represents the camp that is sympathetic to Habermas's rejection of the subject-object dialectic. By committing herself to the Habermasian position, Cook neglects the revisionary character of Adorno's version of the subject-object dialectic, thereby presenting a literal and oversimplistic reading of Adorno's position, especially in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. I argue that this kind of reading fails to take into consideration the complexity of Adorno's philosophical position by neglecting the disclosive-figurative style of his argumentation; as such, the critical and ethical dimensions of Adorno's thought are completely misunderstood. As a response, I offer below a reconstruction of Adorno's revision of the subject-object dialectic evinced in his essay "Subject and Object" in order to point out the ethical dimension of the subject-object relation in the context of "reconciliation."

Meanwhile, Rüdiger Bittner's criticism leveled against Adorno, I think, is an inflection of the Habermasian position. Bittner charges Adorno with "religious foundationalism" and alleges that Adorno does not provide a convincing philosophical argument based on logical and normative grounds. Instead, Bittner maintains, Adorno relies on religious or theological vocabulary which renders the latter's position philosophically untenable. Even if Bittner does not directly refer to Habermas, I interpret this as another manifestation of the Habermasian position. While Habermas charges Adorno with an irresponsible aestheticism that can exacerbate as opposed solve fascism, for his part, Bittner reads Adorno's use of negative religious or theological symbolisms as an irresponsible rhetorical move that leads to philosophical pessimism and

nihilism. In this sense, even if they express their complaints differently, the criticisms of Habermas, Cooke, and Bittner are of the same ilk. As a response to Bittner, I point out two aspects of Adorno's work that the former misses. First, by insisting that logical deduction is the only medium of philosophical argumentation, Bittner fails to understand that the normative basis for Adorno's materialist ethics is the historical reality of suffering conditioned by society. As such, as opposed to abstract theorems, the concrete experience of suffering is the normative basis for any ethical pronouncement. Secondly, this materialist conception of ethics can only be expressed indirectly via what Adorno himself calls "inverse theology." As opposed to religious foundationalism, Adorno's inverse theology aims to express a radical negation of the wrong state of social conditions. As such, Adorno is not trying to look for a God or to revive religion; rather, very similar to Nietzsche's abandonment of the nihilistic life, Adorno is trying to demonstrate the negativity of social reality in order to negate such negativity. Adorno's philosophy, in this sense, is a profound negative gesture of negating suffering. Inverse theology, therefore, is Adorno's version of the negation of negation, the purpose of which is to revive what has been mentioned in the previous chapter as mimetic receptivity or our repressed capacity to understand our complex relation with objects (both human and nonhuman). Adorno hopes that, through a more reconciliatory attitude towards objects, we are able to overcome the reified state of human affairs and recover human experience.

This reconciliatory stance towards the nonidentical is described below as "cognitive utopia." Moreover, cognitive utopia is further described as the recovery of experience in the sense that it reorients cognition to its somatic origins. The body is described as the locale of the mimetic moment. Cognitive utopia is the reconciliation of the mind and body, subject and object. I argue, following Adorno, that human cognition construed in the context of reconciliation is the ethical dimension of thinking. Finally, I explore the possibility of aesthetic experience, construed as our cognitive openness to objects. Aesthetic experience, in this context, is linked to the ethics of thinking, gleaned from an emphatic disclosure of and immersion into damaged life.

RECONCILIATION: THE SUBJECT-OBJECT DIALECTIC AND INVERSE THEOLOGY

In the previous chapter, where I discussed Adorno's revaluation of the language of philosophy, I pointed out that for Habermas the redemption of Western philosophy from the monistic cul-de-sac arrived at the exhaustion of the "philosophy of consciousness," a philosophical paradigm based on the ontological relation between subject and object, is only possible by

turning to an intersubjective model based on communicative rationality. My initial response to Habermas is by interpreting his move as a theoretical leverage launched against the early Frankfurt School, one which identifies the early critical theorists with irrationalism and an irresponsible aestheticism. Nietzsche, for Habermas, is a pioneer of this irresponsible aestheticism that has dangerous philosophical and political consequences. I argued that Habermas commits a *reductio ad hitlerum* by reducing Nietzsche and Adorno's works into worthless aestheticisms that, for Habermas, results in fascism. As I mentioned above, in addition to my initial response to Habermas in chapter 3, in what follows I offer my responses to two inflections of the Habermasian critique, namely, the Habermasian rejection of the subject-object dialectic as expounded by Cooke and the charge of religious foundationalism by Bittner.

Habermas sees the subject-object model as suffering from an irrevocable monism in the sense that it begins with a transcendental ego (e.g., the Cartesian Cogito) that initiates the epistemic process or the act of knowing. From this supposed monological standpoint, the subject is not seen as constituted within a world of interaction, but, rather, gains theoretical and practical control of the object.[1] In other words, Habermas contends that the philosophy of consciousness does not account for the thoroughgoing sociality of interaction. The philosophy of consciousness is virtually taken to be the hallmark of Western philosophy—perhaps even from the time of the ancient Greeks, but having its Modern and most influential articulation in the works of Descartes, Kant, Spinoza, Leibniz, Schelling, and Hegel[2]—but Habermas emphasizes its influence on Left-Hegelianism's notion of praxis which, in turn, has a profound impact on early critical theorists like Adorno. The philosophy of consciousness, Habermas notes, is grounded in a conception of the subject that subsumes the object both in "representation" and "action." The mind, based on the subject-object model, functions to either "represent" or "produce" objects as they are. These two functions are inextricably related in the sense that intervention in nature and the production of objects presuppose knowledge of the state of affairs we call the world; such representational knowledge is motivated by the possibility of intervention.[3] In Marxism, the subject-object model takes the form of a paradigm of production that considers praxis as a form of productive activity (labor). This, for Habermas, is rooted in the standard version of Hegel's account of the phenomenology of the subject, which was given a materialist reading by Marx and then a Hegelian reading of Marx by Lukács.[4] According to Habermas, the production model of praxis tends to equate production and labor (instrumental action), thereby remaining blind to the significance of communicative action. Via Habermas's analysis of Lukácsian Marxism, this critique of the subject-object model trickles down to the early Frankfurt School, particularly to Adorno.

Adorno's philosophical reflections on the subject-object relation are summarized in one of his last essays, called "Subject and Object," published before his death in 1969. The essay could be read as a brief representation of Adorno's metacritique of epistemology, echoing the basic arguments laid down in *Against Epistemology*, and a representation of his theory of meaning, strengthening the insights gathered from his "Theses on the Language of the Philosopher." The essay hints on, especially in the latter part, Adorno's philosophical anthropology, resembling Sartre's "man is a project" with his quasi-existentialist phrase: "Man is a result, not an *eidos*."[5] The publication of "Subject and Object," on account of the timing of its first appearance, reveals that Adorno continued to seriously engage with this classical epistemological subject-object problematic throughout his career, leaving us the impression that he was well aware of the centrality, and indeed indispensability, of the subject-object relation in his own project. The essay also leaves us the impression that the subject-object relation is a performance of the irreducible aporia of provisionality, that is, of conditionality, qualification, and accident. The essay itself performs this aporia on account of the tentativeness and remarkable figuration of its presentation. Adorno attempts to discuss the subject-object relation by not couching the relation in absolute ontological terms, like in most traditional epistemologies, but in, rather, loosely organized, yet well-argued statements. The context of the statements is profoundly and necessarily epistemological; Adorno's aim is to highlight the inherent, yet dissimulated and often taken-for-granted, tensional conditions within the triangular structure of the object, subject, and definition. While Adorno sets out to make sense of, that is to overcome, the aporias involved in the formation of knowledge—which, akin to Nietzsche, is deeply anthropological for Adorno—he argues that only by maintaining these aporias do we gain a sense of the "primacy of the object," in opposition to constitutive subjectivity, and only through these aporias do we understand the inextricability between subject and object; they are inextricable because what we call "human consciousness" is a product of the symbiotic, albeit uneven, exchange between subject and object. Indeed, not only is a radical revision of the subject-object relation central for him, but it is arguably the backbone of his theory of language and his reinscription of the mimetic impulse.

However, with Habermas having set the ground for a total rejection of the subject-object model of cognition, any talk of the subject-object relation would appear banal and dated to commentators sympathetic to his position. For instance, Cooke illustrates in the following passages what can be regarded now as a conventional Habermasian position:

> Habermas's major contribution is to have recognized the need for a fundamental paradigm shift. In his view, most of the theoretical problems of classical

Left-Hegelian theory are connected with a subject-object model of cognition and action. According to this model, knowledge and action are conceived instrumentally as the imposition of will by a solitary human subject on an object distinct from him. Habermas advocates a complete break with this model: he argues that the critique of instrumental rationality—developed most fully in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* but central to the entire tradition of Left-Hegelian theory—is not a fruitful direction for critical and social thinking since it relies on a model of cognition and action that fails to allow for a nonrepressive relationship between the knowing and the acting subject and the object of her thought and action. Instead he proposes a shift to an intersubjective framework.[6]

Cooke further writes:

Thanks to his shift from a subject-object model of cognition and action to an intersubjective one, Habermas is also well placed to give an account of emancipation that is epistemologically nonauthoritarian. With regard to the motivation to think and act in emancipatory ways, he is able to avoid a position that roots motivation in invariant psychological structures that are immune to the influences of history and context.[7]

One cannot help but notice Cooke's rather incredible claims. Firstly, without distinguishing between the traditional model (offered by Plato down to Kant) and Adorno's revisionist model, she claims that the subject-object model of knowledge and action conceives instrumental reason "as the imposition of will by a solitary human subject on an object distinct from him." Now this appears to be a literal, and hence oversimplistic, reading of Adorno's genealogical account of mimesis and its pathological turn to instrumental reason. A literal interpretation of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* fails to account for the complexity of the text, that is, its figurative or metaphorical presentation—more precisely, figuration as an instance of critical disclosure. Adorno and Horkheimer's decision to use the *Odyssey* to retell the origin of subterfuge was not simply an instance of an irresponsible aestheticism, but because they were well aware that the text can effectively function as a tool for disclosure, thus opening up our eyes to levels of meaning that ordinary argumentative language would otherwise fail to deliver. Cooke's Habermasian-inspired literal interpretation is a gesture of unnecessarily warding off the critical potential of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, rendering its critical impulse inoperative.

Secondly, Cooke notes that the subject-object model "fails to allow for a nonrepressive relationship between the knowing and acting subject and the object of her thought and action." This is again a grave oversimplification and misreading of Adorno's position; more specifically, the Habermasian

position purports to have corrected the epistemological monism of Adorno. It appears that the charge of monism, however, is a little too hasty, since the Habermasian position fails to acknowledge and justly comprehend the role that the notion of mimesis plays in the wider context of Adorno's project. Cooke's reading implies that a theory of mimesis, based on the subject-object dialectic, is devoid of any ethical content—in more Habermasian terms, mimesis is devoid of any normative content. On the contrary, Adorno's account, especially in "Subject and Object," can be read, or should be read, as an ethical outcry against the ideological content and reificatory tendency of identity thinking embodied, in one instance, in constitutive subjectivity:

> The more individuals are really degraded to functions of the social totality as it becomes more systematized, the more will man pure and simple, man as a principle with the attributes of creativity and absolute domination, be consoled by exaltation of his mind.[8]

Moreover,

> the question of the transcendental subject's reality weighs heavier than appears in its sublimation as pure mind, fully so in the critical retraction of idealism. In a sense . . . the transcendental subject is more real—that is to say, more determinant for the real conduct of men and for the resulting society—than those psychological individuals from which the transcendental one was abstracted. They have little to say in the world, having on their part turned into appendages of the social apparatus and ultimately into ideology. The living human individual, as he is forced to act in the role for which he has been marked internally as well, is the *homo oeconomicus* incarnate, closer to the transcendental subject than to the living individual for which he immediately cannot but take himself.[9]

The ethical thrust of Adorno's essay is clear: the critique of the transcendental subject's usurpation of the object or, said differently, idealism's inwardization of the idea of the good life or the reduction of the subject-object relation into the hypostatization of the subject[10] which also entails "mental imprisonment"[11]—in other words, "constitutive subjectivity." Adorno's stance against reification could be viewed as an ethical battle cry from the standpoint of society's redemption. This ethical impulse partly informs the Adornoian enterprise, while, as I will show later, another aspect of this ethical impulse is based on the materiality of the experience of suffering. The utopian vision of Adorno is also clearly stated in "Subject and Object": a renewed sensitivity to the object, which is only possible via a revaluation of the subject's position in empirical cognition, as opposed to the subject's formalism which is blindly endorsed by most of traditional epistemology.[12] This utopian vision

is also expressed optimistically, which is somewhat unusual for Adorno: "the relationship of subject and object would lie in the realization of *peace* among men as well as between men and their Other."[13] This statement is in stark opposition to the Habermasian claim that the subject-object dialectic does not provide room for a nonrepressive relationship between subject and object; as a matter of fact, Adorno endorses intersubjectivity ("*peace* among men"), but he also goes beyond the intersubjective model by taking into earnest ethical consideration the nonhuman ("men and their Other"). In this context, it is not at all farfetched to assume "nature" as the nonhuman—the nonconceptual that is infinitely given, yet also infinitely escapes our conceptual grasp. If this reading holds water, then Adorno's utopian-ethical vision could be a possible critical model for contemporary environmental ethics.[14] Adorno's proposal is to read the dialectical relation between subject and object from the standpoint of reconciliation:

> If speculation on the state of reconciliation were permitted, neither the undistinguished unity of subject and object nor their antithetical hostility would be conceivable in it; rather, the communication of what was distinguished. Not until then would the concept of communication, as an objective concept, come into its own.[15]

As such, in Adorno's view, reification can only be resisted by collapsing our conceptual mechanism neither into constitutive subjectivity nor simply into a pre-mimetic moment in history. Acknowledging the primacy of the object does not entail the hypostasis of the object, but, rather, the recognition of the mediatory or dialectical interaction between subject and object, in the sense that the object is "infinitely given,"[16] that is to say, the inexhaustible *givenness* of an object could very well speak of its nonidentical character. It is in this sense that mimesis is reinscribed as enfeebled rationality, reason powerless over the object. Ironically, such powerlessness marks the non-domineering empowerment of the subject in the sense that the subject is reoriented back to unrestrained experience: "the subject as unlimited experience will come closer to the object than the filtered residuum shaped to fit the requirements of subjective reason."[17] What differentiates Adorno's revised subject-object model from traditional epistemology and, indeed, from Left-Hegelianism, is its emphatic rejection of two tendencies in Modern epistemology: (1) the tendency towards an irrationalism that advances a higher form of knowledge that exceeds the provisions of our rational capacity and (2) the tendency towards a kind of solipsism that reduces our field of experience into our purported capacity to grasp knowledge.[18] This relapse into irrationalism and solipsism, for Adorno, could only be avoided via an immanent critique of our concepts, that is, by an immanent delimitation of the conditions that

make experience possible. Adorno uses a revised subject-object model that pays attention to the structure of our conceptual language.

Cooke's last claim in favor of Habermas, and against the subject-object model, is that the latter's intersubjective turn allows him to defend a theory of emancipation while avoiding the error of positing "invariant psychological structures that are immune to the influences of history and context." If this claim is used to level against Adorno, then it is problematic in at least two ways. First, the critique of instrumental rationality, in general, and the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, in particular, does not purport to present invariant psychological structures, but queries the dialectical conditions for the emergence of our valuations or normative practices; if such method of inquiry reveals certain patterns in our behavior that transpire in history (language, mimesis, fear, domination, will to power, etc.), it does not follow that these patterns of behavior are invariant and are immune to the influences of history. On the contrary, such patterns of behavior are deeply rooted in history and they are only understood as socio-historical phenomena. Moreover, the Habermasian position, while dismissing psychological structures (invariant or otherwise), does not provide a convincing explanation for the reality of psychological patterns that inform how we behave in history and how these psychological patterns are, after all, the bases of many of our normative claims, for example, freedom, human rights, justice, or the concept of a good life. While on the conceptual level, we could discuss these normative practices in transactional or procedural communication, our propensity or motivation to defend these normative claims tooth and nail is pre-transactional or pre-procedural. Be that as it may, pre-transactional does not necessarily mean ahistorical; it does not follow that simply because it cannot be captured or positively identified by our conceptual apparatus or explained by reason that it is beyond the bounds of history. On the contrary, as will be shown later in Adorno's inverse theology, the historical moment is the normative ground of ethical consciousness that ensues from the experience of suffering and the awareness of the nonidentical character of the world. But this nonidentical feature of the pre-transactional is precisely what Habermas' intersubjective model purportedly circumscribes; Habermas is confident that reason manages to circumvent these pre-transactional psychological patterns, while it is itself deeply rooted in these patterns. Second, while it is fair enough to claim that Habermas avoids a nonauthoritarian position by advancing an intersubjective model, Cooke's statement implies that *only* the intersubjective model is able to defend such position. We have already seen that a revisionist subject-object model is also able to articulate and defend a nonauthoritarian stance and concomitantly also able to endorse a communicative stance. This being said, one can question the conventional view that an intersubjective theory of communication and a subject-object dialectical model are mutually exclusive.

It appears that this view is unnecessarily overstated. It could be argued that Habermas's overconfidence in the rational structure of intersubjective communication runs the risk of rationalist foundationalism or what Adorno repeatedly calls idealism; as such, the Habermasian position also runs the risk of committing the solipsistic error of modern epistemology outlined earlier.

I have, so far, tried to defend the Adornoian position with regard to the subject-object dialectic against Cooke's recounting of the Habermasian position. Based on the foregoing discussion, the conventional Habermasian reaction underestimates the Adornoian position and unnecessarily aborts the interpretive or disclosive potential of Adorno's revisionist stance. It is as an interpretive ontology that informs his theories of language and mimesis that Adorno's revision of the subject-object relation provides a scaffold for his notion of negative dialectics and aesthetic theory. As such, as an interpretive-disclosive ontology, the revised prognosis of the *chorismos* between subject and object reveals, or at least perceives, human language's and thought's propensity towards ideology; this was already mentioned earlier, but there is more to be said about the dialectical relation between subject and object:

> The separation is no sooner established directly, without mediation, than it becomes ideology, which is indeed its normal form. The mind will then usurp the place of something absolutely independent—which it is not; its claim of independence heralds the claim of dominance. Once radically parted from the object, the subject reduces it to its own measure; the subject swallows the object, forgetting how much it is an object itself.[19]

In other words, thinking's forgetfulness of its mimetic origin, its somatic interaction with nature's objects, results in the pathological turn of rationality. The argument that Adorno is being redundant by simply repeating epistemological investigations already made by past philosophers (ranging from the earliest reflections of Plato and Aristotle, the Scholastic account of Aquinas, down to the Modern polemics of Descartes, Hume, Locke, and Kant) totally misses the point of his revision of the subject-object relation. In particular, what is missed is that Adorno presents this epistemological theme, first and foremost, as *a* problem to be reckoned with and *not* simply a philosophical paradigm that one could conveniently appeal to. To be more specific, what is missed is Adorno's critique of the aforementioned ideological content of thinking and, more poignantly, the failure of the epistemological observations of past philosophers (from Plato to Kant) to properly address the problem of reification to which philosophy, more than any other discipline, unwittingly lends itself. Rather, past epistemological accounts consider the "primacy of human reason" as a given. For this reason, Adorno, as I have shown in chapter 3, lobbies for a revaluation of the language of philosophy,

for philosophy is itself suspended in the dynamics of thinking and, as such, is susceptible to conceptual reification. Indeed, Adorno follows past philosophers by problematizing the subject-object relation, which is probably the oldest epistemological quandary, and Habermas is probably correct to point out that Adorno's interpretation is still under the aegis of the "philosophy of consciousness." However, Habermas misses Adorno's intention of re-describing the subject-object relation in order to present a more robust story of their dialectical interplay from the standpoint of reconciliation. This is, of course, linked to Habermas's refusal of Adorno's theory of mimesis and pre-disposition towards aesthetic critique. The unfortunate upshot of downplaying the incisiveness of rearticulating the subject-object dialectic, especially for critical theory, is that much is lost from a social critique that aims to question the dynamics of knowledge formation and how such formation becomes engrained in our normative practices.

Meanwhile, another staunch critique is Rüdiger Bittner who charges Adorno with "religious foundationalism." Like Habermas before him, who charged Adorno with irresponsible aestheticism and performative contra-diction, Bittner bemoans that the negative presentation of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* results in a kind of philosophical pessimism or nihilism. For Bittner, a negative anti-foundationalism does not provide a normative solu-tion to social problems. Instead of grounding the critique of instrumental reason in the normativity of a rational and rigorous mode of argumenta-tion, Adorno and Horkheimer, according to Bittner, resort to the unreliable vocabulary of religion. For instance, Adorno and Horkheimer's use of the word "calamity" (*Unheil*) to describe the social and political situation of their time ("the wholly enlightened earth is radiant with triumphant calamity"[20] becomes a point of contention for Bittner:

> The concept of *Unheil*, at least in its pure form, is only available from theolo-gians. However, to buy from them and thus to make the enterprise of the book theological in substance is a danger for *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. The book would no longer represent thought or indeed enlightened thought, which is the banner the authors invoke.[21]

In other words, Bittner is arguing that by borrowing terms from theology, Adorno and Horkheimer have essentially written a religious book and have unwittingly deflated the soundness of their philosophical claims. Bittner essentially repeats Habermas's performative contradiction remonstration, but instead of aestheticism, the former alleges that the authors of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* have resorted to religious foundationalism which contradicts the truth that they claim, that is, the dialectical turn of reason towards oppres-sive instrumentalization.[22] Because the style of the book is itself a digression

from well-accepted forms of philosophical writing, Bittner wonders whether the book is a philosophical treatise that employs theological tropes to support its argument or is itself a religious book. Either way Bittner thinks that the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is a treatise that uses "religious vocabulary for rhetorical purposes"[23] and criticizes the use of such rhetoric because it does not contribute to the main argument of the book, rather such rhetoric only muddles the presentation of the argument. For instance, Bittner maintains that Adorno and Horkheimer's overreliance on religious tropes (like "calamity") and tenets, such as, the Jewish "ban on images" (*Bilderverbot*) does not support, what Bittner calls, the "positive" thesis of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, namely, that Enlightenment reveals its own falsity and thereby says the truth about itself.[24] By claiming that Adorno and Horkheimer are putting forward a "positive" argument, Bittner, in effect, is saying that their reference to the Jewish *Bilderverbot* is utterly superfluous or sheer rhetorical excess. Because of this excess, the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* does not qualify as a serious philosophical treatise because it falls short of "rational" and "rigorous" argumentation and, hence, cannot be presented "in the open market-place of thought"; it is better off presented "inside the church or synagogue," Bittner laments.[25]

It is because Bittner demands an exacting distinction between rational/rigorous argumentation and religious/theological language that he could afford to accuse Adorno and Horkheimer of religious foundationalism clothed in a negative anti-foundationalism. Not only does Bittner appear disdainful of religion, but he totally dismisses how theological tropes employed by Adorno and Horkheimer function in their negative anti-foundationalism. In contradistinction to Bittner's reading, Adorno does not neglect the problem of foundationalism, but, rather, he rejects the "demand for foundational logical deduction,"[26] the type of argumentation that Bittner demands. Bittner does not realize that Adorno is not simply making an analytical claim, but, rather, an ethical claim based on what he, and Horkheimer, understood as the human species' destructive relation to nature—a destructive relation that could result in "calamity." What complicates the presentation of this thesis is that Adorno and Horkheimer realized that conventional ways of presenting the problem, including philosophy and science, are themselves instances of identity thinking. Both philosophy and science are instances of the human species' attempt to differentiate itself from the natural world inasmuch as both demand a kind of thinking founded on strictly logical and calculative methods. This being said, Bittner is demanding from Adorno and Horkheimer the very same logic that they are criticizing and trying to avoid. Therefore, the only way to circumvent foundational logical deduction is to present their ethical claim through a nonidentical language, notwithstanding the fact that this is very difficult to achieve. This is true not only in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*

but throughout the other works of Adorno as well. For instance, in *Negative Dialectics*, he writes: "No man should be tortured; there should be no concentration camps. . . . They must not be rationalized."[27]

James Gordon Finlayson offers a convincing interpretation of the passage just quoted. As opposed to "theorems" or self-evident truths, ethical imperatives, like "No man should not be tortured; there should be no concentration camps," are only "true as impulses" and "must not be rationalized." In other words, the normative bases of ethical sensibility, for Adorno, are not analytical propositions that are deducible from abstract postulates that can be demonstrated logically or procedurally. Rather, ethical sensibility is something that is "mediated by the social reality."[28] However, Adorno insists that when confronted by social reality, theory reacts to a world with a faulty core, but is not able to answer everything.[29] Therefore, ethical sensibility is grounded in the perception or experience of the faulty core of social reality, that is to say, the materiality of suffering. This is what Adorno means by ethical sensibility as being true as an impulse, as opposed to true because it follows the strict rules of logic. Witnessing or experiencing suffering concretely is enough ground to oppose social reality's faulty core.[30] Consider the following passage from *Negative Dialectics*:

> A new categorical imperative has been imposed by Hitler upon unfree mankind: to arrange their thoughts and actions so that Auschwitz will not repeat itself, so that nothing similar will happen. . . . The new imperative gives us a bodily sensation of the moral addendum—bodily, because it is now the practical abhorrence of the unbearable physical agony to which individuals are exposed. . . . It is in the unvarnished materialistic motive only that morality survives.[31]

In the above passage, Adorno uses the horrifying experience of Auschwitz as the material ground for the emergence of a "new categorical imperative," that is, the emphatic attention given to the imminence of violence. To find logical reasons for this new imperative would only render it refractory, reduced into an abstract principle or formula, such as the old Kantian categorical imperative. Adorno's materialistic motive is based on the experience of suffering. Suffering, then, is the normative ground of this new imperative which is described by Adorno in visceral terms as "bodily sensation."[32] Adorno further argues that all mental things originate from physical impulses,[33] thus underscoring the dialectical relation between body and thinking. It is through this dialectical relation that thinking, for Adorno, becomes ethical. In another relevant passage from *Metaphysics: Concept and Problems*, Adorno remarks:

> If I say to you that the true basis of morality is to be found in bodily feeling, in identification with unbearable pain. . . . It is that morality, that which can

be called moral, i.e., the demand for right living, lives on in openly materialist motifs. The metaphysical principle of the injunction that "Thou shalt not inflict pain"—and this injunction is a metaphysical principle pointing beyond mere facticity—can find its justification only in the recourse to material reality, to corporeal, physical reality, and not to its opposite pole, the pure idea.[34]

In this somewhat Spinozist move, Adorno cites the body or "bodily feeling" as the fulcrum of ethical sensibility. More specifically, the body's ability to feel pain and suffering is the material basis for the development of ethical sensibility. In this specific context, "ethics," referred to by Adorno as "morality" or the "moral," is "the demand for right living." This ethical demand or imperative is grounded in a deep awareness of the "faulty core" of social reality, alternatively referred to by Adorno as the "wrong state of things." Therefore, the basis of the ethical injunction, "Thou shall not inflict pain," is the concrete perception or experience of suffering and not, as putatively regarded, some abstract ethical theorem. It is in this very sense that, in contradistinction to Kant's moral imperative, the universalizability of any ethical pronouncement is based on the concrete experience of injury or injustice— what Adorno refers to as "bodily feeling." I call this Adorno's Spinozist move because of the emphasis on the relation between the body and thinking, inasmuch as for Benedict de Spinoza thought is only able to perceive or become aware of things through the body's ability to receive impressions.[35] Because of this emphasis on the role of the body, the materiality of suffering renders our ethical commitments "stronger than any valid theoretical argument that could be given for them" and our insistence on rational and abstract justifications only weakens them.[36] In this context, the experience of the materiality of suffering, for Adorno, informs the quality of philosophical thinking, as it activates the ethical character of thinking.[37] Philosophical thinking, then, becomes a reflective engagement with social reality's faulty core, where philosophical presuppositions are derived dialectically from material experience as opposed to self-evident or abstract assumptions.[38] It is this ethical dimension of Adorno's work that Bittner ignores and so he misses the whole point of the complexity of presenting the material basis of ethical sensibility. Instead, Bittner is looking for logical demonstrability in the text of Adorno, that is to say, he is looking for a philosophical theorem, whereas this is precisely what Adorno deliberately avoids since theorems are not able to demonstrate social contradictions. Instead of logical demonstrability, what Adorno seeks to demonstrate is that social contradictions are themselves the very normative bases of our ethical pronouncements; that ethical theorems are, themselves, merely derivatives of social conditions that cause suffering. The role of philosophy is to expose and protest against the "undiminished persistence of suffering, fear, and menace"[39] and that the ubiquity of these

things should serve as a reminder of the wrong state of things. As a means of protest, there is a need for philosophy to "lend a voice to suffering. . . . For suffering is objectivity that weighs upon the subject; its most subjective experience, its expression, is objectively conveyed."[40] Moreover, in addition to philosophy being a protest against the wrong state of things, it is now part of its purpose to expose the limitations of its own archaic language of looking for the absolute in things or self-evident truths. Rather, philosophy should express our complex and problematic relation to our social environment.

Adorno's materialist conception of ethics points us to another aspect of his work: "inverse theology." A few clarificatory comments need to be provided about Adorno's inverse theology since what it means is by no means self-evident. By clarifying what inverse theology means for Adorno, I complete my response to Bittner, whom I think is mistaken when he charges Adorno with religious foundationalism. In a 1934 letter to Benjamin, Adorno, himself, did not shy away from admitting that his own philosophical position was informed by a form of inverse theology:

> Do not take it for immodesty if I begin by confessing that our agreement in philosophical fundamentals has never impressed itself upon my mind more perfectly than it does here. . . . And this also, and indeed in a quite principled sense, touches upon one's position with regard to "theology." Since I always insisted on such a position before entering into your Arcades, it seems to me doubly important that the image of theology, into which I would gladly see our thoughts dissolve, is none other than the very one which sustains your thoughts here—it could indeed be called an "inverse" theology.[41]

Adorno is referring to Benjamin's essay "Franz Kafka"[42] which Adorno reads as "against natural and supernatural interpretation."[43] Not only does Adorno confess to Benjamin that their works share fundamental affinities with theology, but he also asserts that they are both doing some form of "inverse theology," that is, a type of theology that runs against the natural and supernatural. But what could this mean? By saying that he is an advocate of inverse theology, is Bittner correct in accusing Adorno of religious foundationalism? Perhaps, it might help to first say what inverse theology is not. Inverse theology is not the same as "negative theology" (apophatic theology) which is the idea "that of God, we can know and say only what 'he' is not."[44] In this sense, negative theology is still essentially "positive" because it does not deny the existence of a God, but, rather, simply that we do not have the means to know and describe the actual attributes of God. God, then, is still a presence, albeit "understood to be unnameable, unsayable, and indeed inconceivable."[45] Negative theology rests on the fundamental limitation of human language to describe God for what "he" really is, as God is

the metaphysical being par excellence: anterior to anything in this world and, hence, beyond any cognitive conceptualization. Given this definition of negative theology, it is important not to confuse it with Adorno's negative dialectics. Meanwhile, inverse theology, as Adorno conceived it, is based on his revision of the subject-object dialectic, specifically the nonidentical relation between subject and object. As stated earlier, inverse theology is against natural and supernatural interpretation which means that it is neither positive theology nor ahistorical theology. It is not positive because its purpose is not to explain reality through a given revelation of a divine God; it is not ahistorical because it is fundamentally grounded in human historical reality which is nothing else but the aforementioned faulty core of social reality. As such, then, inverse theology, for Adorno, is a critical reaction to this faulty core of social reality. It is also in this context that we could link inverse theology with Adorno's materialist ethics gleaned, as discussed above, from the standpoint of suffering. To some degree, Adorno echoes the observation of Marx in the "Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," where the latter remarks that "*Religious* distress is at the same time the *expression* of real distress and also the *protest* against real distress."[46] Despite Marx's contention that religion is "the opium of the people,"[47] his view of religion is not that disparaging as is usually regarded. For Marx, religion is also a form of protest against what affects us as wrong. Gleaned from the standpoint of distress or suffering, Adorno, like Marx, understands religion as a protest against distress, but it is a kind of negative protest because it negates the negativity—that is, the wrong state—of social reality. However, for Adorno, the invocation of inverse theology is by no means a desperate return to positive theology or to religious spirituality. Rather, inverse theology is a radical negation of our distressful social condition. This protest against distress is similar to Albert Camus's declaration of "metaphysical rebellion," but, unlike metaphysical rebellion, Adorno's negation of the wrong state of things is not a wholesale rebellion against "the whole of creation."[48] In contradistinction to Marx, Adorno does not conceive of inverse theology as a way of numbing our sensibilities from suffering which is an act of escapism. On the contrary, as a radical gesture, inverse theology is a deliberate abandonment of the otherworldly of traditional religion and it seeks to imagine the Other of suffering. In other words, inverse theology is not a form of consolation, but a thinking of a radical future in the present. Very similar to Nietzsche's negation of a negation that allows us to affirm life, thereby abandoning nihilism, Adorno's imagination of a radical future via the negation of the wrong state of things allows us to envisage social conditions that resemble a vague notion of a good life. Therefore, as a gesture of redemption, an inverse theology neither promises to alleviate our distress by providing an image of a consoling God nor does it encourage us to embrace a notion of relationality that promises

comfort through technology. Rather, inverse theology allows us to imagine a "post-Auschwitz" world where, once again, it is possible to think of the good life through art, religion, and philosophy, but only in an "inverted" manner which entails a heightened attention to the reality of suffering. In this context, then, art, religion, and philosophy—having been altered by the new ethical imperative wrought out of the experience of Auschwitz—become the unequivocal negation of suffering, so that Auschwitz or anything similar to it will not happen again.

Adorno's concept of redemption does not promise anything positive or anything immediate, as it preserves the nonidentical character of reality. Another way of saying this is that such notion of redemption recovers our ability to experience the very negativity that surrounds us and only then would it be possible for us to imagine something other than this negativity. Nevertheless, the negation of negativity is radically negative. The vague notion of a good life envisaged from a redemptive standpoint is something that we cannot name; in a section below, I refer to this alternatively as "ungroundable hope." In the same correspondence with Benjamin cited earlier, Adorno illustrates a notion of ungroundable hope by referring to the figure of Odradek, the main character of Kafka's *The Cares of a Family Man*, as a "promise of *hope* . . . as the other face of the world of things . . . a sign of distortion—but precisely as such he is also a motif of transcendence . . . the ultimate limit and . . . reconciliation of the organic and inorganic, or the overcoming of death."[49] The figure of Odradek is paradoxical: while he promises hope, he could only do so as a distorted figure—but by being distorted, he transcends any form of familiarity, as he does not assume any definitive identity. Therefore, Odradek is the promise of *negative hope*, as he "*bears witness as a photographic negative to a happiness we have been denied*."[50] It is in this context that the Jewish ideas of *Bilderverbot* play out in the work of Adorno through his description of the figure of Odradek. In addition to the negative hope that the figure of Odradek indicates, in *Negative Dialectics*, what Adorno refers to as a "materialist longing" is also related to ungroundable hope:

> The materialist longing to grasp the thing aims at the opposite: it is only in the absence of images that the full object could be conceived. Such absence concurs with the theological ban on images. Materialism brought that ban into secular form by not permitting Utopia to be positively pictured. . . . At its most materialistic, materialism comes to agree with theology. Its great desire would be the resurrection of the flesh.[51]

The above passage reveals key elements of Adorno's appropriation of *Bilderverbot* and how it plays out in his inverse theology. The passage itself is by no means a tacit confirmation of Adorno's affinity with theology, even

pointing out that the agreement between materialism and theology is what makes materialism a genuine materialism. For Adorno, the materialist longing aims to grasp the full object—or the truth of an object—negatively, that is, in the absence of a clearly recognizable image. It is clear from the passage that the appropriation of *Bilderverbot* should not be taken literally, rather, according to Adorno, in a secular sense: the refusal to positively identify a utopian vision. I referred to this negative utopia above as the "vague notion of a good life." Such materialist longing is materialism because the negation that inverse theology entails does not long for an otherworldly but affirms (ala Nietzsche) the same material reality while negating its faulty core. The awareness and disclosure of this faulty core is enough reason to negate it and long for better conditions, as Adorno emphasizes, "the false, once determinately known and precisely expressed, is already an index of what is right and better."[52] Expressed another way, Adorno maintains that the false "proclaims itself in . . . a certain immediacy, and this immediacy of the false, this *falsum*, is the index *sui atque veri* . . . a certain pointer for what I consider 'right thinking.'"[53] We must pay attention to the paradoxical argument of Adorno: the false or the wrong life is, therefore, the very normative standard upon which the truth of the falsity of reality is disclosed; it is this disclosure of reality's own falsity that prompts its very own inversion.

COGNITIVE UTOPIA AND THE RECOVERY OF EXPERIENCE

The above discussion already points to the complexity of Adorno's revisionist model of the subject-object dialectic. He does not simply draw on terminology from traditional accounts of the philosophy of consciousness. "Subject and Object" is a re-articulation of the vexed question of the dialectic, but Adorno analyzes the dialectic from a critical standpoint. Adorno's style of questioning comports itself with the timbre of suspicion exhibited in the works of Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, and Derrida. In opposition to Habermas's claim, Adorno is not simply repeating past attempts to solve the subject-object problem; solving it is far from his real concern. What Adorno does is to use the subject-object dialectic to reveal that all thinking is susceptible to "identity thinking." And by acknowledging this often neglected aspect of human consciousness, that is, by being receptive to the traumatic wreckage of a damaged or reified life, the possibility of reviving the utopian ideal of resisting reification and all its effects with "negative dialectics" as our new ethical imperative, our sensitivities come closer to an image of reconciliation—or, in Adorno's own words, we begin to realize the possibility of "the state of distinctness without domination, with the distinct participating in each other."[54]

Adorno is well aware that the burden of reconciliation falls to the subject part of the dialectic, that is, to the part of our conceptual language. His proposal of a revaluation of the language of philosophy, which actually extends to a broader conception of language, seeks to orient philosophy to a utopian vision: "the state of distinctness without domination, with the distinct participating in each other." With his revision of the subject-object dialectic, Adorno is able to demonstrate the dynamics of reification that occurs amid the dialectical exchange between our linguistically preformed conception of the world, on the one hand, and the nonidentical world, on the other. What I sought to bring forth in my discussion of Nietzsche and Adorno's theories of language (chapters 2 and 3), on the one hand, is that both thinkers emphatically acknowledge the existence of a real physical world and, as such, they consciously avoid collapsing philosophy to sheer solipsism. On the other hand, they both strongly object to the naïve positivistic claim that we have direct access to the physical world as it is sans the mediation of a linguistic or conceptual apparatus. A third feature of the Nietzsche-Adorno position is the recognition of the thoroughly complex dynamics between the *world* (object) and our *worldview* (subject). Failure to acknowledge such complexity could either lead to a naïve positivism or a dangerous idealism. This complexity could be further expressed, as do Adorno and Horkheimer in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and Nietzsche in *Twilight of the Idols*, as human history's traversal of a course that eventually led to the hypostatization of our conceptual apparatus, where now our objects of experience are predetermined by our conceptual apparatus, what is referred to now as identity thinking (Adorno) or metaphysics (Nietzsche). The priority accorded to our conceptual mechanism over experience entails that concepts have become increasingly separated from their original cognitive basis in sensuous experience. Adorno describes this unfortunate trajectory as the *chorismos* or gnawing gap between subject and object which pathologically results in the distortion of both.

We have seen above that the ethical thrust of Adorno's philosophy could be gleaned from his critique of the reificatory character of constitutive subjectivity, a revisionist understanding of the subject-object dialectic, the material experience of suffering, and the negation of the wrong state of things. Such ethical thrust hinges on a more fundamental advocacy of his philosophical enterprise: "the recovery of experience."[55] To be more precise: the recovery of experience from the virulent effects of identity thinking's conceptual imperialism and the suffering caused by the pathological conditions of social reality. Impoverished experience or damaged life is described in "Subject and Object" as a form of "captivity": "Captivity was internalized; the individual is no less imprisoned in himself than in the universal, in society";[56] the same impoverishment of experience is described in *Negative Dialectics* as a "spell" cast not only on human beings but on the world. It is in this binding

spell—the captivating illusion of freedom construed as primacy over the objects of nature, culminating in the inwardization of subjectivity—that the subject comes to assume a "perverted" image of its separation from nature, separation in the sense of virulent abstraction, the totalization of reified consciousness.[57] Such virulent abstraction, in Adorno's words, "threatens the life of the species as much as it disavows the spell cast over the whole, the false identity of subject and object."[58]

Indeed, here Adorno reiterates a basic assumption made in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*: the hostility of humankind towards itself, "a denial of nature in the human being for the sake of mastery over extrahuman nature and over the other human beings."[59] This is the unfortunate path that conceptual reason has taken, that is, mimesis gone awry. But Adorno does not propose to lead us back to a pre-mimetic state. What he proposes, rather, is the enfeebling of human reason's virulence, that is to say, reason's self-acknowledgment of its very own irrational content. Thus, akin to Nietzsche, Adorno maintains that reason's self-realization of itself as not entirely rational is immanent within itself.[60] We have seen in chapter 1, that this self-reflective feature of reason had already been emphasized by the proponents of the *Frühromantik* tradition, specifically in their use of Romantic irony wherein the aporetic status of language, and hence thinking, is performed alongside thinking's self-consciousness. Not entirely rational means that reason's irrationality lurks behind, and informs, its external presentation as knowledge, as science, as philosophy, and, indeed, as politics. The imperialism of reason lurks behind all these spheres of the social world. But the self-realization of reason, its polarization or recognition of "self-contradictoriness" as absolute identity, is also the key towards reconciliation; for self-realized reason will hopefully leave "the particular reason of the universal behind" or, in other words, when it begins to become receptive to the nonidentical, it will begin to acknowledge "the utopian particular that has been buried underneath the universal."[61] Such unearthing of the utopian particular does not entail a wholesale rejection of our conceptual apparatus; rather, it implies the becoming fuller of the subject, in contradistinction to the subject's hypostatization which renders it less than it is. By reconciling with the object via concepts, the subject becomes more: "The subject is the more the less it is, and it is less the more it credits itself with objective being."[62] Moreover, the unearthing of the utopian particular, for Adorno, is the reorientation of our conceptual apparatus back into the infinite givenness of the object, which also means the acknowledgment of the object's reliance on the concept, for the "object, too, is mediated; but according to its own concept."[63] Furthermore, "the object, though enfeebled, cannot be without a subject either. If the object lacked the moment of subjectivity, its own objectivity would become nonsensical."[64] In *Negative Dialectics*, Adorno refers to this reconciliation and reciprocation between subject and

object as "cognitive utopia": the "use of concepts to unseal the nonconceptual with concepts, without making it their equal."[65]

The recovery of experience, therefore, presupposes cognitive utopia. In this sense, "experience," for Adorno, means the unsealing or disclosure of the nonidentical with concepts without the total subsumption of the objects by the concepts. The mimetic moment is, therefore, crucial for the recovery of experience, since mimesis entails precisely the conceptual formation of our lifeworld. However, mimesis, as Adorno and Horkheimer emphatically maintain, is Janus-faced, it is the process through which we open ourselves up to the world and, at the same time, also the process that leads to domination. In other words, mimesis is the fulcrum of experience, at the same time as it is the dissimulated blockage of experience. As pointed out earlier, experience becomes impoverished when thought remains "captivated" or trapped in the "spell" of identity thinking, construed as mastery over the objects of nature. Again, Nietzsche and Adorno are one in the observation that the spell of identity thinking governs even our most ordinary use of language; it is in our day-to-day dealings with objects, our day-to-day use of words where we manipulate these objects, where we let concepts subsume objects. This process involving language leads us to choose homogeneity over heterogeneity, uniformity over variety, unity over diversity, sameness over difference. Indeed, Adorno argues that the kind of thinking imposed on us by the status quo is the very opposite of dialectical thought: "Conceptual order is content to screen what thinking seeks to comprehend."[66] J. M. Bernstein explains this point further:

> Routine concept application, where concepts are possessed and the world routine and law-like in its presentation of phenomena, would seem to *not* call into operation our capacity for reflective judging. Ordinary perceptual judgement only wants from the object judged its familiarity, its fit within the conceptual order as a step within practical life.[67]

The nondialectical character of identity thinking blocks reason's self-reflection, thereby failing to open up and be receptive to the nonidentical character of objects. In the context of modern life, we understand, via Adorno, that the ubiquity and obliviousness of the everyday aggravates the damaged life; the everyday impoverishes experience because it unwittingly submits to an unquestioned conceptual order at the expense of new possibilities—the familiar becomes the order of the day. Adorno, for instance, refers to the fetishization of music and the regression in listening in an administered or commodified society, where liking is the same as recognizing the familiar, as an example of the ubiquity of the familiar. He writes: "No more choices are made . . . no one demands the subjective justification of the conventions,"

since the "familiarity of the piece is a surrogate for the quality ascribed to it," hence, "the charms become dulled and furnish models of the familiar."[68] In this instance, Adorno shifts from an epistemological account to a more macroscopic account of the subject-object relation. He provides us an example of how the pathological instantiation of mimesis occurs in society. Experience is relegated to the mediation of a reified conceptual order, that is, show business. The experience (or nonexperience) of listening is mediated by music charts, sales, and the manufactured image of the artist, instead of the subjective, that is to say, the personal involvement of the listener with the music; in more theoretical terms, the receptivity of the subject to the object. In this sense, experience is impoverished since the mimetic experience is itself mediated by a conceptual order that has everything to do with the *production* of music but does not have anything to do with its *creation*.

Adorno perceives the possibility of reconciliation in the shared material basis of subject and object: the body. The body is the fulcrum through which and from which the subject makes sense of his spatio-temporal world. As such, Nietzsche and Adorno converge again in this cognitive-mimetic function of the body. There is a certain affinity between Nietzsche's ontological supposition that the will-to-truth emerges as a self-regulating process of a unity of irreducible somatic forces from which consciousness emerges as an aggregate[69] and Adorno's emphasis that bodily feeling is the basis of ethical consciousness in the sense that "consciousness is a function of the living subject."[70] Moreover, Nietzsche argues that judgment can only occur after the "process of assimilation" has already taken place:

> There could be no judgments at all if a kind of equalization were not practiced within sensations: memory is possible only with a continual emphasizing of what is already familiar, experienced. Before judgment occurs, the process of assimilation must already have taken place; thus, here, too, there is an intellectual activity that does not enter consciousness, as pain does as a consequence of a wound.[71]

For his part, Adorno remarks: "All mental things are modified physical impulses, and such modification is their qualitative recoil into what not merely 'is.' . . . The supposed basic facts of consciousness are something other than mere facts of consciousness."[72] Like Nietzsche, Adorno maintains that the transcendent characteristic of subjectivity is a byproduct of a logical construct,[73] and that what is often neglected by idealist philosophies is the utterly material or physical origin of constitutive subjectivity. Both Nietzsche and Adorno emphasize the primacy of the body over the mind, the mind being dependent on the body, the production of the transcendent mind being its ultimate separation from its material origin. In chapter 2, we considered

Nietzsche's argument that the body-mind dualism, characteristic of Western philosophy, is a complication of the metaphysical bias of the fear of temporality. In this context, what lies behind the history of constitutive subjectivity (the de-historicized subject) is the metaphysical fear of becoming—this fear is symptomatic of idealism's forgetfulness of the mind's essential, yet dissimulated bond, with the body, purporting to accord a privileged status to the mind. Meanwhile, Adorno presents the situation from the standpoint of the mind's alienation from its very own beginning and self-consciousness; he maintains that the metaphysical separation of mind and body, that is, forgetfulness of the mind of its somatic origin, is the real cause of the mind's unhappiness. Nevertheless, Adorno also points out, in an almost existential parlance, that it is precisely this feeling of unhappiness—the feeling of separation from the body—that is the mind's negative reminder of a sense of reconciliation; such self-consciousness is necessarily unhappy. This feeling of unhappiness is presented above as the historical experience of suffering which, as we have seen, is the normative ground of Adorno's materialist ethics. Reconciliation is, therefore, the ultimate struggle of the mind to break free from its alienated state. From this, we could infer, following Adorno, that the drama of reconciliation is not simply the overcoming of the violence inflicted on the object, but, more precisely, the overcoming of the violence inflicted on the mind—on the subject. Such violence can be gleaned from the hypostatization of the mimicked character of the object (body), turning subjectivity (mind) inwards; the forgetfulness of this somatic encounter is the actualization of this violence.

Mimesis is another word for the metaphorical organization of language. The metaphorical structure of language mimics the somatic coordination of the body's competing drives. Mimesis, ipso facto, is the possibility of experience. To say that metaphorical language is linked to the body is to say that the body is an interpretative medium. What we consider as the sphere of reality is "constituted" and "interpreted" by our bodily drives—they "co-create" and "comport the very objects of our experience."[74] The point raised in chapter 2 has something to do with the metaphorical constitution of our experience, that language is essentially somatic. What we learn from both Nietzsche and Adorno is that mimesis or the metaphorical organization of language, as an expression of the will, is what lies behind affective experience, what lies behind subjectivity. Hence, the recovery of the mimetic drive is, therefore, the recovery of experience. Moreover, the mimetic moment or language, inasmuch as it is metaphorical, has always been informed by its aesthetic content. The recovery of experience entails a recovery of the aesthetic, which also entails the recovery of bodily feeling.

Given the above, "cognitive utopia" can only be a recovery of experience by seeking to recover our senses. Once more, we learn to listen to

our bodies as locales of mimetic moments. Moreover, it is cognitive utopia precisely because it seeks to reconcile mind and body, subject and object. Acknowledging the mimetic or metaphorical basis of language does not mean, for either Nietzsche or Adorno, that our assimilation or creation of an external world is thoroughly driven by our unconscious somatic drives (Nietzsche) or the nonidentical objects (Adorno). Rather, the assimilated or created world is both a product of the dialectical interaction between our "conscious ideological positioning"[75] and the nonidentical, unconscious, material forces. The assimilation or creation of a world is, therefore, a socio-historical process, for it involves the material social, political, and historical conditions surrounding and, hence, constituting the subject's lifeworld. To put it differently, "the limits and possibilities of the body's coordination of somatic drives is also shaped according to our present persuasion of belief concerning the world."[76] So—although subject and object are infinitely incommensurate, since it is part of the meaning of subject to be an object, yet not part of the object to be a subject[77]—Adorno is justified in claiming that the recovery of the object, that is of experience, emphatically depends on a renewal of our conceptual sensibilities; that the object, at this point in time, cannot do without the subject. In this sense, in cognitive utopia, the object is not virulently subsumed by the subject, nor is the subject irrevocably dissolved in the object. Moreover, cognitive utopia displaces the Habermasian worry that any talk of subject and object merely reinforces the view that reason can only manifest in history as objectification or instrumentalization. Contrary to the Habermasian claim, what cognitive utopia seeks is reason's reconciliation with nature, that is, the redemption of both through mimesis. Kompridis illustrates this point very clearly:

> In taking the position of the "object," the "subject" is not abandoning its subjectivity (or responsibility); that follows only from the premises of the standard subject-object framework. Rather, the "subject" is engaged in a mimetic or receptive act through which it can encounter the "object" in nonobjectifying, noninstrumental way, putting itself in a position where it can see itself through the "object's" eyes.[78]

Hence, the principle that animates cognitive utopia is receptivity, but not simply intersubjective receptivity, but, rather, also receptivity to the infinitely given, yet silent object. This notion of receptivity also implies the possibility of providing a voice to the voiceless, whether persons or things. The rehabilitation of this receptivity finds its way by reorienting ourselves to how our bodies function in the cognitive process and how this cognitive process cannot do without language. We have to realize, moreover, the deeply metaphorical or aesthetic character of our use of language, for

indeed we live in an aesthetically *created* world. Like Nietzsche, Adorno undermines the idealist priority given to transcendental reason and, instead, like Nietzsche, rethinks the role of our bodily drives in the formation of our experiences and how these drives shape consciousness. Thus, both Nietzsche and Adorno converge in viewing mental processes as epiphenomenal. But the point of cognitive utopia is not simply to expose the reified state of our conceptual apparatus, but, more importantly, the revival of concepts via concepts that are oriented towards providing the nonidentical the voice of reason. The voice of reason that cognitive utopia advocates is not trapped within a copy-bound or representational mimetic model, one which replaces the particularity or individuality of objects with identity,[79] but, rather, it is a type of reason that highlights the affective formation of consciousness and, as such, leaves room for a mimetic model that is open to the infinite givenness and nonconceptuality of objects. The upshot of the latter notion of reason is that it does not unwittingly paralyze conceptual thinking and becomes more akin to "the spontaneity of the subject"; for our access to objects, Adorno intimates, is not the "spiritual silence of integral administration," but, rather, in "the subjective surplus in thought."[80] It is, therefore, not the goal of cognitive utopia to sever ties with language: "to abolish language in thought is not to demythologize thought."[81] Thinking, according to Adorno, is dialectical precisely because of language— "Dialectics—literally: language as the organon of thought"—and, in accordance to Nietzsche's revival of the deeply seated metaphorical structure of language, Adorno also views dialectics as the attempt to critically rescue the "rhetorical element" in thought.[82] As with the subject-object dialectic, this critical rescue of the rhetorical in thought, moreover, entails a mutual estimation of expression and thing[83] and, as such, dialectical language only seeks to appropriate the world metaphorically, always on guard against thought's relapse to myth.

In his posthumously published *Lectures on Negative Dialectics*, Adorno asserts, "The power of negative dialectics is the power of whatever is <u>not</u> realized in the thing itself."[84] The "surplus of thought," mentioned earlier, is the "not realized" and, for Adorno, this "negativity" in thought provides a more dignified and receptive space for the unfolding or disclosure of "objectivity." But here, objectivity means "infinite givenness," *exhaustibility*, as opposed to identity. The ethical role of philosophy is to maintain the dialectical in thought, more precisely, language's ability to separate "thought and object just as much as it is capable of being mobilized against separation."[85] Negative dialectics or receptivity to objectivity—one of constant and open conceptual expression of objectivity, at the same time not letting the conceptual take over or, in a word, "reconciliation,"—is the "utopian" image of cognition, an utopian image that is precisely the "ethical" struggle of thinking.

POSSIBILITY, AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE,
AND DAMAGED LIFE

In this section, I tackle the possibility of aesthetic experience, which, for both Nietzsche and Adorno, is an indispensable aspect of our openness to objects. I will demonstrate that the ethics of thinking is linked to aesthetic experience inasmuch as the redemptive dimension of mimesis is only gleaned from an emphatic immersion into damaged life. The experience of damaged life brings to the fore the moments of critical disclosure, possibility and creativity, and redemption.

The discussion of cognitive utopia above allows us to interpret negative dialectics as the unfolding of the ethical content of thinking. Such ethical import, as intimated above, is receptive to the role of language as the mimetic link between subject and object, the reconciliatory relation between our conceptual apparatus and the infinite and nonidentical givenness of the world. What all these amount to for Adorno is our receptivity to "possibility," as he declares in *Negative Dialectics*.[86] As receptivity to possibility, negative dialectics maintains the distance between words and things.[87] Possibility is, therefore, thought's own self-consciousness of its very own conceptuality, that is to say, of its very own fallibility. Part of thought's self-awareness is also the realization that objects or particularities in reality—that is, in how these objects or particularities are presented to us by our present historico-ideological situation—appear false or damaged. For Adorno, the possible or the not-yet inheres in objects or particularities inasmuch as they are conceptually presented as incomplete. In this sense, the revival or, in some cases, the creation of utopian energies rests on the painful recognition of the incompleteness of the object. While identitarian thought only perceives or is under the specious impression of perceiving noncontradiction between subject and object, nonidentitarian thought perceives contradiction between subject and object; in this sense, nonidentitarian critique or negative dialectics attempts at identifying whether a "concept does justice to what it covers."[88] What is hoped for in this dialectically nonidentitarian notion of justice is both the disclosure of the "pernicious supremacy" of reified concepts in our day-to-day activities, on the one hand, and the realization that the present configuration of objects or particularities in society falls short of the objects' concepts, on the other hand.[89] An example for this is how capitalism manifests itself in the current state of society as the very failure to fulfill its own concept. In other words, possibility or utopia inheres in damaged life inasmuch as the disclosure of the wrong state of things rekindles, albeit painfully, our receptivity to possibility. In the above context, therefore, negative dialectics, as critical disclosure, reveals the falsified way we perceive society normatively structured by the wrong state of things. In his lecture series *Problems of Moral*

Philosophy, delivered in 1963, Adorno announced that the only decent, by which he perhaps means earnest, way of confronting the reality of the wrong state of things is not by promising that a good life is possible in a bad life, but, rather, "by making this situation a matter of consciousness—rather than covering it up with sticking plaster," for only then would "it be possible to create the conditions in which we can properly formulate questions about how we should lead our lives today."[90] By bringing the damaged life into our consciousness, we also become conscious of conceptual fallibility or the finitude of our epistemological and moral categories. Such consciousness will be a constant reminder of thought's indebtedness to objects and, at the same time, thought's reorientation in *responsible* spontaneity.

Adorno's notion of possibility, therefore, goes beyond the simple restoration of the thoroughly material subject-object dialectic. Or, said another way, he goes beyond a simple epistemological account of the dialectic, as the emphatically ethical content of Adorno's critique of the wrong state of things reverberates in his revision of the subject-object dialectic. Therefore, thinking, in this light, is ethical because it is receptive to the *decency* of emphatically acknowledging what is wrong, yet it is also negative. It is negative in two senses: first, because it refuses to posit normative finality and maintains a pathos of distance from the object and, second, because it admits to being contaminated by damaged life, yet perceives in damaged life the possibility of negative utopia. Thus, for Adorno, positivity or, better yet, redemption inheres in the negative, in the nonidentical; the meaning of utopia is only conceivable against the background of dystopia, or as Adorno phrases it in "Critique": "The false, once determinately known and precisely expressed, is already an index of what is right and better."[91] He arrives at the same conclusion in "Resignation": "The universal tendency of oppression is opposed to thought as such. Thought is happiness, even where it defines unhappiness: by enunciating it."[92]

I have already adumbrated above the idea of "ungroundable hope" by relating it to Adorno's discussion with Benjamin of the figure of Odradek in Kafka's story. Through the distorted, yet redemptive, figure of Odradek, we may evince a notion of ungroundable hope or negative hope. Moreover, I have also related the idea of ungroundable hope to Adorno's notion of materialist longing found in *Negative Dialectics*. However, to be more precise, "ungroundable hope" is a metaphorical phrase I borrow from Nicholas H. Smith; it is a phrase that attempts to capture the redemptive content of negative dialectics. Smith observes that the basic thrust of critical theory is "hope for a better world."[93] But, as we have seen, the ethical element of hope, for Adorno, is its negativity or its refusal to posit any positivistic or rational justification for why we should hope for something better. Following Richard Rorty, Smith contends that critical theory, in this case Adorno's critical

theory, does not intend to block off hope, but, rather, it gains more critical leverage from its "skepticism" about hope's "rational groundability" and "attentiveness to the contingency" of the fulfillment of hope; these are, Smith notes, "just what we need to have hope," that is, the reactivation of our "utopian imagination while advocating meliorism" without falling into the trap of the "metaphysical notion of utopia as transfigured humanity."[94] If we follow the theoretical and practical implications of ungroundable hope, then we begin to understand that "uncertainty" is the most certain and potent aspect of possibility. Negative dialectics, then, emerges as a reminder of ungroundable hope; and, in the context of the subject-object dialectic, negative dialectics is able to disclose a notion of social responsibility that is deeply rooted in the historicality of damaged life.

The above discussion of possibility brings us to the issue of the *possibility* of possibility in a damaged life. I argue that Adorno's (and Nietzsche's) answer is clear: "aesthetic experience" bears the weight of possibility. It was noted in the preceding discussions that negative dialectics is able to *respond* to the still unrealized possibilities that the nonidentical offers—even more emphatically, and historically so, in the current state of a damaged life. So, like Nietzsche who pushes the notion of nihilism to its conceptual limits so as to overcome it, Adorno, for his part, conceives the critical-ethical element of thinking immanently within the damaged life and uses it as a springboard to conceive possibilities fueled by utopian hope. In this context, Deborah Cook is correct in insisting that possibility in Adorno always contains a "speculative dimension"[95] or, as Adorno puts it, the conceptual can "capture the immortal only in the configurations of the mortal."[96] This means that thinking the nonidentical remains conceptual; but since the conceptual is now recast as mortal, as fallible, the subject retains his or her freedom to step outside the fringes of a given conceptual framework. Thus, in this sense, rigidity is dissolved. Thought maintains its distance from the conjured object and, with the infinite givenness or "undiminished multiplicity"[97] of the object as its guide, points to still undisclosed possibilities: "It opens itself up to them in all earnestness, does not use them as a mirror, does not confuse its own reflection with the concrete realities."[98] The ethical content of thought is the "pathos of distance" to use a Nietzschean phrase in a more or less re-contextualized form, that thinking maintains as it confronts objects—the receptivity to the "otherness" of objects—a gesture that resists the temptation of identity. In *Aesthetic Theory*, Adorno, borrowing a curious term from Benjamin, refers to this pathos of distance as the "aura" of an object, in particular, of an artwork: "Aura is not only . . . the here and now of the artwork, it is whatever goes beyond its factual givenness, its content; one cannot abolish it and still want art."[99] He writes, moreover: "The distance of the aesthetic realm from that of practical aims appears inner-aesthetically as the distance of aesthetic objects from the observing subject."[100] As such, for

Adorno, the "aesthetic distance" instantiated by the aura of a work of art, or any object for that matter, is the "primary condition for any closeness to the content of works."[101] The experience of the aura, which for Adorno is the locus of aesthetic experience, opens up the subject to "interpretation" and "receptivity."[102]

In the context of Adorno's concept of aesthetic experience, Yvonne Sherratt provides us schematic definitions of "interpretation" and "receptivity." Interpretation is "the act of applying and reapplying concepts to a work of art in order to attempt to make a judgment as to what the work of art portrays";[103] while receptivity is defined as the "act of aesthetic engagement" which elicits something distinctive in the object.[104] The "mortal" act of interpretation—the use and reuse of concepts for critical disclosure—is the dignified consequence of the subject's receptivity to the "immortal" aura, immortal only in the sense that it escapes our conceptual apparatus. The act of interpretation, therefore, entails continuous and untiring configurative shifts—for, in every, act of interpretation, our conceptual apparatus should give justice to what is given and, still, be open to the fleeting "enigma" of whatever object or artwork that is in sight. Receptivity, in this sense, is the capacity to point beyond the determinate givenness of an object. Receptivity is, therefore, an ambivalent gesture, for, as an "act of aesthetic engagement," it entails distance and proximity—it is only by maintaining the auratic distance between subject and object that conceptual justice is given to the object and, in return, the subject is opened to the nonidentical givenness of the object. Once more, we perceive the relation between subject and object as reciprocal and reconciliatory, but not necessarily positively communicative. Conceptual thinking's powerlessness over the enigmatic character of objects, or what Adorno refers to as the "fracturedness" of objects,[105] is the nonidentical that persistently escapes thinking. Ultimately, Adorno imagines the possibility of cognitive utopia in our receptivity to the enigmatic, auratic givenness of objects; indeed cognitive utopia is best embodied in the experience of an artwork, inasmuch as the experience, which also presupposes the conceptual or linguistic operation of the mind as a normative point of departure, allows the unfolding of the nonidentical to conceptual contemplation. For Adorno, the experience of the nonidentical is the disclosure of the *incompleteness* of thinking, but, ultimately, the experience of the object's "remainder": "Artworks that unfold to contemplation and thought without any remainder are not artworks."[106] What is stressed in auratic distance is the irreducibility of the mediatory or mimetic structure of aesthetic experience and, I argue, of experience in general. In the above context, mimesis, for Adorno, is the bearer of aesthetic experience:

> Mimetic comportment—an attitude toward reality distinct from the fixated antithesis of subject and object—is seized in art—the organ of mimesis since

the mimetic taboo—by semblance and, as the complement to the autonomy of form, becomes its bearer.[107]

Here, Nietzsche and Adorno converge in stressing the thoroughly mediatory structure of mimesis. As opposed to Plato, who like Habermas proposes a stark opposition between aesthetic experience and reason, both Nietzsche and Adorno refuse to give up on the ethical and epistemological dimensions of aesthetic experience. While both Nietzsche and Adorno reject Plato's representational model of mimesis or "mimetic taboo," they both locate in the mediatory space created by aesthetic experience an emphatic expression of ethical sensibility. Nietzsche's emphasis on the irreducibility of somatic drives as the epiphenomenal content of our cognitive faculty allows us to conceive of affective experience as a "transfigurative mimetic relation"[108] between subject and object. Like Adorno, Nietzsche shifts from a copy-based or representational mimetic model to a mimetic model that emphasizes the active participation of the subject; in Adorno, this is the subject's receptivity and act of interpretation. Meanwhile, in "On Truth and Lies," Nietzsche writes:

> Between two absolutely different spheres, as between subject and object, there is no causality, no correctness, and no expression; there is, at most, an *aesthetic* relation: I mean, a suggestive transference, a stammering translation into a completely foreign tongue—for which, there is required, in any case, a freely inventive intermediate sphere and mediating force.[109]

In chapter 2, we have seen how Nietzsche's theory of language accounts for the metaphorical transfiguration of objects into language. In opposition to a metaphysical notion of reality, Nietzsche reorients us to a conception of a world mediated by language, and he describes this mediation as socially motivated and historically situated. So, while our perspectival image of the world is normatively grounded in metaphorical language, it is precisely our recognition of the metaphorical nature of language that provides leeway for perspectival shifts or *creativity* in our value judgments. Meanwhile, we could interpret Adorno's conception of mimesis as the opening up of the subject to the object, and vice versa. By following the implications of the auratic givenness of the object, we get an insight into the proximate distance created in the relation, which, for Adorno, allows the subject to form a spontaneous aesthetic attitude or disposition towards the object. In "The Actuality of Philosophy," Adorno borrows a phrase from Francis Bacon, "*ars inveniendi*" (art of invention), to scaffold what he terms as an "exact fantasy," a process of generation and regeneration, configuration and reconfiguration, of the subject's knowledge of the object.[110] In this context,

we could further construe aesthetic experience as receptivity to the material constitution of the object, which demands from the subject an "exactness" of judgment, and then receptivity to the infinite givenness of the object, which creates a space for a spontaneity-inspired interpretive stance or, in other words, a provision for "fantasy" or "imagination." Subject-object reciprocity could, therefore, be understood as a process wherein the subject charts the object, as it were a tourist in a strange town or city, while concepts and their constellations function like a tourist's map. In this analogy, it is clear that a map does not measure up to everything in the actual town or city; one could discover the most interesting parts of town while actually strolling and perhaps ignoring the map. Affective experience (Nietzsche) or aesthetic experience (Adorno) is guided by the conceptual mechanism of language, as it were a map, but its language should not be construed to be bound to an a priori *ratio*. While any a priori *ratio* can always be posited by idealist philosophy *only* in principle, experience's resistance to any a priori given is an *actual* or material phenomenon. In this context, thinking can only be "ethical" when it attunes itself to the nonidentical resistance of objective experience—and, by doing so, it avails itself of an "imagined" freedom from its own rigidifying tendency. There is, in principle, a transmutation of priorities—the infinite givenness of the object takes over the subject, but this is precisely what is needed to feed our imagination or fantasy. In other words, while the primacy of the object remains, the emergence of "meaning" depends on the mimetic encounter between subject and object, that is to say, the imaginative dimension of aesthetic experience elicits meaning. In a more sociopolitical context, this refers to our ability to imagine or fantasize about something *other* than a damaged life.

From the foregoing discussion, we could connect three interrelated moments which emerge from the relation between aesthetic experience and the ethics of thinking: these are the moments of (1) critical disclosure, (2) possibility and creativity, and (3) redemption. Our experience of a damaged life can lead us to nihilism (Nietzsche) or conformism (Adorno); but from the standpoint of critical disclosure, such experience should strike a critical and ethical chord within us. Our receptivity to the implications of a damaged life should be able to disclose social injustices as pathological. In the current state of things in society, damaged life leaves its indelible mark; but it is precisely the experience of wreckage that we are able to imagine a nontranscendent beyond, that is, ungroundable hope. In other words, the traumatic experience of damaged life fuels our imagined leap towards or wager for "change"—but this is a leap or wager neither understood in the theological sense suggested by Kierkegaard and Pascal nor in the sense of negative theology. Rather, the leap or wager is understood in the context of Adorno's inverse theology, as discussed above, which is always immanent and normatively grounded in the

materiality of suffering. The new ethical imperative for thinking is its indebtedness to and constant dialogue with society and history. Critical disclosure is receptive to social pathologies and historical situatedness; at the same time, we must recognize the indelible contribution of language in the formation of our normative standards/perspectives/knowledge. Critical disclosure hones our receptivity to possibility (e.g., the possible circumvention of social injustice) and, hence, to aesthetic creativity. We have seen earlier how the auratic distance between subject and object creates a space for possibility, for the thinking of the not-yet or the imagination of that which usually escapes our normative conceptual frameworks. The honing of receptivity promised by critical disclosure, in the context of Adorno, means our receptivity to the object of experience and our openness to the "new." Finally, the recovery of experience, which involves a deeply aesthetic dimension as we have seen above, revives our sense of hope: it provides a standpoint from which alienation and suffering in a totally rationalized, administered, and damaged society can be gleaned from the standpoint of social redemption—or, at least, the imagination of an emphatic image of freedom, albeit vague. Ultimately, what such imagination entails is a new way of responding to difference or what we usually refer to as the oblique "other."

NOTES

1. Cf. Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, 387.
2. Cf. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. See Ibid., 361–65.
5. *SO*, 511.
6. Maeve Cooke, *Re-Presenting the Good Society* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2006), 45.
7. Ibid., 50.
8. *SO*, 500.
9. *SO*, 500–1.
10. *SO*, 508–9.
11. *SO*, 504.
12. *SO*, 506.
13. *SO*, 500, my italics.
14. See, for instance, Eric S. Nelson, "Revisiting the Dialectic of Environment: Nature as Ideology and the Ethics in Adorno and the Frankfurt School," *Telos*, 155 (Summer 2011), 105–26.
15. *SO*, 499.
16. *SO*, 506.
17. *SO*, 506.

18. I am following here the formulation of Roger Foster, albeit slightly modified, in his *Adorno: The Recovery of Experience* (New York, NY: University of New York Press, 2007), 28.

19. *SO*, 498–99.

20. *DE*, 1. See also *DE*, 11, 28, 54, 158, 182, 187, and 191.

21. Rudiger Bittner, "Does *Dialectic of Enlightenment* Rest on Religious Foundations?," in *The Early Frankfurt School and Religion*, eds. Margarete Kohlenbach and Raymond Guess (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 158.

22. A similar view is forwarded by Hauke Brunkhorst who maintains that Adorno and Horkheimer are guilty of metaphysical foundationalism, dualism, and elitism. See "The Enlightenment of Rationality: Remarks on Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*," *Constellations*, 7:1 (2000), 133–40.

23. Bittner, "Does *Dialectic of Enlightenment* Rest on Religious Foundations?," 162.

24. Ibid., 165.

25. Ibid., 169.

26. Christopher Craig Brittain, *Adorno and Theology* (London: T&T Clark International, 2010), 73.

27. *ND*, 285.

28. James Gordon Finlayson, "Morality and Critical Theory: On the Normative Problem of Frankfurt School Social Criticism," *Telos*, 146 (Spring 2009), 20.

29. *ND*, 31.

30. Cf. Brittain, *Adorno and Theology*, 74.

31. *ND*, 365.

32. I have referred to this elsewhere as Adorno's implicit Spinozism because of this emphatic reference to the role of the body and its relation to thinking. See Paolo A. Bolaños, "Philosophy from the Standpoint of Damaged Life: Adorno on the Ethical Character of Thinking," *Budhi: A Journal of Ideas and Culture*, 16:3 (2012), 84.

33. *ND*, 202.

34. *M*, 116–17.

35. The following is the actual remark of Spinoza: "The human mind is capable of perceiving a great number of things, and is so in proportion as its body is capable of receiving a great number of impressions." Benedict de Spinoza, *Ethics*, trans. R. H. M. Elwes (New York, NY: Prometheus Books, 1989), prop. XIV, pt. II.

36. Finlayson, "Morality and Critical Theory," 20–21.

37. Adorno's material ethics has an interesting similarity with the "nonformal ethics" propounded by Max Scheler. Scheler offers a critique of Kant's ethics which is based on a "formalism," an abstractness that fails to take into consideration the materiality of ethical experience. See *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values: A New Attempt toward the Foundation of an Ethical Personalism*, trans. Manfred S. Frings and Roger L. Funk (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973).

38. Cf. Bolaños, "Philosophy from the Standpoint of Damaged Life," 80.

39. *WSP*, 14.

40. *ND*, 17–18.

41. *CC*, 66–67.

42. See Walter Benjamin, "Franz Kafka: On the Tenth Anniversary of His Death," in *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York, NY: Schocken Books, 1968), 111–40.

43. *CC*, 67.

44. William Franke, "Negative Theology," in *Encyclopedia of Science and Religions* (Dordrecht: Springer Reference, 2013), 1443.

45. Ibid.

46. Karl Marx, "Contributions to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law, Introduction," in *Marx & Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 3 (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 2010), 175.

47. Ibid.

48. Albert Camus, *The Rebel: An Essay on Man in Revolt*, trans. Anthony Bower (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1956), 23.

49. *CC*, 69.

50. Peter E. Gordon, *Adorno and Existence* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 179.

51. *ND*, 207.

52. *C*, 288.

53. *LND*, 28–29.

54. *SO*, 500.

55. I am borrowing here Foster's description of the overall thrust of Adorno's project as a "recovery of experience," which Foster considers to be Adorno's primary understanding of the critical role of philosophy: the breaking open of epistemology— a "notion of experience in involuntary memory, as opposed to the everyday work of habitual classification." Moreover, "the recovery of experience must take the form of a type of process that uses the subject to 'break out' of the confinement that the role of the subject in cognition has come to resemble. Through the recovery of experience . . . Adorno in fact claims to be able to reveal the truth about the constituting subject, that is, its origin in the self-constriction of the subject, which leads to the social-historical condition of disenchantment. In this way, the subject is able to come to a reflection on its own conditionedness." Foster, *Adorno: The Recovery of Experience*, 149, 151.

56. *SO*, 505.

57. See *ND*, 244.

58. *ND*, 346.

59. *DE*, 42.

60. See *ND*, 317.

61. *ND*, 318.

62. *SO*, 509.

63. *SO*, 502.

64. *SO*, 509.

65. *ND*, 10. In spite of the conventional Habermasian reaction to the subject-object relation, as discussed above, there is an attempt in the recent literature of

Adornoian scholarship to rehabilitate Adorno's revisionist subject-object model. We can consider the following commentators to have paid special attention to this aspect of Adorno's enterprise: J. M. Bernstein, Yvonne Sherratt, Michael Marder, and Deborah Cook. There are, of course, obvious differences in their individual accounts, but they are all keen enough to acknowledge the radicality and critical soundness of Adorno's account of the subject-object relation. See J. M. Bernstein, *Adorno: Disenchantment and Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Yvonne Sherratt, *Adorno's Positive Dialectic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Michael Marder, "On Adorno's 'Subject and Object,'" *Telos*, 126 (Winter 2003), 41–52; and Deborah Cook, "From the Actual to the Possible: Non-Identity Thinking," in *Adorno and the Need in Thinking: New Critical Essays* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007). An earlier defense of the importance of the subject-object relation in Adorno's project is found in Gillian Rose, *The Melancholy Science: An Introduction to the Thought of Theodor W. Adorno* (Hong Kong: The Macmillan Press, Ltd., 1978).

66. *ND*, 5.

67. Bernstein, *Adorno: Disenchantment and Ethics*, 315.

68. *CI*, 29–30, 33.

69. Deleuze takes note of Nietzsche's point of departure: "What is the body? We do not define it by saying that it is a field of forces, a nutrient medium fought over by a plurality of forces. For in fact there is no 'medium,' no field of forces or battle. There is no quantity of reality, all reality is already quantity of force. There is nothing but quantities of force in mutual 'relations of tension. . . . Every force is related to others and it either obeys or commands. What defines a body is this relation between dominant and dominated forces. Every relationship of forces constitutes a body—whether it is chemical, biological, social or political. Any two forces, being unequal, constitute a body as soon as they enter into a relationship. This is why the body is always the fruit of chance, in the Nietzschean sense, and appears as the most 'astonishing' thing, much more astonishing, in fact, than consciousness and spirit. . . . Being composed of a plurality of irreducible forces the body is a multiple phenomenon, its unity is that of a multiple phenomenon, a 'unity of domination.'" *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1983), 39–40.

70. *ND*, 185.

71. *WP*, 352.

72. *ND*, 202.

73. *SO*, 509.

74. Kristen Brown, *Nietzsche and Embodiment: Discerning Bodies and Non-dualisms* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 2006), 15.

75. Cf. Claudia Crawford, "Nietzsche's Physiology of Ideological Criticism," in *Nietzsche as Postmodernist* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 1990), 164.

76. Colin Hearfield, *Adorno and the Modern Ethos of Freedom* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2004), 59.

77. *ND*, 183.

78. Kompridis, *Critique and Disclosure*, 104.

79. *ND*, 173.

80. *ND*, 205.

81. *ND*, 56.

82. *ND*, 56.

83. *ND*, 56.

84. *LND*, 178.

85. *LND*, 181.

86. See *ND*, 52.

87. *ND*, 53.

88. *ND*, 146.

89. See *ND*, 199.

90. *PMP*, 167.

91. *C*, 288.

92. *R*, 293.

93. See Nicholas H. Smith, "Hope and Critical Theory," *Critical Horizons*, 6:1 (2005), 45–61.

94. Ibid., 55. Also see Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and Social Hope* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1999).

95. Cook, "From the Actual to the Possible," 170–71.

96. *LND*, 76.

97. *LND*, 76.

98. *LND*, 76.

99. *AT*, 56. Benjamin defines aura "as the unique phenomenon of a distance, however close it may be. If, while resting on a summer afternoon, you follow with your eyes a mountain range on the horizon or a branch which casts its shadow over you, you experience the aura of those mountains, of that branch." *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York, NY: Schocken Books, 1968), 222–23.

100. *AT*, 392.

101. *AT*, 392.

102. Cf. Yvonne Sherratt, "Adorno's Aesthetic Concept of Aura," *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 33:2 (2007), 160.

103. Ibid.

104. Ibid., 166.

105. *AT*, 167.

106. *AT*, 161.

107. *AT*, 145.

108. Cf. Hearfield, *Adorno and the Modern Ethos of Freedom*, 60.

109. *TL*, I, 86.

110. *AP*, 131. For a book length study of this notion, see Shierry Weber Nicholsen, *Exact Imagination, Late Work: On Adorno's Aesthetics* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1997). For a similar interpretation to that of mine, compare Hearfield, *Adorno and the Modern Ethos of Freedom*, 61. Also see Michael Cahn, "Subversive Mimesis: Theodor W. Adorno and the Modern Impasse of Critique," in *Mimesis in Contemporary Theory: An Interdisciplinary Approach* (Chapel Hill, NC: John Benjamins Publishing Co., 1985), 27–64.

Conclusion

My overarching aim has been to articulate a philosophical notion of an ethics of thinking through the works of Nietzsche and Adorno. The challenge in articulating this notion of ethics is that it is only possible to describe it indirectly. I mentioned in the Introduction that this task is not a conventional comparative study of these thinkers, but, rather an *experimentation with* their key ideas in order to conceptualize an idiosyncratic notion of philosophical praxis that is grounded in the ethical dimension of thinking. I hinted on what the ethics of thinking means by expounding on fragment 46 of Adorno's *Minima Moralia* where he explicates the idea of the "morality of thinking." To rehearse, Adorno warns us against the idealist tendency to impose the primacy of the general over the particular. I have noted that this imposition is the basis of the domineering tendency of human rationality over nature, a tendency that results in the hypostatization or reification of our conceptual apparatus. Conceptual reification is the forgetfulness of thinking of its material or historical origin—expressed another way, the forgetfulness of the primacy of the particular over the general. Conceptual reification is the subsumption of the particular under the general. In plain terms, this kind of unethical thinking is found in bureaucratic systems, such as capitalism. Under capitalism, individuals are reduced into classifiable categories where the particularity of an individual is deemed inessential. For example, people are subsumed under big data or computer analytics that purportedly quantify human performance, a phenomenon aptly referred to by Jerry Z. Muller as the "tyranny of metrics."[1] Moreover, capitalism is also a system of thought that justifies the primacy of economic growth that has had a tremendous destructive effect on the natural environment.[2]

We have seen that the central point of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is to show the relationship between human rationality and nature and how this

145

relationship dialectically evolved into the former's destruction of the latter. For Adorno and Horkheimer, the story of Enlightenment is the dialectical movement of a species that sought to distinguish itself from nature, a movement of emancipation that developed into the capacity to manipulate nature through the complex use of language and concept formation. The *Dialectic of Enlightenment* shows how the human species' originally innocuous mimetic relation to nature turned into a destructive supremacy over nature that results in the suffering of both the human species and nature itself. The ethics of thinking is a kind of thinking that emerges out of the ruins of the dialectic of Enlightenment. By following Adorno, this kind of thinking may be described as combatting the destructive supremacy of human rationality via the reversal of priority, that is, the primacy of the particular over the general or the primacy of nature over reason. Only through this reversal can the dignity of the material world can hopefully be revived. In this sense, then, the ethics of thinking is an emphatic rejection of identity thinking, a process of thinking in modern society through which everything is subordinated to the wrongful primacy of an abstract concept or a system. As opposed to identity thinking, the ethics of thinking is a kind of thinking that is receptive to the nonidentical character of the world of human and nonhuman objects.

In the context of the foregoing chapters, I attempted to illustrate, albeit idiosyncratically, that the ethics of thinking could be presented as a form of philosophical praxis. What this means is that, as an ethical outlook, the ethics of thinking primarily takes place within the language of philosophy itself. This is the reason why I chose Nietzsche and Adorno to help me articulate what the ethics of thinking is all about. I believe that they are the most vocal modern philosophers in terms of criticizing the underlying bad faith of traditional philosophy in the form of metaphysics or idealism. Through their relentless critical outlook towards the language of philosophy, Nietzsche and Adorno are able to show us that it is within the language of philosophy where we can locate the possibility of expressing the material basis of thinking— that the presuppositions of philosophy (metaphysical, political, religious, or ethical) are founded on the materiality of thinking. Thinking, therefore, is a social and historical enterprise, and there is no such thing as pure thinking that is isolated from historical reality, whether or not that social reality is right or wrong. However, this revival of the dignity of material reality requires a shift in the way we construe philosophical activity and, thereby philosophical praxis.

Since the ethics of thinking and philosophy (as thinking) are intimately related for Nietzsche and Adorno, it was important to identify a historical point from which their thoughts would later converge. I have argued in the first chapter that both Nietzsche and Adorno are heirs to the *Frühromantik* tradition. This is a crucial point in the articulation of the ethics of thinking.

The strong philosophical affinities that we associate with the writings of Nietzsche and Adorno are profoundly informed by the spirit of the works of the early German Romantics. More specifically, Nietzsche and Adorno's complex understanding of the nature of language has its philosophical pedigree in the early German Romantic's anti-foundationalist stance towards language. Moreover, the emphasis on poetry, irony, and playful writing style by the early German Romantics found their way into the respective writing and thinking styles of both Nietzsche and Adorno. In addition, the linguistic constitutivism of the early German Romantics has had a substantive influence on how Nietzsche and Adorno developed their respective epistemologies, both of which explain the relation between thinking and language. Overall, the *Frühromantik* tradition had left an indelible mark on the thoughts of Nietzsche and Adorno because they were able to develop a metacritique of philosophy based on philosophy's self-reflection or self-understanding of its own language. This sensitivity to language informs philosophical praxis.

What Adorno calls the confusion between what "persists" and what "perishes" by philosophers is articulated by Nietzsche as the "metaphysical bias"—the confusion between the "last" and the "first," namely, the confusion between the concept and the object. According to Nietzsche and Adorno, this confusion has permeated the Western philosophical tradition and, indeed, how we commonly understand how cognitive processes work. What Nietzsche and Adorno are basically arguing is that, if we take this confusion for granted, then we also take for granted its most dangerous and surreptitious implication, that is, nihilism or idealism. Our predisposition towards inviolable universal categories (Nietzsche) or concept fetishism (Adorno) has profoundly informed and remains deeply ingrained in our normative practices. The deconstruction of our normative practices, from the standpoint of damaged life, is the *conditio sine qua non* of the "ethics of thinking." As a deconstructive stance, the emphatic mission of the ethics of thinking is the search for new ways of *responding* to crises. This is only possible if thinking itself acknowledges the profound influence of the nonidentical other, which includes humans and the natural environment, upon thought; failure to listen or pay heed to the call of the nonidentical other is a betrayal of the imperative implied in the ethics of thinking.

For Nietzsche, language by itself is already a "falsification" of the testimony of the senses. But like Adorno, Nietzsche also stresses the importance of rescuing thinking from *too much* falsification. Illusions are necessary, but only inasmuch as they are life-enhancing or are able to reinscribe within us the hope of a better life beyond this damaged one. For Adorno, this is possible only if thinking leaves enough space for imagination to flourish and inform our search for new ways of thinking, that is, responding to nature and its objects, including us humans. By allowing itself to provide provisions for

change, thinking, to borrow a line from William Connolly, "participates in that uncertain process by which new possibilities are ushered into being,"[3] which entails thinking's struggle to courageously challenge the established order, that is, to go beyond the bounds of the common, the safe. This participation in uncertainty is performed when thinking begins to understand that the tentativeness of concepts is actually an affirmative aspect of knowledge formation. Ultimately, in this sense, the highest form of *learning* is *unlearning*, our ability to respond anew to the world. This performance is disclosive and, as opposed to the battle cry of the Habermasians, is not strictly a wholesale rejection of reason and truth. On the contrary, thinking's performative participation in uncertainty broadens the domain of reason, thereby also broadening our conceptual capacities and our receptivity to new emerging "truths." This is a point which Kompridis emphatically repeats throughout his *Critique and Disclosure*, stressing the "possibility of a new, practice-altering conception of reason,"[4] a conception of reason that has a bearing on how philosophy should consciously conduct itself. As for Nietzsche and Adorno, this new conception of reason is grounded in a profound sensibility to the role of language as a disclosive process and, as such, they articulate the ethical dimension of thinking in the context of its "world-opening and world-transforming capacity."[5] This, for Kompridis, is the emancipative or liberative factor of language, its ability to hover over "rigid meanings and the current space of possibility."[6] As an ethical praxis, thinking guards itself from the error of solidification. Kompridis is also quick to point out that "the course of such emancipation is not something over which we can exercise direct control of, since world-disclosing language is not language we can instrumentalize."[7] But this noninstrumentality is something that we, as language users and agents of reason, should realize and consciously impose on ourselves; this is an ethical moment in thinking, a struggle which thinking will have to consider as its responsibility; avoidance of this responsibility or conformism to any higher authority, divine or otherwise, is a betrayal of thinking itself. To be able to conceive of ethical responsibility or accountability, we do not need to posit something divine, but, rather, we are accountable to the actual, yet nonidentical, givenness of the here and now.

Inasmuch as we are able to stress the ethical dimension of thinking, we are also able to link this to the practical task of philosophy, more precisely, the critical task of philosophy. Such critical task always has a bearing on our own self-understanding. The following passage from Foucault summarizes this point:

> That criticism is no longer going to be practiced in the search for formal structures with universal value, but rather as a historical investigation into the events that have led us to constitute ourselves and to recognize ourselves as subjects of

what we are doing, thinking, saying. . . . And this critique will be genealogical in the sense that it will not deduce from the form of what we are what it is impossible for us to do and to know; but it will separate out, from the contingency that has made us what we are, the possibility of no longer being, doing, or thinking what we are, do, or think. It is not seeking to make possible a metaphysics that has finally become a science; it is seeking to give new impetus, as far and wide as possible, to the undefined work of freedom.[8]

Foucault's observation could indeed be used for the purpose of further illustrating the implications of the ethics of thinking. Thinking is ethical because, as an act that is peculiar to us humans, a revised understanding of what constitutes thinking allows us to understand ourselves in ways that conventional identitarian thought could not. In this context, thinking is ethical because it is a way of relating to ourselves as agents of thought and of possibility. A further implication of this is that we come to understand change to be something within our reach, that is, within human possibility, as opposed to divine revelation.

With the invocation of the role of aesthetic experience, Nietzsche and Adorno are able to stress the somatic or material origin of thinking. By doing so, they revive a sensibility peculiar to the Romantic spirit: the bringing together of thinking and feeling. Like the early German Romantics, Nietzsche and Adorno are able to present their works as counterweight to the dispassionate stance of the Western tradition with regard to the nature of thinking. As I have mentioned above, Nietzsche and Adorno share with early German Romanticism a philosophical preoccupation with the relationship between language and knowledge formation that enacts an anti-foundationalist stance. Through this anti-foundationalist stance it is possible to reconfigure language, more specifically philosophical language, in the face of the unfamiliar. This is the normativity of the new described above which, I have argued, fueled the Romantic spirit that Nietzsche and Adorno imbibed. By bringing to the fore the Romantic features of Nietzsche and Adorno's writings, we would be able to highlight the practical element of their style of thinking and writing I termed above as philosophical praxis. Nietzsche and Adorno demonstrate the fluidity of language not only in their more polemical writings but, more interestingly, in their peculiar style of thinking and writing. As such, by demonstrating the fluidity of language, they present a radical critique and redemption of philosophy's own language. By emphasizing this element in Nietzsche and Adorno's thinking and writing, we make more pronounced the profoundly Romantic character of their works. In other words, Nietzsche and Adorno embody a contemporary continuation of the early German Romantic tradition. I must add that by emphasizing this Romantic inflection of Nietzsche and Adorno, we also highlight the deeply epistemological nature

of the Romantic stance. As such, early German Romanticism is presented as a subversion of metaphysical thinking and identity thinking, opening philosophy to metaphorical thinking and configurative thinking.

Nietzsche and Adorno represent the philosophical minority for claiming that thinking is inextricably related to, even originates from, bodily feeling: the somatic and deeply aesthetic structure of cognition and experience. The *chorismos* between subject and object, maintained by traditional idealist philosophy or metaphysics, makes it difficult for us to understand thinking as a deeply somatic activity, that is, as a kind of "doing" or "action," indeed, as a kind of praxis. Both Nietzsche and Adorno emphasize the symbiotic relationship between thought and the world, one "touching" the other and vice versa. This process of "touching" is the basis of reconciliatory change. Thinking and praxis, thus, converge. One could say even that thinking is a kind of praxis. The cultivation of new practices is the cultivation of new ways of relating to the world, disclosing hidden possibilities. As such, as a community of philosophers, we can consider this normative content of thinking as our new ethical imperative.

NOTES

1. See Jerry Z. Muller, *The Tyranny of Metrics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 2018).

2. An excellent book-length discussion of the relation between Adorno and environmental philosophy is by Deborah Cook, *Adorno on Nature* (London: Routledge, 2014).

3. William Connolly, *Neuropolitics, Thinking, Culture, Speed* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 1.

4. Nikolas Kompridis, *Critique and Disclosure: Critical Theory between Past and Future* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2006), 38.

5. Ibid., 140.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Michel Foucault, "What is Enlightenment?," in *The Foucault Reader* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984), 45–46.

Bibliography

PRIMARY SOURCES

Adorno, Theodor W., *Against Epistemology: A Metacritique (Studies in Husserl and the Phenomenological Antinomies)*, translated by Willis Domingo (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013).

———, "The Actuality of Philosophy," *Telos*, 1977:31 (1977), 120–133.

———, *Aesthetic Theory*, translated by Robert Hullot-Kentor (London: Continuum, 2004).

———, "Critique," in *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords*, translated by Henry W. Pickford (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1998).

———, *The Complete Correspondence, 1928–1940*, translated by Nicholas Walker (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

———, *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture* (London: Routledge, 1991).

———, "Discussion of Professor Adorno's Lecture 'The Meaning of Working Through the Past," in *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords*, translated by Henry W. Pickford (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1998).

———, "Essay as Form," translated by Bob Hullot-Kentor and Frederic Will, *New German Critique*, 32 (Spring–Summer 1984), 151–171.

———, *Introduction to Sociology*, translated by Edmund Jephcott (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000).

———, *The Jargon of Authenticity*, translated by Knut Tarnowski and Frederic Will (London: Routledge, 2003).

———, *Lectures on Negative Dialectics*, translated by Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008).

———, *Metaphysics: Concept and Problems*, translated by Edmund Jephcott (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001).

———, *Minima Moralia: Reflections on a Damaged Life*, translated by E. F. N. Jephcott (London: Verso, 2005).

———, *Negative Dialectics*, translated by E. B. Ashton (New York, NY: Continuum, 1999).

———, *Notes to Literature Volume One*, translated by Shierry Weber Nicholsen (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1991).

———, "Opinion Delusion Society," in *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords*, translated by Henry W. Pickford (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1998).

———, *Prisms*, translated by Samuel and Shierry Weber (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1967).

———, *Problems of Moral Philosophy*, translated by Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001).

———, "Progress," in *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords*, translated by Henry W. Pickford (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1998).

———, "Resignation," in *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords*, translated by Henry W. Pickford (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1998).

———, "Subject and Object," in *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader* (New York, NY: Continuum, 1982).

———, "Theses on the Language of the Philosopher," in *Adorno and the Need in Thinking: New Critical Essays* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

———, "Why Still Philosophy," in *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords*, translated by Henry W. Pickford (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1998).

Adorno, Theodor W. and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, translated by Edmund Jephcott (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002).

Hamann, Johann Georg, "Metacritique on the Purism of Reason," in *Writings on Philosophy and Language*, translated by Kenneth Haynes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

———, "The Last Will and Testament of the Knight of the Rose-Cross," in *Writings on Philosophy and Language*, translated by Kenneth Haynes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

von Herder, Johann Gottfried, "How Philosophy Can Become More Universal and Useful for the Benefit of the People (1765)," in *Herder: Philosophical Writings*, translated by Michael N. Forster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

———, "Letters for the Advancement of Humanity (1793–7)," in *Herder: Philosophical Writings*, translated by Michael N. Forster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

———, *Treatise on the Origin of Language*, in *Herder: Philosophical Writings*, translated by Michael N. Forster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

———, *Über die neuere deutsche Literatur: Fragmente*, in *Werke in zehn Bänden* (Frankfurt: Deustsche Klassiker Verlag).

von Humboldt, Wilhelm, *On Language: The Diversity of Human Language-Structure and its Influence on the Mental Development of Mankind*, translated by Peter Heath (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

———, *Über die Kawi-sprache auf der Insel Java*, 3 Vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *The Antichrist*, translated by Walter Kaufmann, in *The Portable Nietzsche* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1976).

———, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, translated by Walter Kaufmann (New York, NY: Vintage, 1966).

———, *Daybreak: Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality*, translated by R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

———, "Description of Ancient Rhetoric," translated by Sander L. Gilman et al., in *Friedrich Nietzsche on Rhetoric and Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

———, *Human, All too Human: A Book for Free Spirits*, translated by R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

———, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, translated by Walter Kaufmann, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche* (New York, NY: Modern Library, 2000).

———, "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense," in *Philosophy and Truth: Selections From Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's*, edited and translated by Daniel Breazeale (New York, NY: Humanities Press International, 1990).

———, *The Gay Science*, translated by Walter Kaufmann (New York, NY: Random House, Inc., 1974).

———, "The Philosopher: Reflections on the Struggle Between Art and Knowledge," in *Philosophy and Truth: Selections From Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's*, edited and translated by Daniel Breazeale (New York, NY: Humanities Press International, 1990).

———, *The Will to Power*, translated by Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1967).

———, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, translated by Walter Kaufmann, in *The Portable Nietzsche* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1976).

———, *Twilight of the Idols: Or How One Philosophizes with a Hammer*, translated by Walter Kaufmann, in *The Portable Nietzsche* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1976).

———, *Unpublished Writings from the Period of Unfashionable Observations*, translated by Richard T. Gray (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995).

Novalis, "General Draft," in *Philosophical Writings*, translated by Margaret Mahony Stoljar (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997).

———, "Last Fragments," in *Philosophical Writings*, translated by Margaret Mahony Stoljar (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997).

Schlegel, Friedrich, "Athenaeum Fragments," in *Philosophical Fragments*, translated by Peter Firchow (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1991).

———, "*Blütenstaub*," in *Philosophical Fragments*, translated by Peter Firchow (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1991).

———, "Critical Fragments," in *Philosophical Fragments*, translated by Peter Firchow (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1991).

———, "Dialogue on Poesy," in *Theory as Practice: A Critical Anthology of Early German Romantic Writings*, edited and translated by Jochen Schulte-Sasse, et al. (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

———, "Fragments on Literature and Poesy," in *Theory as Practice: A Critical Anthology of Early German Romantic Writings*, edited and translated by Jochen Schulte-Sasse, et al. (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

———, "Ideas," in *Philosophical Fragments*, translated by Peter Firchow (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1991).

———, "Philosophical Lectures: Transcendental Philosophy," in *The Early Political Writings of the German Romantics*, edited by Frederick C. Beiser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

SECONDARY SOURCES

Allison, David B., ed., *The New Nietzsche: Contemporary Styles of Interpretation* (New York, NY: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1877).

Ameriks, Karl, "Reinhold, History, and the Foundation of Philosophy," in *Karl Leonhard Reinhold and the Enlightenment*, edited by George di Giovanni (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010).

Ansell-Pearson, Keith, ed., *Nietzsche and Modern German Thought* (London: Routledge, 1991).

Aristotle, *Prior Analytics*, translated by Hugh Tredennick, in *Aristotle: The Categories, On Interpretation, Prior Analytics* (London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1962).

Babich, Babette E., "Adorno on Science and Nihilism, Animals, and Jews," *Symposium: Canadian Journal of Continental Philosophy/Revue canadienne de philosophie continentale*, 14:1 (2011), 1–36.

———, "On the Analytic-Continental Divide in Philosophy: Nietzsche's Lying Truth, Heidegger's Speaking Language, and Philosophy," in *A House Divided: Comparing Analytic and Continental Philosophy*, edited by C. G. Prado (New York, NY: Humanity Books, 2003).

Bauer, Karin, *Adorno's Nietzschean Narratives: Critiques of Ideology, Readings of Wagner* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999).

Baynes, Kenneth, "The transcendental turn: Habermas's 'Kantian Pragmatism'," in *The Cambridge Companion to Critical Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

Becker, Christian and Reiner Manstetten, "You: Novalis' Philosophical Thought and the Modern Ecological Crisis," *Environmental Values*, 13:1 (February 2004), 101–118.

Beiser, Frederick C., *German Idealism: The Struggle Against Subjectivism, 1781–1801* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

———, *The Romantic Imperative: The Concept of Early German Romanticism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

Benjamin, Walter, *Illuminations*, translated by Harry Zohn (New York, NY: Schocken Books, 1968).

———, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, translated by John Osborne (London: Verso, 1998).

Bernstein, J. M., *Adorno: Disenchantment and Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Bingham, Charles, "The Goals of Language, the Language of Goals: Nietzsche's Concern with Rhetoric and its Educational Implications, in *Educational Theory*, 48:2 (Spring 1998), 229–240.

Bittner, Rudiger, "Does *Dialectic of Enlightenment* Rest on Religious Foundations?," in *The Early Frankfurt School and Religion*, edited by Margarete Kohlenbach and Raymond Guess (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

Blankenagel, John C., "The Dominant Characteristics of German Romanticism," *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, 55:1 (March 1940), 1–10.

Bolaños, Paolo A., "From Rigidity to Receptivity: Articulating an Ethics of Thinking via Nietzsche and Adorno," in *Representation and Contestation: Cultural Politics in a Political Century*, edited by John McSweeney and Ching-Yu Lin (Amsterdam and New York, NY: Rodopi, 2010).

———, "Philosophy from the Standpoint of Damaged Life: Adorno on the Ethical Character of Thinking," *Budhi: A Journal of Ideas and Culture*, 16:3 (2012), 78–93.

Bowie, Andrew, *Aesthetics and Subjectivity: From Kant to Nietzsche* (New York, NY: Manchester University Press, 1990).

———, *From Romanticism to Critical Theory* (London: Routledge, 1997).

Breazeale, Daniel, "The Word, the World, and Nietzsche," *The Philosophical Forum*, 6:2–3 (Winter–Spring 1974–75), 301–320.

———, *Philosophy and Truth: Selections From Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's* (New York, NY: Humanities Press International, 1990).

Brittain, Christopher Craig, *Adorno and Theology* (London: T&T Clark International, 2010).

Brobjer, Thomas H., *Nietzsche's Philosophical Context: An Intellectual Biography* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2008).

Brown, Kristen, *Nietzsche and Embodiment: Discerning Bodies and Non-Dualisms* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 2006).

Brunkhorst, Hauke, "The Enlightenment of Rationality: Remarks on Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*," *Constellations*, 7:1 (2000), 133–139.

Buck-Morss, Susan, *The Origin of Negative Dialectics: Theodor W. Adorno, Walter Benjamin, and the Frankfurt Institute* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1979).

Burke, Donald A., et al., eds., *Adorno and the Need in Thinking: New Critical Essays* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

Cahn, Michael, "Subversive Mimesis: Theodor W. Adorno and the Modern Impasse of Critique," in *Mimesis in Contemporary Theory: An Interdisciplinary Approach* (Chapel Hill, NC: John Benjamins Publishing Co., 1985).

Camus, Albert, *The Rebel: An Essay on Man in Revolt*, translated by Anthony Bower (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1956).

Cavell, Stanley, "Freud and Philosophy: A Fragment," *Critical Inquiry*, 13:2, The Trial(s) of Psychoanalysis (Winter 1987), 386–393.

———, *In Quest of the Ordinary: Lines of Skepticism and Romanticism* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

Clark, Maudemarie, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

de Condillac, Étienne Bonnot, *Essay on the Origin of Human Knowledge*, translated by Hans Aarsleff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Connolly, William, *Neuropolitics, Thinking, Culture, Speed* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2002).

Cook, Deborah, "A Response to Finlayson," *Historical Materialism*, 11:2 (2003), 189–198.

———, "Critical Stratagems in Adorno and Habermas: Theories of Ideology and the Ideology of Theory," *Historical Materialism*, 6 (2000), 67–88.

———, "From the Actual to the Possible: Non-identity Thinking," in *Adorno and the Need in Thinking: New Critical Essays* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

———, *Adorno on Nature* (London: Routledge, 2014).

Cooke, Maeve, *Re-presenting the Good Society* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2006).

Crawford, Claudia, "Nietzsche's Physiology of Ideological Criticism," in *Nietzsche as Postmodernist* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 1990).

———, *The Beginnings of Nietzsche's Theory of Language* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1988).

Danto, Arthur, *Nietzsche as Philosopher* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1965).

Deleuze, Gilles, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, translated by Hugh Tomlinson (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1983).

———, *Pure Immanence: Essays on a Life*, translated by Anne Boyman (New York, NY: Zone Books, 2001).

———, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, translated by Robert Hurley (San Francisco, CA: City Lights Books, 1988).

Deranty, Jean-Philippe, "Adorno's Other Son: Derrida and the Future of Critical Theory," *Social Semiotics*, 16:3 (September 2006), 421–433.

———, "Injustice, Violence and Social Struggle: The Critical Potential of Axel Honneth's Theory of Recognition," *Critical Horizons*, 5 (2004), 297–322.

Derrida, Jacques, "The Question of Style," translated by Ruben Berezdivin, in *The New Nietzsche: Contemporary Styles of Interpretation* (New York, NY: Delta Book, 1977).

Derrida, Jacques, "White Mythology," in *Margins of Philosophy*, translated by Alan Bass (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

Dummett, Michael, *Frege: Philosophy of Language* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1973).

Düttmann, Alexander Garcia, *The Memory of Thought: An Essay on Heidegger and Adorno*, translated by Nicholas Walker (London: Continuum, 2002).

Eldridge, Richard, *The Persistence of Romanticism: Essays in Philosophy and Literature* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Emden, Christian, *Nietzsche on Language, Consciousness, and the Body* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2005).

Endres, Martin, Axel Pichler, and Claus Zittel, eds., *Text/Kritik: Nietzsche und Adorno* (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2019).

Farrell-Krell, David and David C. Wood, eds., *Exceedingly Nietzsche: Aspects of Contemporary Nietzsche-Interpretation* (London: Routledge, 1988).

Fichte, Johann Gottlieb, *The Science of Knowledge*, translated by Peter Heath and John Lachs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

Finlayson, James Gordon, "Morality and Critical Theory: On the Normative Problem of Frankfurt School Social Criticism," *Telos*, 146 (Spring 2009), 7–41.

———, "The Theory of Ideology and the Ideology of Theory: Habermas contra Adorno," *Historical Materialism*, 11:2 (2003), 165–187.

Forster, Michael N., *After Herder: Philosophy of Language in the German Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

———, *German Philosophy of Language: From Schlegel to Hegel and Beyond* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

Foster, Roger, *Adorno: The Recovery of Experience* (New York, NY: University of New York Press, 2007).

Foucault, Michel, "What is Enlightenment?," in *The Foucault Reader* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984).

Frank, Manfred, "The Difficult Step into Actuality: On the Makings of an Early Romantic Realism," *Comparative and Continental Philosophy*, 8:2 (2016), 199–215.

———, *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism*, translated by Elizabeth Millán-Zaibert (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 2003).

Franke, William, "Negative Theology," in *Encyclopedia of Science and Religions* (Dordrecht: Springer Reference, 2013).

Frischmann, Bärbel, "The Philosophical Relevance of Romantic Irony," in *Brill's Companion to German Romantic Philosophy*, edited by Elizabeth Millán Brusslan and Judith Norman (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

Früchtl, Josef, *Mimesis: Konstellation eines Zentralbegriffs bei Adorno* (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 1986).

Gandesha, Samir, "Leaving Home: On Adorno and Heidegger," in *The Cambridge Companion to Adorno* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

———, "The 'Aesthetic Dignity of Words': Adorno's Philosophy of Language," *New German Critique*, 97 (Winter 2006), 137–158.

Gemes, Ken, "Nietzsche's Critique of Truth," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 52:1 (March 1992), 47–65.

Gerber, Gustav, *Die Sprache als Kunst* (Bromberg: Mittler'sche Buchhandlung, 1873).

Gibson, Nigel, "Rethinking an Old Saw: Dialectical Negativity, Utopia, and *Negative Dialectic* in Adorno's Hegelian Marxism," in *Adorno: A Critical Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 2002).

Gilman, Sander L., et al., "Nietzsche's Lectures on Rhetoric: Reading a Rhetoric Rhetorically," introduction to *Friedrich Nietzsche on Rhetoric and Language* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989).

Golomb, Jacob, "How to De-Nazify Nietzsche's Philosophical Anthropology?," in *Nietzsche, Godfather of Fascism? On the Uses and Abuses of a Philosophy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002).

Gordon, Peter E., *Adorno and Existence* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

Guess, Raymond, *Outside Ethics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press).

Gupta, R. K., "Freud and Schopenhauer," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 36:4 (1975), 721–728.

Habermas, Jürgen, "A Reply to my Critics," in *Habermas: Critical Debates*, edited by John B. Thompson and David Held (London: The Macmillan Press, Ltd., 1982).

———, "Nachwort von Jürgen Habermas," quoted by Hullot-Kentor, in *Things Beyond Resemblance: Collected Essays on Theodor W. Adorno* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2006).

———, "On Nietzsche's Theory of Knowledge: A Postscript from 1968," translated by James Swindal, in *Nietzsche, Theories of Knowledge, and Critical Theory: Nietzsche and the Sciences I* (London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999).

———, *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*, translated by Christian Lenhardt and Shierry Weber Nicholsen (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1992).

———, *The New Conservatism: Cultural Criticism and the Historians' Debate*, translated by Shierry Weber Nicholsen (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989).

———, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, translated by Frederick G. Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1990).

———, *The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the Rationalization of Society*, Vol. 1, translated by Thomas McCarthy (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997).

Hartmann, Eduard Von, *Philosophy of the Unconscious*, translated by William Chatteron Coupland (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, & Co, Ltd., 1893).

Hazelton, Roger, "Nietzsche's Contribution to the Theory of Language," *The Philosophical Review*, 52:1 (January 1943), 47–60.

Hearfield, Colin, *Adorno and the Modern Ethos of Freedom* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2004).

Hegel, G. W. F., *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, translated by H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

Held, David, *Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1980).

Heller, Agnes, "Habermas and Marxism," in *Habermas: Critical Debates*, edited by John B. Thompson and David Held (London: The Macmillan Press, Ltd., 1982).

Hinman, Lawrence M., "Nietzsche, Metaphor, and Truth," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 43 (1982), 179–199.

Hobbes, Thomas, *Leviathan*, edited by J. C. A. Gaskin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

Hogh, Philip, *Communication and Expression: Adorno's Philosophy of Language*, translated by Antonia Hofstätter (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017).

Hohendahl, Peter Uwe, *Prismatic Thought: Theodor Adorno* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1995).

Honneth, Axel, "Communication and Reconciliation: Habermas' Critique of Adorno," *Telos*, 39 (1979), 45–61.

———, "From Adorno to Habermas: On the Transformation of Critical Social Theory," in *The Fragmented World of the Social: Essays in Social and Political Philosophy* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995).

———, *Disrespect: The Normative Foundations of Critical Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007).

———, *Reification: A New Look at an Old Idea* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Horkheimer, Max, "Egoism and Freedom Movement: On the Anthropology of the Bourgeois Era," translated by David J. Parent, *Telos*, 54:10 (December 1982), 10–60.

———, *Eclipse of Reason* (London: Continuum, 2004).

Houlgate, Stephen, *In Hegel, Nietzsche and the Criticism of Metaphysics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

Hullot-Kentor, Robert, *Things Beyond Resemblance: Collected Essays on Theodor W. Adorno* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2006).

Hulob, Robert C., *Nietzsche: Socialist, Anarchist, Feminist*. http://learning.berkeley.edu/robertholub/research/essays/American_Nietzsche.pdf.

Jameson, Frederic, *Late Marxism: Adorno, or, the Persistence of the Dialectic* (London: Verso, 1996).

Jarvis, Simon, *Adorno: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998).

Jay, Martin, "Theodor W. Adorno and the Collapse of the Lukácsian Concept of Totality," in *Marxism and Totality: The Adventures of a Concept from Lukács to Habermas* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984).

———, *Adorno* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984).

———, *Force Fields: Between Intellectual History and Cultural Critique* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1993).

Kant, Immanuel, *Critique of Pure Reason*, translated by Norman Kemp Smith (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

Kaufmann, Walter, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974).

Klein, Wayne, *Nietzsche and the Promise of Philosophy* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997).

Koelb, Clayton, ed., *Nietzsche as Postmodernist: Essays Pro and Contra* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1990).

Kofman, Sarah, *Nietzsche and Metaphor*, translated by Duncan Large (London: The Athlone Press, 1993).

Kompridis, Nikolas, "Re-Inheriting Romanticism," in *Philosophical Romanticism*, edited by Nikolas Kompridis (London: Routledge, 2006).

———, "The Idea of a New Beginning: A Romantic Source of Normativity and Freedom," in *Philosophical Romanticism*, edited by Nikolas Kompridis (London: Routledge, 2006).

———, *Critique and Disclosure: Critical Theory between Past and Future* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2006).

Lacoue-Labarthe, Philippe and Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Literary Absolute: The Theory of Literature in German Romanticism*, translated by Philip Barnard and Cheryl Lester (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, Albany, 1988).

Lacoue-Labarthe, Philippe, "Le detour (Nietzsche et la rhetorique)," *Poetique*, 5 (1971), 53–76, translated into English by Gary M. Cole as "The Detour," in *The Subject of Philosophy* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

Lafont, Cristina, *The Linguistic Turn in Hermeneutic Philosophy*, translated by Jose Medina (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1999).

Lange, Frederick, *The History of Materialism and Criticism of its Present Importance*, translated by Ernest Chester Thomas (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1957).

Lemm, Vanessa, "Critical Theory and Affirmative Biopolitics: Nietzsche and the Domination of Nature in Adorno/Horkheimer," *Journal of Power*, 3:1 (April 2010), 75–95.

Liastos, Yianna, "An Artist's Choice, an Artist's Commitment: Reconciling Myth and Modern History in Nietzsche and Adorno," *Dialectical Anthropology*, 26 (2001), 137–158.

Locke, John, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, edited P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975).

Löwy, Michael and Robert Sayre, *Romanticism Against the Tide of Modernity*, translated by Catherine Porter (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001).

———, "The Romantic and the Marxist Critique of Modern Civilization," *Theory and Society*, 16:6 (November 1987), 891–904.

Lukács, Georg, *The Destruction of Reason*, translated by Peter R. Palmer (London: Merlin Press, 1980).

Macdonald, Iain and Krzysztof Ziarek, eds., *Adorno and Heidegger: Philosophical Questions* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008).

de Man, Paul, "Rhetoric of Tropes," in *Allegories of Reading: Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke, and Proust* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979).

Marder, Michael, "On Adorno's 'Subject and Object'," *Telos*, 126 (Winter 2003), 41–52.

Marx, Karl, "Contributions to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law, Introduction," in *Marx & Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 3 (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 2010).

Menke, Christoph, *The Sovereignty of Art: Aesthetic Negativity in Adorno and Derrida*, translated by Neil Solomon (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1999).

Millán Brusslan, Elizabeth, "The Romantic Poetry of Nature: an Antidote to German Idealism's Eclipsing of Natural Beauty," in *Brill's Companion to German Romantic Philosophy*, edited by Elizabeth Millán Brusslan and Judith Norman (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

Millán-Zaibert, Elizabeth, "Forgetfulness and Foundationalism Schlegel's Critique of Fichte's Idealism," in *Fichte, German Idealism, and Early Romanticism*, edited by Daniel Breazeale and Tom Rockmore (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010).

———, "Introduction: 'What is Early German Romanticism?'," in *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 2004).

———, "What is Early German Romanticism," in *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism*, translated by Elizabeth Millán-Zaibert (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 2003).

———, *Friedrich Schlegel and the Emergence of Romantic Philosophy* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 2007).

———, *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 2004).

Morris, Martin, *Rethinking the Communicative Turn: Adorno, Habermas, and the Problem of Communicative Freedom* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 2001).

Müller, Harro, "Mimetic Rationality: Adorno's Project of a Language of Philosophy," translated by Susan H. Gillespie, *New German Critique*, 108 (Fall 2009), 85–108.

Muller, Jerry Z., *The Tyranny of Metrics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 2018).

Nehamas, Alexander, *Nietzsche: Life as Literature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985).

Nelson, Eric S., "Revisiting the Dialectic of Environment: Nature as Ideology and the Ethics in Adorno and the Frankfurt School," *Telos*, 155 (Summer 2011), 105–126.

Neuhouser, Frederick, *Fichte's Theory of Subjectivity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

Nicholsen, Shierry Weber, *Exact Imagination, Late Work: On Adorno's Aesthetics* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1997).

Norman, Judith, "Nietzsche and Early Romanticism," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 63:3 (2002), 501–519.

———, "Romantic Irony," in *The Edinburgh Dictionary of Continental Philosophy*, edited by John Protevi (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005).

O'Flaherty, James C., *The Quarrel of Reason with Itself: Essays on Hamann, Michaelis, Lessing, Nietzsche* (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1988).

———, *Unity and Language: A Study in the Philosophy of Johann Georg Hamann* (New York, NY: AMS Press Inc., 1966).

Osborne, Peter, *Anywhere or Not at All: Philosophy of Contemporary Art* (London: Verso, 2013).

Outhwaite, William, "Nietzsche and Critical Theory," in *Nietzsche: A Critical Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1995).

Owen, David, "Nietzsche and the Frankfurt School," in *The Routledge Companion to the Frankfurt School*, edited by Peter E. Gordon, Espen Hammer, and Axel Honneth (New York, NY: Routledge, 2019).

Palamarek, Michael K., "Adorno's Dialectics of Language," in *Adorno and the Need in Thinking* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

Pecora, Vincent P., "Nietzsche, Genealogy, Critical Theory," *New German Critique*, 53 (1991), 104–130.

Plass, Ulrich, "Moral Critique and Private Ethics in Nietzsche and Adorno," *Constellations*, 22:3 (2015), 381–392.

Plato, *Cratylus*, translated by C. D. C. Reeve, in *Plato: Complete Works* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1997).

———, *The Republic*, translated by Tom Griffith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

———, *Theatetus*, translated by M. J. Levett, in *Plato: Complete Works* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1997).

Pollack-Milgate, Howard, "Romantic Views of Language," in *Brill's Companion to German Romantic Philosophy*, edited by Elizabeth Millán Brusslan and Judith Norman (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

Putz, Manfred, ed., *Nietzsche in American Literature and Thought* (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1995).

Pütz, Peter, "Nietzsche and Critical Theory," *Telos*, 50 (1981–82), 103–114.

Reardon, B. M. G., "The Romanticism of Karl Marx," *The Downside Review*, 98:322 (1978), 1–12.

Reinhold, Karl Leonhard, *The Foundation of Philosophical Knowledge*, in *Between Kant and Hegel: Texts in the Development of Post-Kantian Idealism*, translated by George di Giovanni (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2000).

Rickels, Laurence A., ed., *Looking After Nietzsche* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 1990).

Ridley, Aaron, "Guilt Before God, or God Before Guilt?," *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, 29 (Spring 2005), 35–45.

Romand Coles, "Identity and Difference in the Ethical Positions of Adorno and Habermas," in *The Cambridge Companion to Habermas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

Rorty, Richard, *Philosophy and Social Hope* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1999).

Rose, Gillian, *The Melancholy Science: An Introduction to the Thought of Theodor W. Adorno* (Hong Kong: The Macmillan Press, Ltd., 1978).

Sandford, Stella, "The dream is a fragment: Freud, transdisciplinarity and early German Romanticism," *Radical Philosophy*, 198 (July/August 2016), 25–34.

Schädelbach, Herbert, "The Transformation of Critical Theory," in *Communicative Action: Essays on Jürgen Habermas's The Theory of Communicative Action*, translated by Jeremy Gaines and Doris L. Jones (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).

Scheler, Max, *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values: A New Attempt toward the Foundation of an Ethical Personalism*, translated by Manfred S. Frings and Roger L. Funk (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973).

Schelling, F. W. J., *First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature*, translated by Keith R. Peterson (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 2004).

Schopenhauer, Arthur, *The World as Will and Idea*, Vol. 1, translated by R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1950).

Schrift, Alan D., *Nietzsche's French Legacy: A Genealogy of Poststcuturalism* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1995).

Scrivener, Michaeal, "Habermas, Romanticism, and Literary Theory," *Literature Compass*, 1:1 (2004), 1–20.

Sedgwick, Peter, "Introduction: Nietzsche Institutions," in *Nietzsche: A Critical Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1995).

Seel, Martin, *Aesthetics of Appearing*, translated by John Farrell (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005).

Sherratt, Yvonne, "Adorno's Aesthetic Concept of Aura," *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 33:2 (2007), 155–177.

———, *Adorno's Positive Dialectic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

Shrift, Alan D., "Language, Metaphor, Rhetoric: Nietzsche's Deconstruction of Epistemology," *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 23:3 (July 1985), 66.

Sikka, Sonia, "Herder on the Relation Between Language and the World," *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, 21:2 (April 2004), 183–200.

Smith, Nicholas H., "Hope and Critical Theory," *Critical Horizons*, 6:1 (2005), 45–61.

Solomon, Robert C., ed., *Nietzsche: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1973).

de Spinoza, Benedict, *Ethics*, translated R. H. M. Elwes (New York, NY: Prometheus Books, 1989).

Stern, J. P., "Nietzsche and the Idea of Metaphor," in *Nietzsche, Imagery and Thought: A Collection of Essays* (London: Mathuen, 1978).

Stone, Alison, "Alienation from Nature and Early German Romanticism," *Ethical Theory Moral Practice*, 17 (2014), 41–54.

———, "Friedrich Schlegel, Romanticism, and the Re-enchantment of Nature," *Inquiry*, 48:1 (2005), 3–25.

Strong, Tracy B. and Frank Andreas Sposito, "Habermas' Significant Other," in *The Cambridge Companion to Habermas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

Strong, Tracy B., "The Epistemology of Nihilism," in *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of Transfiguration* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000).

Sünner, Rüdiger, *Ästhetische Szientismuskritik: Zum Verhältnis von Kunst und Wissenschaft bei Nietzsche und Adorno* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Peter Lang, 1986).

Sutton, Claud, *The German Tradition in Philosophy* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1974).

Taylor, Charles, *The Language Animal: The Full Shape of the Human Linguistic Capacity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

Taylor, Seth, *Left-Wing Nietzscheans* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1990).

Thomas, Douglas, *Reading Nietzsche Rhetorically* (New York, NY: The Guilford Press, 1999).

Wellmer, Albrecht, "Communications and Emancipation: Reflections on the Linguistic Turn in Critical Theory," in *On Critical Theory*, edited by John O'Neill (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1977).

———, *Endgames: The Irreconcilable Nature of Modernity: Essays and Lectures*, translated by David Midgley (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1998).

Welsch, Wolfgang, "Nietzsche über Vernunft, 'Meine *wiederhergestellte* Vernunft'," in *Rationalität und Prärationalität* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1998).

Wiggershaus, Rolf, "The Frankfurt School's Nietzschean Moment'," translated by Gerd Appelhans, *Constellations*, 8:1 (2001), 144.

Wischke, Mirko, *Die Geburt der Ethik: Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Adorno* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1994).

Wolin, Richard, *The Seduction of Unreason: The Intellectual Romance with Fascism: From Nietzsche to Postmodernism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).

Appendix

Further Reading

WORKS BY ADORNO

Aesthetics, translated by Wieland Hoban (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018).

Alban Berg: Master of the Smallest Link, translated by Juliane Brand and Christopher Hailey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

An Introduction to Dialectics, translated by Nicholas Walker (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2017).

Aspects of Sociology, translated by John Viertel (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972).

Beethoven: The Philosophy of Music, translated by Edmund Jephcott (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002).

Can One Live after Auschwitz? A Philosophical Reader, edited by Rolf Tiedemann (California: Stanford University Press, 2003).

Dream Notes, translated By Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007).

Essays on Music, edited by Richard Leppert (California: University of California Press, 2002).

Guilt and Defense: On the Legacies of National Socialism in Postwar Germany, translated by Jeffrey K. Olick and Andrew J. Perrin (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2010).

Hegel: Three Studies, translated by Shierry Weber Nicholsen (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1999).

In Search of Wagner, translated by Rodney Livingstone (New York: Verso, 1981).

Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, translated by Rodney Livingstone (California: Stanford University Press, 2001).

Kierkegaard: Construction of the Aesthetic, translated by Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989).

Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy, translated by Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992).

Notes to Literature Volume Two, translated by Shierry Weber Nicholsen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992).

165

Ontology and Dialectics, translated by Nicholas Walker (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2019).

Philosophical Elements of a Theory of Society, translated by Wieland Hoban (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2019).

Philosophy of Modern Music, translated by Anne G. Mitchell and Wesley V. Blomster (New York: Continuum, 2003).

Philosophy of New Music, translated by Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006).

Quasi Una Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music, translated by Rodney Livingstone (London: Verso, 2002).

Sound Figures, translated by Rodney Livingstone (California: Stanford University Press, 1999).

The Adorno Reader, edited by Brian O'Connor (MA, USA: Blackwell Publishing, 2000).

The Psychological Technique of Martin Luther Thomas Radio Addresses (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).

The Stars Down to Earth and Other Essays on the Irrational in Culture (London: Routledge, 1994).

Towards a Theory of Musical Reproduction, translated by Wieland Hoban (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006).

"Who's Afraid of the Ivory Tower? A Conversation with Theodore W. Adorno," translated by Gerhard Richter, in *Monatshefte*, 94:1 (2002).

WORKS BY ADORNO ET AL.

Aesthetics and Politics: The Key Texts of the Classic Debate within German Marxism, translated by Ronald Taylor (London: Verso, 1980).

Correspondence 1925-1935, translated by Wieland Hoban (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005).

Correspondence 1943-1955, translated by Nicholas Walker (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006).

Group Experiment and Other Writings, translated by Jeffrey K. Olick and Andrew J. Perrin (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2011).

The Authoritarian Personality, Part One (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1964).

The Positivist Dispute in German Sociology, translated by Glyn Adey and David Frisby (London: Heinemann, 1976).

Towards a New Manifesto, translated Rodney Livingstone (London: Verso, 2011).

WORKS BY NIETZSCHE

Ecce Homo, translated by Walter Kaufmann, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche* (New York: Modern Library, 2000).

On the Future of Our Educational Institutions, translated by Michael W. Grenke (Indiana: St. Augustine's Press, 2004).

Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks, translated by Marianne Cowan (Washington, DC, 1998).

Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche, edited and translated by Christopher Middleton (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1996).

The Birth of Tragedy, translated by Walter Kaufmann, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche* (New York: Modern Library, 2000).

The Pre-Platonic Philosophers, translated by Greg Whitlock (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006).

Untimely Meditations, translated by R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Writings from the Late Notebooks, translated by Kate Sturge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

Index

About the Author

Paolo A. Bolaños teaches philosophy at the Department of Philosophy and the Graduate School of the University of Santo Tomas, Manila, Philippines. He is the author of *On Affirmation and Becoming: A Deleuzian Introduction to Nietzsche's Ethics and Ontology*. The author is the founding editor of *Kritike: An Online Journal of Philosophy* and a member of the Philippine Academy of Philosophical Research.