#### \*\*Trigger warning this K will discuss non-explicit mentions of anti-simetic violence\*\*

## 1

#### Identity thinking generalizes objects under categories assuming it’s capturing the object in full thereby ignoring the inherent commitment of the non-identical. Therefore, all non-negative dialectical modern thinking fails.

Freyenhagen 13 Fabian Freyenhagen [University of Essex], 2013, “ADORNO’S PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY Living Less Wrongly” Cambridge University Press, ISBN: 978-1-107-03654-3, <https://www.cambridge.org/us/academic/subjects/philosophy/twentieth-century-philosophy/adornos-practical-philosophy-living-less-wrongly?format=HB&isbn=9781107036543> SJMS

iii The whole is untrue 2 (modern thought forms) However, it is not just capitalism (and its nominally socialist rivals) which are wrong for Adorno – modern thought forms are also problematic.39 Adorno paints a basically Kantian picture of modern thought forms. Thus, he suggests that empirical cognition is a composite of concepts and sensory input, such that the latter is subsumed under the former. This process of synthesis involves bringing something specific and particular (the manifold given to us via the senses) under something general (concepts). In effect, cognition becomes thereby a process of identification, of assigning the particular to a general class into which it falls. This means that we never cognise the thing in itself as such, but only how it appears to us, mediated by our spatio-temporal frame of reference (Kant calls this our‘forms of intuition’) and our conceptual scheme (that is, in Kant, the twelve categories). However, unlike Kant, Adorno does not think of this conceptual scheme as unchangeable or a priori.40 Instead, he historicises the Kantian idea (following the work of the early Lukács).41 For Adorno, as for Horkheimer, the conceptual schemes with which we operate are what might be called ‘historical a priori’ – given the historical and social setting we grow up and live in, we approach the world and think of it in certain ways.42 Society is always already inside human beings and their experiences.43 Both the object of experience and the way we experience it are shaped by the society we inhabit.44 These ways of structuring our experience take on a necessary and universal character within a social world, but, at least historically speaking, human beings have been subject to a series of incommensurable frameworks, such that Kant’s claim to a stronger form of necessity and universality comes out false. Kantians would reply that our conceptual scheme is not just a reflection of a particular society or stage in human history, but inherent in thought and experience as such. Perhaps human societies differ in terms of certain specifics – in their empirical concepts – but certain basic categories are necessarily operative in each of these variations. I cannot resolve this disagreement here, but merely note that, even if Adorno is right and our conceptual scheme is not necessary in any transhistorically strong sense, this does not mean that we could do without any conceptual scheme whatsoever. Adorno himself notes that to think is to use concepts and thereby to identify,45 and, hence, ‘identity thinking [Identitätsdenken]’, of which Adorno speaks frequently and critically, seems to be the only thinking there could be. However, what Adorno means by talking about identity thinking is more than just emphasising the inevitable fact that thinking is conceptual.46 While all thinking has this latter characteristic, only some forms of thinking – albeit the dominant ones in the modern world – are based on the assumption that the synthesis performed by subsuming the sensible manifold under concepts actually captures this manifold in full (or in its essential properties). We need to be careful here. Adorno is not just worried about which concept is used in a particular case – it might well be that we often do not use the most suitable concept in a given case and that this has to be corrected. (Perhaps Pluto is actually not a planet, but better conceptualised as an asteroid, despite a long tradition that thought otherwise.) What Adorno complains about is something more fundamental. It is the thought that any subsumption under concepts, even the most apt one, misses something about its object and if this mismatch is not reflected upon, then thought does injustice to the object.47 Instead of saying what something is, ‘identity thinking says what it falls under, what it is an example or representative of, what it consequently is not itself’. 48 What is missed in the object is called variously ‘the non-identical’ [das Nichtidentische] or ‘the non-conceptual’ [das Nichtbegriffliche] by Adorno. This central idea in Adorno’s work is difficult to make sense of. This is partly for philosophical reasons – that which escapes our conceptual schemes is inherently and unsurprisingly hard to grasp. Given that language is based on concepts, we struggle to express it. Still, some of the difficulty also stems from having to interpret Adorno’s texts and statements on this issue, which are far from easy and often give the impression of presenting a contradictory or otherwise problematic picture. The way to unlock some of these difficulties is to consider the following puzzle. If all thinking uses concepts, which are general rules, under which particulars are meant to be subsumed, then it is an open philosophical question how genuine experience of these particulars is possible. After all, the particular objects we encounter in experience are not concepts or mental entities (or at least we tend to presume that they are not) and how can something completely different in character – thought – have access to them? Call this the ‘Problem of Missing Affinity’. This problem is probably as old as philosophy and Adorno is very well aware of this and the traditional philosophical answers to it. His thesis is that these traditional answers all tend towards idealism – even where they are avowedly materialist – in the following sense: they all work on the basis of the assumption that we can capture the world in the conceptual framework we bring to it (or, at least, the best version of it, once we have worked that out). Putting it in terms of Hegel’s philosophy, traditional philosophy thinks that the world is rational, as long as we look at it in a sufficiently rational way.49 The danger in this assumption is, however, that instead of cognising the world, we cognise only what we bring to it – instead of knowledge of something other than thought and its categories, we might be settled with a big tautology. Empirical cognition would be like recognising that bachelors are unmarried men. In this sense, Kant’s talk of the inaccessible thing in itself at least acknowledged the problem, while Hegel’s absolute idealism extinguished all traces of it.50 Thus, the mistake of identity thinking is not that it involves identification and concepts – all thinking does this inevitably – but the mistake is that it rests on the assumption, whether explicitly or not, that the world is fundamentally accessible in full to thought.51 This assumption is problematic because it loses from view that there might be something in the object (or even the object as a whole) which is incompatible with, or inaccessible by conceptual thought. It does not sufficiently attend to the fact that identifying always involves disregarding what is non-identical and incommensurable in the particular object of our cognition. It thereby violates a commitment inherent in its conception of concepts itself: concepts are directed towards capturing what they are not; in Adorno’s terminology: concepts, incarnation of identity, aim at the nonconceptual, the non-identical.52

#### Their defense of “this concrete subject has a dual nature” in the Farr evidence causes domination, victim blaming, unfreedom, and fails – and we agree with the transedental subject for now in your Tiberius evidence

Freyenhagen 13 Fabian Freyenhagen (Fabian Freyenhagen is a British philosopher and Professor of Philosophy at the University of Essex. He is known for his expertise on critical theory and Kantian ethics.) “No right living,” Chapter 2 in Adorno’s Practical Philosophy: Living Less Wrongly. Cambridge University Press. 2013. Pgs. 56-59. <https://www.cambridge.org/us/academic/subjects/philosophy/twentieth-century-philosophy/adornos-practical-philosophy-living-less-wrongly?format=HB&isbn=9781107036543>. SJMS

I.1 Moral worth, repression, and happiness Given Adorno’s criticisms of Kant’s conception of freedom (see Appendix), it is unsurprising that he objects to Kant’s dualism between rational agency and physical nature also in the context of Kant’s moral theory. Specifically, this dualism is at issue in Kant’s account of moral worth. For Kant we only accrue moral worth for our actions if we act in accordance with duty out of respect for the moral law, with any inclinations and desires playing at most an accompanying role, but not that of supplying the underlying and sufficient motivation (the determining ground). Moral motivation, in this picture, is contrasted with any motivation (any incentives) with which our sensuous nature provides us. While Adorno objects to this picture of moral worth, he also recognises that it is a natural upshot of viewing natural inclination as a threat to freedom (and thereby to morality): Kant’s every concretion of morality bears repressive features. Its abstractness is a matter of substance, eliminating from the subject whatsoever does not conform with its pure concept. Hence the Kantian rigorism. The hedonistic principle is argued against not because it is evil in itself, but because it is heteronomous to the pure ego. ... As he honors freedom, however, seeking to cleanse it of all impairments, Kant simultaneously condemns the person to unfreedom in principle.4 Put differently, Kant divorces moral worth from natural inclination and hedonism (and, more generally, from empirical motivations) because of a combination of two thoughts: (a) we can only get praised and blamed for what is sufficiently in our control and (b) motivation by natural inclination is not sufficiently in our control and not sufficiently aligned with what morality requires us to do. In order to be credited for our (moral) motivations, they have to be independent of our sensible nature (and the empirical world as a whole) – Kant is here taking a typically moral-philosophical thought to its logical conclusion, and Adorno recognises this. In order to save the idea of moral worth, we need the pure, transcendental ego – removed from moral luck, from the contingencies of what our sensuous nature endows us with, and from what the external world makes out of our well-intentioned best efforts in terms of consequences. However, honouring freedom by cleansing it of everything empirical – Adorno objects – is at the same time to introduce an element of unfreedom into its very heart; specifically, it introduces inner repression into the workings of freedom (see also Appendix). In other words, freedom is purchased at the price of dominating our sensuous nature. The problematic nature of this domination is revealed in the pathologies that result from it – if Adorno is correct, then we are all suffering from such pathologies at least to some extent and do so (at least in part) because of the inner repression we subject ourselves to. What is more, the dualism underlying Kant’s motivational rigorism is neither sustainable nor necessary. This latter criticism builds on Adorno’s objections to Kant’s conception of freedom discussed in the Appendix: the dualism is not sustainable because there cannot be an invention by the pure mind. Physical impulses are not just the expression of rational decision-making (as Kant has it), but constitutive of it. Similarly, the dualism is not necessary because in a free society physical impulses and rational requirements would pull in the same direction. It might be true that after a long history of alienation from our physical impulses and needs, what we take to be rational requirements pull in a different direction to the physical impulses, but this does not mean that they have to do this as a matter of principle. One way Kantians could reply is to argue that Adorno’s worry about inner repression is premised on a misunderstanding of Kant’s views. A certain way of reading the examples Kant discusses (such as his famous examples of the shopkeeper who does not cheat his customer and of someone who gladly helps others in need) might suggest that we have to suppress inclinations in order to become morally worthy: it is the fortitude shown in the struggle with inclinations that makes one deserving of moral praise. Kant does, indeed, sometimes sound as if he endorsed such a viewpoint – for example, he says that the action of helping others ‘first has its genuine moral worth’ when the philanthropist’s mind is ‘overshadowed by his own grief which extinguishes all sympathy with the fate of others, but he stills helps them’. 5 However, this reading is, all things considered, misleading – Kant’s point in the examples is merely that we cannot know in cases where motivations other than respect for the moral are present, whether or not the latter was sufficient as a motivation for the act in question, and, hence, we cannot know whether or not the act has moral worth – the moral motive only comes to our attention in cases of conflicting motivations that are overcome.6 In other words, Kant is advancing an epistemic, not a moral or metaphysical claim in these examples. His full picture of moral worth leaves room for sensuous nature and does not necessarily imply its domination. To be morally worthy, you have to act morally for moral reasons, but doing so is not always possible without the help of our sensuous nature. The latter can prompt morally worthy actions – for example, unless we have certain emotional sensibilities (such as empathy for the suffering of others), we will not recognise the morally salient features of situations and be prompted by this into considering our duties. Kant even says that we have a duty (albeit an indirect one) to develop these sensibilities – say by exposing ourselves to those who suffer from illness and misfortune.7 Also, the mere presence of motivations with which our sensuous nature equips us (say joy in helping others) does not detract from our moral worth, since these motivations can accompany the morally worthy motivation of acting in accordance with duty out of duty. The key point is merely that respect for the moral law has to be sufficient as incentive for actions in order to gain moral worth for them. Finally, some recent Kantians weaken even this requirement: it would be permissible and accrue moral worth to act on natural inclinations and desires as long as these inclinations and desires have been framed – worked through, if you like – by respect for the moral law.8 In other words, these Kantians admit that our inclinations, desires, and emotions are not just fixed givens beyond our control, but can be shaped by our rational nature and once this has happened, they are perfectly suitable as moral motivation. In these ways, Kant’s dualism between sensuous nature and rational agency is presented as less stark, or even – in the final response just indicated – as something that can be overcome in some instances. Still, if this picture is to be at all a Kantian one, then the dualism has to remain part of it. Otherwise, we would have to give up Kant’s central claim that all competent adults have the capacity for rational and moral agency as well as its corollary that we can hold all of them morally and legally responsible for their actions. (This claim illustrates well the way Kant is committed to the egalitarian Enlightenment project of treating all (competent) adults as responsible agents with rights, independently of any arbitrary contingencies.) In response, Adorno would question the underlying view (partly following Nietzsche). Firstly, he is sceptical that maintaining the idea of universal moral and criminal responsibility is in fact well-motivated. It might seem to be something progressive, but in fact is driven by an urge to punish – such that we hold individuals responsible for what they are not responsible and mask what is really a social problem by individualising blame (see Chapter 3). Secondly, there is a second kind of Nietzschean worry: if inner repression is necessary to underwrite moral agency (at least initially when the character is formed), then it is worth asking whether or not this sacrifice is worth it. In fact, even Kant recognised that happiness is a kind of constraint on morality – he concedes that there is something problematic in a moral theory, if happiness has no place at all in it. For Kant, happiness does not have a place in supplying the motivation for acting morally (for our actions to have moral worth the incentive we incorporate into our maxims of action cannot be the happiness gained from so acting, even if the action happens to be in conformity with duty); it does not supply the criterion of rightness or wrongness (as in Utilitarianism); but Kant acknowledges that happiness is a constraint insofar as we could reasonably reject morality, if we had not even the hope for happiness (in proportion to our virtue). If we had no rational hope that the highest good (happiness in proportion to virtue) could be achieved, then morality ‘must be fantastic and directed to empty imaginary ends and must therefore in itself be false’. 9 There is a rather complicated story at issue here – to underpin rational hope, Kant postulates freedom, the existence of God (who guarantees the hospitability of nature to moral agency and secures the highest good by his grace), and the immortality of the soul (required for the infinite striving towards virtue), albeit only for practical purposes – but we need not enter into it here. The important point is that, as Adorno highlights, happiness is a kind of constraint on morality even for Kant: Kant finally concedes that the world would be a hell if it were not possible to achieve – and were it only in a transcendental realm – something like the unity of reason and the impulses it has suppressed.10 In fact, Adorno goes further: The postulates of practical reason which transcend the subject – God, freedom, immortality – imply a critique of the Categorical Imperative, of pure subjective reason. Without these postulates the Imperative would be unthinkable, all Kant’s avowals to the contrary notwithstanding. Without hope there is no good.11 Put more strongly still, Adorno seems to say that without hope, there is no moral right. His critique then is that if we accept (as Kant does) that happiness is an indirect constraint on morality and if we further accept (as Adorno wants to convince us that we should) that it is possible to reconcile reason and physical nature in the empirical domain (albeit not in our current social world), then a morality that is premised on either postponing happiness to an other-worldly realm or even just relies on the hope of such happiness is guilty of legitimising excessive repression and blocking real reconciliation. By promising happiness beyond the empirical domain, one contributes to people’s acceptance of repression in this world, rather than to changing the social setting. Thirdly, even if one rejected the two Nietzschean worries, there is another rejoinder open to Adorno: Kant cannot underwrite moral agency, even if one granted – for argument’s sake – Kant’s dualism. This point is connected to the next set of criticisms that Adorno levels against Kant’s ethics.

#### 2 Impacts:

#### [1] Identity thinking reproduces Auschwitz

Freyenhagen 13 Fabian Freyenhagen [University of Essex], 2013, “ADORNO’S PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY Living Less Wrongly” Cambridge University Press, ISBN: 978-1-107-03654-3, <https://www.cambridge.org/us/academic/subjects/philosophy/twentieth-century-philosophy/adornos-practical-philosophy-living-less-wrongly?format=HB&isbn=9781107036543> SJMS Bracketed for gendered language.

However, for Adorno, Auschwitz was not a unique set of events, standing out from history and unlike anything which came before or after. In many ways, almost the opposite is the case for him: Auschwitz is an exemplification of the general tendencies of the age.3 In particular, it is an extreme example of two (interrelated) central tendencies of modern social reality: (a) the elimination of all individuality to the point of indifference towards individual life (which includes the objectification and depersonalisation of human beings); and (b) the inversion of means and ends (which includes the subordination of human beings to their own creations). The victims of Auschwitz were not just murdered but the perpetrators also attempted to erase any sense of being a unique, irreplaceable individual in them. In Primo Levi’s words, the aim was ‘to annihilate us first as men in order to kill us more slowly afterwards’. 4 The actions of the perpetrators thereby mirrored something fundamental in the workings of modern society and rationality (according to Adorno): the elimination of particularity, such that everything and everyone becomes fungible – just another instance of a general category; one which can easily be expended or discarded, since others could take its place. Those actions foreshadowed a tendency, according to which differences matter, if at all, as inefficiencies or stopgaps to be eliminated. Auschwitz expresses also the inversion of means and ends typical of modern society (and thought forms), albeit in an extreme form: the modern means of industrialisation, transport, and bureaucratic administration (as well as technical-instrumental rationality) are not just decoupled from human ends, but actually turned against the most basic of such ends, survival. Notably, capitalism has replaced human ends and needs with its own telos – production for production’s sake or (what comes to the same thing for Adorno) the maximisation of profit – and satisfies these ends and needs, if at all, incidentally and even then in a distorted and incomplete manner. In this way, the events for which the name ‘Auschwitz’ stands were not something which went against the trend of civilisation. Rather, these events were intimately connected to some of the main tendencies of the path which civilisation has taken and to the structure of modern society and thinking in particular. The lesson of Auschwitz – at least, according to Adorno – is not that culture was replaced by a momentary fallback into a barbaric state; the lesson is that culture itself failed.5 If Auschwitz was possible in a country with an advanced economy and high culture (‘a land of poets and thinkers’, as Germany is known); if it happened despite the fact that moral theories reached into the minds of perpetrators (in the way Eichmann claimed that he had lived his whole life according to Kant’s categorical imperative of which he seemed to have a decent grasp);6 if it was carried out not so much by monsters, but ordinary men (and women) [people];7 if they thought of themselves not as acting against morality and civilisation, but as men of integrity who have taken on a heavy burden to protect them, remaining in their own eyes, with few exceptions, decent and respectful of human life (as Himmler described the work of the SS in his October 1943 speeches at Posen); and if it was not the act of a small group of people, but if a whole society contributed, in one way or another, to it;8 then it seems not altogether far-fetched to come to Adorno’s pessimistic conclusion that Auschwitz was not an accident, but an indication of a deep-seated problem of modern society, civilisation, and culture. If this view is defensible,9 then it suggests also another conclusion: as long as our modern culture – its thought forms and the social world underpinning it – continues unchanged, the reoccurrence of events such as Auschwitz remains a real possibility.

#### [2] Enlightenment is not merely a period in 18th century Europe – because of fear of the unknown, through identity thinking, enlightenment is a process of radicalizing mythical fear in the name of demythologiziation. This all-consuming fear of the unknown maintains global systems of exploitation and oppression.

Zuidervaart 15 Zuidervaart, Lambert (Lambert Zuidervaart is Professor of Philosophy Emeritus at the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto. He is the author of Adorno's Aesthetic Theory (MIT Press), Artistic Truth, Social Philosophy after Adorno, Religion, Truth, and Social Transformation, and other books.), "Theodor W. Adorno", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Winter 2015 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2015/entries/adorno/>. SJMS Ellipses in original.

According to Horkheimer and Adorno, the source of today's disaster is a pattern of ~~blind~~ domination, domination in a triple sense: the domination of nature by human beings, the domination of nature within human beings, and, in both of these forms of domination, the domination of some human beings by others. What motivates such triple domination is an irrational fear of the unknown: “Humans believe themselves free of fear when there is no longer anything unknown. This has determined the path of demythologization … Enlightenment is mythical fear radicalized” (DE 11). In an unfree society whose culture pursues so-called progress no matter what the cost, that which is “other,” whether human or nonhuman, gets shoved aside, exploited, or destroyed. The means of destruction may be more sophisticated in the modern West, and the exploitation may be less direct than outright slavery, but ~~blind~~, fear-driven domination continues, with ever greater global consequences. The all-consuming engine driving this process is an ever-expanding capitalist economy, fed by scientific research and the latest technologies. Contrary to some interpretations, Horkheimer and Adorno do not reject the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. Nor do they provide a negative “metanarrative” of universal historical decline. Rather, through a highly unusual combination of philosophical argument, sociological reflection, and literary and cultural commentary, they construct a “double perspective” on the modern West as a historical formation (Jarvis 1998, 23). They summarize this double perspective in two interlinked theses: “Myth is already enlightenment, and enlightenment reverts to mythology” (DE xviii). The first thesis allows them to suggest that, despite being declared mythical and outmoded by the forces of secularization, older rituals, religions, and philosophies may have contributed to the process of enlightenment and may still have something worthwhile to contribute. The second thesis allows them to expose ideological and destructive tendencies within modern forces of secularization, but without denying either that these forces are progressive and enlightening or that the older conceptions they displace were themselves ideological and destructive.

#### The Alternative is to use negative dialects to confront the non-identical - this resolves the crisis posed by your violence – it understands the subordinate needs of an object come before our concepts.

Freyenhagen 13 Fabian Freyenhagen [University of Essex], 2013, “ADORNO’S PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY Living Less Wrongly” Cambridge University Press, ISBN: 978-1-107-03654-3, <https://www.cambridge.org/us/academic/subjects/philosophy/twentieth-century-philosophy/adornos-practical-philosophy-living-less-wrongly?format=HB&isbn=9781107036543> SJMS

In fact, on Adorno’s view it is only through the external intervention of the subject that objects can fully unfold their potential. Whatever is contained in the objects themselves requires human subjectivity to be voiced.75 This cannot merely consist in copying the object or perceiving it. Objects require interpretation and this, in turn, requires the subject to move beyond them – not to the fixed categorisation of identity thinking, but to the more fluid forms of (the already mentioned) constellations or force fields of concepts.76 In this way, the subject can help to unlock the historical, dynamic, and relational character of the objects they cognise.77 Still, there are no guarantees here: interpretations can miss their object or fail to be illuminating; only the successful ones realise the difficult balancing act of achieving ‘bindingness [Verbindlichkeit] without system’. 78 Along with the rigid nature of identity thinking, certainty has to be given up too, and fallabilism takes its place.79 This lack of certainty is particularly acute within late modernity: within a wrong social life and against the background of the dominance of identity thinking, the objects themselves are deformed and cannot reveal their true nature.80 Instead, we have to engage in ‘negative dialectics’, that is, we have to engage in constant questioning of our thought forms and the confrontation of them with the experiences of non-identity. Such a dialectics is negative in the sense that it incorporates the denial of two assumptions: (1) the denial of the assumption that identity of our conceptual scheme with the world can be achieved; and (2) the rejection of the assumption that the conclusions of dialectics can move beyond the wrong state of the world and the wrong thought forms dominating within it.81 Negative dialectics is a reflection of this state and these thought forms, and if they were eventually overcome, then it would come to an end too.82 In that sense, it is not an eternal truth or orientation either.

#### They’re FW is a link – it tries to ground normative claims which delay’s action, is inappropriate, irrational and it leads to and undermines the evil of Auschwitz – also use explanatory normativity

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Fabian Freyenhagen [University of Essex], 2013, “ADORNO’S PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY Living Less Wrongly” Cambridge University Press, ISBN: 978-1-107-03654-3, Pages: 203-205 <https://www.cambridge.org/us/academic/subjects/philosophy/twentieth-century-philosophy/adornos-practical-philosophy-living-less-wrongly?format=HB&isbn=9781107036543> SJMS

However, as we have seen in this chapter, Adorno rejects the need for, as well as the appropriateness and success of, ‘discursive grounding’. Trying to ground normative claims discursively or at the level of abstract principles is both unsuccessful and an outrage. It is unsuccessful, since morality, according to Adorno, can have content and practical effects only in virtue of relying on non-discursive and non-deducible elements, namely, our impulse-based reactions to suffering and injustice. To suggest that it is necessary to ground normative claims discursively is to implicitly deny that the particular situation by itself contains normativity and to claim that instead the normativity given in it derives from some deeper level of theorising or some higher principle. This idea of derivation, however, gets things terribly wrong in Adorno’s view. For example, it does not take seriously enough the evil of the events for which the name ‘Auschwitz’ stands; for to search for discursive grounding implies that it is necessary to obtain reassurance about the negative normativity of these events at a general level abstracted from them. Not only is such reassurance impossible, it is ethically wrong to ask or search for it – ‘monstrous’. Two points emerge from these views of Adorno’s. Firstly, it should now be clear why Adorno never explicitly provided what his critics asked for. We have just seen that what the critics demanded is a justificatory account of normativity. Yet, as Adorno rejected this project, this demand is (from his perspective) misconceived. While it would have been good to explicitly say so, he probably assumed that his views on the merits and demerits of the justificatory project were sufficiently well-known for him not to comment further on the matter. Secondly, we can reconstruct from Adorno’s sceptical views about ‘discursive grounding’ some constraints on how Adorno would have approached the project of accounting for the normativity of his views. The account would not be justificatory in the sense outlined. Specifically, this implies two constraints: (a) it should not commit the outrage of disregarding the normativity given in a situation by deriving it from a deeper or higher level; and (b) it needs to be sensitive to the non-deductive, impulse-based elements in Adorno’s ethics (and philosophy as a whole). Are there any further constraints on such an enterprise? It seems to me that the following considerations show that there is at least one more constraint besides the two mentioned before. One important element of Adorno’s philosophy is what we might call a kind of ‘error theory’. 40 For Adorno, most people relate wrongly to the world and each other. In fact, according to him, we all have distorted reactions and attitudes most of the time because of the way society has constituted, conditioned, and programmed us. We desire things we do not really need and do not respond fully to the neglect of what we do in fact need.41 In order to make this theory work, Adorno not only needs to have an explanation of why people behave in this way – as just indicated, he seems to think that it is determination by society which explains this – but also needs an explanation of why behaving in this way is wrong or constitutes an error. For example, one way such an explanation could go is to show how states of affairs can give us reasons for action, for believing, etc., and how in most cases people do not respond adequately to these reasons in our current social world – by overlooking them, by letting less weighty considerations override them, etc. As a matter of fact, some such account seems to be at work in Adorno’s theory, though it is often phrased more in terms of a contrast between what a few critical individuals who were lucky to escape complete programming by society think about the world and what the majority of uncritical individuals make of it.42 Admittedly, one might then need further assurance that the judgements of the critics provide the right kind of standard for assessing the judgements of the majority (I return to this soon). Still, the first point to note here is that Adorno needs some sort of account of the errors which most of us all the time and all of us most of the time are committing in relating to our (social) world and each other. Moreover, this places a third constraint on any Adornian account of normativity: it has to be suitable to explain the error(s) in question.

#### The Role of the Ballot is to vote for the debater who best embraces Adorno’s education after Auschwitz – this means using the debate space as an educational space to instill distance of violence and atrocities

Freyenhagen 13 (Quoting Adorno) Fabian Freyenhagen [University of Essex], 2013, “ADORNO’S PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY Living Less Wrongly” Cambridge University Press, ISBN: 978-1-107-03654-3, <https://www.cambridge.org/us/academic/subjects/philosophy/twentieth-century-philosophy/adornos-practical-philosophy-living-less-wrongly?format=HB&isbn=9781107036543> SJMS Quotes from Adorno marked by bracketed inserts.

In his essay ‘Education after Auschwitz’, Adorno draws a distinction between the subjective conditions that made Auschwitz possible and could contribute to its reoccurrence, on the one hand, and the objective conditions, on the other: [Quote] Since the possibility of changing the objective – namely, societal and political – conditions is extremely limited today, attempts to work against the repetition of Auschwitz are necessarily restricted to the subjective dimension. By this I also mean essentially the psychology of people who do such things. I do not believe it would help much to appeal to eternal values, at which the very people who are prone to commit such atrocities would merely shrug their shoulders. I also do not believe that enlightenment about the positive qualities possessed by persecuted minorities would be of much use. The roots must be sought in the persecutors, not in the victims, who are murdered under the paltriest of pretences. What is necessary is what I once called the turn to the subject. One must know the mechanisms that render people capable of such deeds, must reveal the mechanisms to them, and strive, by general awareness of those mechanisms, to prevent people from becoming so again. 86 [End Quote] With changes to the objective conditions highly unlikely, Adorno here concludes that we should concentrate on understanding the (psychological) mechanisms which make people commit atrocities. In this sense, he wants education as ‘an education toward critical self-reflection’. 87 This should proceed both via encouraging reflection and criticism from early childhood onwards, and by fostering it via public awareness campaigns about the (psychological) mechanisms in question.88 Adorno also thinks that instilling a sense of distaste for, or shame about, violence into children (and, if possible, adults) would be important to prevent Auschwitz repeating itself.89 He even makes a few suggestions about the form and content a post-Auschwitz education could have, such as recommending a focus on the concrete forms of resistance against the social horrors committed under Nazism or the opposition to parts thereof (for example, the euthanasia programme) among the German population.90 On a social level, he also suggests reminding people of the catastrophic results – authoritarianism, war, suffering – which the fascist regimes had for their own populations and reminding them that fascist revivals would come at similar costs, something which might present more of a counterweight than reminders about the (even worse) suffering of others.91 What is most important is Adorno’s insistence that this subjective dimension can at best improve the chances of people refraining from participating in such atrocities and thereby reduce the number of those carrying out the murders (though not necessarily the number of the people working in the bureaucratic machine behind the atrocities who Adorno calls ‘desktop murderers’).92 Encouraging reflection from early on and public awareness campaigns will not transform the objective conditions. Still, it might influence the ease with which people might be led by these conditions to the most barbaric excesses. As Adorno puts it in his conclusion of the essay: [Quote] Even if rational enlightenment, as psychology well knows, does not straightaway eliminate the unconscious mechanisms, then it at least reinforces in the preconscious certain counter-impulses and helps prepare a climate that does not favour the uttermost extreme. If the entire culture really became permeated with the idea of the pathogenic character of the tendencies that came into their own in Auschwitz, then perhaps people would better control those tendencies.93 [End Quote] The mere knowledge of how things go wrong may not be sufficient to stop them from going wrong, but it may, so to speak, strengthen the immune system of individuals or even whole societies against the objective tendencies towards depersonalisation, means-end reversal, and disregard of individuals.