

The Dialectic of the Non-identity of Freedom—Based on Adorno's Critique of Kant's Third Dichotomy

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Abstract: *From the chapter on 'Freedom' in Adorno's Negative Dialectics, Adorno's critique of affirmative freedom is used to illustrate his claim to freedom under the dialectic of non-identity. In Adorno's view, freedom in Kant's third dichotomy, which necessarily exists in causality, creates a subservient individual and a compulsory community. The essay argues that Adorno's reflective critique of 'freedom' is in fact a search for the possibility of a correct life after Auschwitz, a critique of the illusory homogenization of bourgeois social phenomena, but also a reflection on the free and autonomous individual. Adorno's critique of Kant's metaphysical vision of freedom is therefore not a mechanical reductionist operation, but has practical implications in the moral philosophy. The dialectic of the non-identity of freedom is the denial of the 'unfreedom in freedom'. But the critique of freedom in capitalist ideology from the logic of the "star cluster" is inevitably negative, so that the subject cannot emerge from a dialectic of unity with history.*

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1. Introduction

"Philosophical thinking is like thinking in models, and the dialectic of negation is the sum of model analysis." [1] Based on this paradigm of understanding, Adorno concentrates in the third part of Negative Dialektik, 'Models', on questions of freedom, the spirit of history, and whether we can continue to live after Auschwitz. In his discussion of the question of 'freedom', Adorno explores why freedom is important to Kant, why Kant sees freedom as an absolute beginning and why he sees the conflict between freedom and determinism as a conflict between the nature and scope of causality. Freedom under absolute conceptualism is not the same as freedom under the socio-historical realm of experience. The domination of nature by reason is implicit in the concept of unconditional freedom, that is, a form of freedom that is not subject to the circumstances of the subject. Similarly, Lenin pointed out that intelligent idealism is closer to intelligent materialism than to stupid materialism. Adorno believed that a critique with a utopian element was closer to a 'transformative practice' than a direct transposition of theory or conformity to reality.

2. Affirmative freedom: the illusion of the dialectic of sameness

Identical thinking pervades traditional Western metaphysics, where either the subject rules over the object or the object subjugates the subject. Hegel was aware of this problem of the existence of the same subject and object: "The metaphysics before Kant held that the provisions of thought are the fundamental provisions of things, and on the basis of this premise insisted that thought can know all existence, and thus that whatever thought thinks is itself known." [2] Hegel thus argues: "I therefore always want to be in the state I have to be in; and to get everything I want is to be free. For everything goes on as you imagine it, and nothing stands in your way; this is absolute freedom, and the only thing that enjoys absolute freedom is the absolute spirit. If we equate ourselves with the rational principles of the world, then we are free." [3] Hegel's view of freedom remains within the civil society he constructs, under the spirit of the Absolute. Thus, for Kant and Hegel, the freedom and self-discipline of the individual are central to their system, but they also subjugate the individual to the state with its absolute power for its ends. Nietzsche, Steiner and Marx in turn stated that the individual should not be subjugated to any external purpose other than his own developmental progress or happiness. As monopoly capitalism developed, the two aspects of freedom and equilibrium gradually developed and changed.

"A philosophy that once seemed obsolete has been reborn by missing the moment of its realization." [1] Marx's definition of the alienated 'essential force of human objectification', Lukács's account of the 'external world of enslavement' - the world of commodities, and Adorno's portrayal of the "The world of total control", as portrayed by Adorno, reveals the closed nature of capitalism from different aspects. However, compared to Marx's time, capitalism has changed significantly, proletarian revolution in the traditional sense is no longer possible, and philosophy thus misses the historical opportunity to unify with practice or to cosmopolitanise itself. For, from the economic, political and ideological to the cultural and psychological, capital had achieved the sole, homogeneous abstract domination of society, and even philosophy, which had been the most critical, "seemed to have become a residue of the simple commodity economy within late industrialised capitalism due to the dramatic expansion of society and the progress of empirical natural knowledge" [1] in other words, it has been homogenised by the market mechanism, losing its own critical function and "becoming a concrete science again". In contemporary society, the principle of homogeneity is taken as a fundamental principle, and the market economy treats different measures of use value as if they were the same measure of value. The principle of homogeneity is also reflected in Kant's statement that "the principle of the homogenisation of the subject is itself the principle of the internalisation of society".

The global expansion of capital has not provided any opportunity for the repair of rationality, and the iron cage of 'sameness' that Adorno feared is still gaining speed in the 'McDonaldisation of society'. Formal rationality means that "people seek optimal ways to achieve their particular ends and outcomes under the influence of rules, regulations and larger social structures." Typical of this is the 'hierarchy', whose principles are broadly threefold: "First, employees have standardised competencies; second, they are subject to rules set by a higher authority; and third, all work is clerical." Its organisation is a massive one that includes a series of vertical, public positions. People in these public positions are charged with certain duties and have to act according to rules, regulated by written regulations, imposed by those who occupy higher positions. In a hierarchical system everything is done to the right person and is extremely efficient. For example, under this predictable design model, the same burger you order in Beijing, New York or Paris will hardly be different - it will have the same weight, the same face, the same calorie content and even the same grams of ketchup. So if you're in an unfamiliar place and don't know what to eat, or are unsure about unfamiliar local food, McDonald's is always a 'safe' choice - you know you can predict what the burger will taste like. Likewise, you know that the McNuggets you had last month won't be any different from the ones you'll have tomorrow, nor will they be any different from the ones you'll have next month. Space and time are both predictable. Seemingly 'free' choices are not free, not reasonable.

The logic of homogeneous thinking is reflected in social life in totalitarianism, hegemony, power politics, or in the enslavement and mind control of the masses. The atrocities of the Holocaust that resulted from Nazism were the product of a homogeneous mode of thinking. The socio-historical situation in which the critical theory of Adorno's philosophy was formed was one of social production in all socialist and capitalist countries, led by the Soviet Union and the United States, where society was constantly becoming a cage-like totality due to increased rationalisation. [4] The proletariat, as the subject of the social revolution, had become unresistingly subservient to the existing order and the social revolution fell into inevitable failure. When Adorno returned to his homeland from exile, he saw a country that was frustrated, indifferent and full of cynical mistrust, and Adorno saw the proletarian masses falling into "uncriticism" either because of their belief in the "affirmative dialectic" of Plato, Kant, Hegel, Lukács and others, or because of the "uncriticism The proletarian masses either fell into "uncriticism" because of their belief in the "affirmative dialectic" of Plato, Kant, Hegel and Lukács, or into "one-way man" because of their uncriticism, thus falling into a dichotomy of understanding "freedom", which inevitably led to negative freedom. Benjamin also wrote a series of essays on One Way Street in the 1930s, including the idea that in the age of industrialisation, the works of art of the age of mechanical reproduction had been drained, leaving behind an impoverished, empty, urbanised experience. People wanted to live and had no choice but to submit and adapt to the given conditions.

In summary, therefore, the principle of homogeneous thinking is embodied both in the traditional Western metaphysical philosophy of discernment and under the principle of equivalence and precision calculation in a commodity economy. Capitalism (the object) rules over the concrete reality of the individual (the subject) and creates the illusion, the illusion of object unity, which gives the false impression that the capitalist system is significantly superior. Self-regulation under the modern organised, rationalised society is not a rational being, but a response to an external coercive mechanism, an order. The individual is trapped in a sense of obscured freedom that is nothing more than an 'illusion'. Adorno discusses the 'problem of illusion' at the beginning of freedom and argues that the subject becomes fictional when it is separated from the object.

Kant's doctrine of freedom is expressed precisely through his analysis of dichotomies. In the third dichotomy, the proposition stresses that causality according to the laws of nature is not the only causality from which all the phenomena of the world can be derived. It is therefore necessary to assume a causality that follows from freedom; the converse stresses that everything happens according to the laws of nature and therefore there is no freedom. In fact the idea of freedom from the very beginning of Kant's work was conceived abstractly and subjectively, as an illusion. But when Kant tries to justify and necessitate the dichotomy, he finds a basis for his opening assumption of the problem of illusion, namely, that there is a logic of non-contradiction in this contradiction. The problem of illusion jumps the freedom of the will out of society and shatters the lie that a finite subject occupies an absolutely pure and self-contained existence. For the urgency of freedom for interest induces the objectivity of contradiction, and the real question is how Kant confronts the contradictory and non-contradictory nature of what is self-existent and what is self-contained (what is outside of what is prescribed). As recent bourgeois emancipation itself provided the context for early modern philosophical reflection on freedom. Adorno cites the contradictory character of early modern freedom: it both opposes the old oppression and fosters the new oppression hidden under the principle of reasonableness. Adorno argues that Kant's third dichotomy is a true reflection of the real, contradictory experience of the subject under capitalist society. In response to the proposition that the will is free or unfree, Adorno's answer is that the modern subject has objective reasons to consider itself both free and unfree. The progress of modern science has weakened our confidence in freedom because it has somehow gained insight into causality. That is why the bourgeoisie has always been concerned with the freedom of particular individuals, not with the freedom of humanity as a whole. They are always on guard and ready to suppress freedom that has the potential to go beyond the bourgeois order.

3. Freedom and Causality

Modern philosophy sees the natural world as a causally ordered system of spatio-temporal objects, because human self-development, whether through ancient mythology or modern science, depends on such an ordered system. Thus we can find in Kant the epistemological character of causal coercion. Kant was dismissed by Adorno as a "cynical little citizen" when he dealt with reason. "Everything that happens presupposes a prior state of affairs", and Kant's causality both transcends the Leibniz school's self-existence and distinguishes itself from Hume's discussion of causality. In terms of Kant's argument for the proper topic in the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, firstly, the causality of the cause that enables something to happen is itself something that happens, is also subject to the laws of nature and presupposes a prior state of affairs. Secondly, rejecting the first beginning, it is because there is no sequential perfection that the causality of the law of nature is no longer the only causality. Third, freedom is the absolute spontaneity of a hypothetical cause starting from itself, and spontaneity is an impulse. Adorno sees Kant as attempting to annex the freedom of the knowing subject to the sameness of all non-samenesses, and then to rise to the absolute law. Kant stresses that necessity, which proceeds from the absolute law, is in contradiction with freedom. But freedom as the highest law of necessity is necessarily bound up with it. This moral law is both rational (reduced to pure logical reason without content) and irrational (accepted in the given). In talking about the concept of freedom Kant introduces the expression "necessity". This means that Kant's concept of causality has a different explanatory space from that of the natural sciences, and Kant is unable to eliminate the contradictory signs here, because what needs to be proved - the principle of necessity itself - is assumed at the outset. "Just as subjects are completely powerless in the face of a society that is independent of them, subjects are aware of the limits of their freedom by virtue of their peculiar affiliation to nature." [1] Adorno attempts to show that Kant's concept of causality cannot tell us about the causal powers of objects and the causal relations between them. Adorno infers that Kant's judgements about causality are homophonic, because Kant agrees that in empirical judgements we know nothing about the objects of these judgements. But this is clearly wrong. Our empirical knowledge of the objects of intuition is true knowledge, even though it is to some extent a product of human reason. For Kant, we do not arbitrarily impose our concepts on the world; on the contrary, the use of knowing in judgement is conditioned by empirical conditions and perceptual release. Since causal relations depend on the spatial and temporal properties of objects, the acquisition of knowledge of things in themselves cannot reveal these relations. Conversely, perceptual intuition about an object is required to personalise it in space and time.

In the third dichotomy, Kant argues that freedom must first exist in causality, but on the other hand everything happens according to the laws of nature and therefore there is no freedom. Kant removes this contradiction in the dichotomy, but does not make a detailed distinction between practical subjects and a priori subjects. Kant argues that "according to the causality of the laws of nature, not all

phenomena of the world can be derived from them with a unique causality. In order to explain these phenomena, it is also necessary to assume a causality that comes from freedom."In his third dichotomy, Kant emphasises that the dialectical process does not presuppose anything positive, thus transcending the earlier deterministic illusion and ceasing to pretend to be consistent with it, but inevitably prompting a mixture of authority and obedience, with one side existing due to its dependence on the other. Kant wants to free the intellectual sphere from the constraints of immanence, but Adorno argues that freedom requires a move away from the freedom cut off by the claim of sameness.

In his third dichotomous antithesis, Kant stresses, first, that every beginning of action presupposes the state of the cause that has not yet acted; second, that we need to go to nature to seek causal associations and subsequently find freedom; and third, that the illusion of freedom, while providing a resting place for knowing in the chain of cause and effect, is, because it is itself blind, the wire of its terminal rule (and only through this wire) to find through the experience of the total correlation. Kant speaks of the causality of nature in addition to the causality of freedom. This antithetical argument embodies the Cartesian style of secularising the free and divine act. But through the antithesis, Adorno criticises Kant for not making a clear distinction between the concept of causality and the concept used, which modifies the concept of causality. Causality is supposed to be present in the thinking of the subject, but Kant treats it as order, dogmatically present in the object and its relations. So "when causality is extended to the concept of pure reason, causality is also denied." [1] Kant turns freedom into free action "in accordance with the rules", like action from reason, but this confines freedom to the principle of sameness. Kant elevates causality, and with it epistemological necessity and the appeal to totality are rendered ineffective.

Kant can only offer us freedom in the realm of metaphysics, whereas in experience man is precisely not free. Adorno criticises Kant's argument for freedom by using the example of the cheater who plays cards or gambles, who believes that if a man wins a bet by deliberately cheating, then he is bound to despise himself. For this is something different from his principle of luck. But Adorno, on the other hand, thinks that whether the cheater despises himself or not is entirely a matter of experience. He may gloat and laugh at the mischief, he may feel guilty for violating a moral principle, he may suspend the moral law and relegate it to madness. Kant here departs from actual content and resorts to mere metaphysical constructs. The "construction" becomes a sameness in itself, and the "constructed thing" is supposed to be the empirical subject, but Kant equates the a priori subject with the empirical subject, because the a priori subject is here reduced to non-identity. Thus, the freedom of the subject becomes something both magical and absurd. Not only Kant, but also Schiller's generation, gave an exalted status to the law, but this is precisely what does not allow freedom to be taken seriously. For the law is the ancient evil of unfreedom.

Based on the third dichotomous argument for and against, 'positive freedom' is a contrived dilemma that Kant wants to save, but instead sets it up as fixed in space and time. On the one hand, Kant's practical philosophy struggles to reconcile the divisiveness and solvability of empiricism within a unified theory of the subject. On the other hand, freedom is not conditioned by the empirical world, and the a priori distinction leads Kant to put freedom into incompatible concepts. Thus it is also clear from the above example that the prescriptive nature of the subject's ontology, in the Kantian sense, cannot help but be caught in a quandary. Thus 'causality is what is imposed on it as a duty in the name of freedom' and becomes an addendum. [1]

The concept of freedom is in fact a knot that contains within itself many entangled things. It is worth noting that causality is not on a single line, that no single event is excluded by diversity. There is a multiplicity and complexity of factors behind the events that are caught up in the grid of intertwined events. To say that 'causality seems to have given way to totality' would still be to fall into another state of high social compression. The young Lukács pushes the dialectic of totality, dismantling the sequence of causality with a concrete totality. But the proletarian consciousness under Lukács' totalitarian dialectic, similar to the subject of Hegel's conceptual dialectic, is reduced to the unity of subject and object. Adorno, on the other hand, argues that "the totality is false", going beyond previous affirmative results and breaking with conceptual fetishism. "Not content that its own conceptuality is part of the meaning of the concept, though it encompasses the non-concept as its meaning, so that the non-concept tends to be equated with the concept and thus cocoons itself." [1] Conceptualisation is the specification of the object by the subject according to a supra-temporal fixity and invariance, a fixity and invariance that is objectively shaped in social relations by the concretized way of thinking of man, i.e. the logic of objectification, which Adorno calls the 'idolatrous character', a social illusion that the reversal of an acquired formation into an innate one. Society in this totality continues to subordinate freedom to obedience and coercion, dissolving the particularity and specificity of the human being in a

state of sameness. The disappearance of causality does not, therefore, mark any kingdom of freedom. But from another perspective, Adorno argues that causality itself has meaning only in the context of freedom. So causality, when reflected upon, finds 'freedom as the idea of non-identity possible'. In other words, causality needs to tell the public what bad things sameness does to non-sameness. Causality needs to be reasserted in a context where the individual is under magic and where the world spirit reinforces its control over external life.

As Fromm argues, "To defeat the forces of totalitarianism, it is necessary first to ascertain the reasons why totalitarians strive to escape from freedom." In the final lecture of *The Problems of Moral Philosophy*, Adorno concludes, "Moral philosophy is necessarily a doctrine of private ethics, and the highest point to which it can rise is the dichotomy between causality and freedom." The dichotomy of causality and freedom is also the contradictory relationship between the moral law in a general sense and the social relations it embodies and the historical conditions and particular individuals who are in them. Adorno argues that Kant does not resolve this 'dichotomy', crucially because he confuses the 'empirical, natural individual' with the 'rational man' and fails to recognise the 'natural connection' that belongs to the 'man'. That what belongs to "man's natural ties is at the same time man's social ties" and that "there is no freedom in the wide dependence in which we live, and therefore no ethics in this ruled world." Kant fully incorporates the will into reason, equating practical reason with theoretical reason, considering the will as a faculty of purpose on the one hand, but on the other hand "the will becomes a terra nullius between subject and object", the will stands at a crossroads and becomes dichotomous. As for the impulse, a necessary condition of the will, which is also washed away by pure reason, Adorno argues that if the will did not include the impulse, practical reason would become cold and ruthless reason, which would lead moral behaviour to its opposite, and moral philosophy, which is supposed to have a warmth, to indifference. Adorno asserts that 'the will is the unity of all impulses and rules. These impulses are expressed as being both spontaneously and rationally specified, distinct from natural causality but within the framework of natural causality: there is no sequence of willed acts outside the causal connection. Freedom is the discourse that expresses these impulses.' [1] Adorno rejects Kant's interpretation of such impulses as an internal event that somehow intervenes in a causal process governed by natural law. Adorno saw the impulse as an addendum. Kant wanted to transcend the state in which moral law and free will are compatible or incompatible, strictly abolishing the ought and the real as one. "Kant's conception of freedom becomes paradoxical: the causality of the phenomenal world, incompatible with Kant's conception of freedom, engulfs the idea of freedom." [1] This causality is the fact that everything under a single line is predicated on a prior state of affairs, which later infers an effect. An apple falls from the tree due to the law of natural causality, but if something of another dynamic breaks into this decision, a new causal sequence begins, and Kant does not address how this new causal sequence merges into the totality of causal conditions.

Adorno argues that Kant is paradoxically forced to construct causality out of freedom because man is, in himself, only part of blind nature and cannot be transcended. Firstly, reason requires in itself a universal conformity so that it can confront the blind, the amorphous; secondly, when reason confronts the amorphous, freedom becomes the only possible antagonist. This double difficulty drives Kant neither to give a limit to the scope of human activity nor to place it in absolute freedom. Kant's conception of freedom is based on reconciliation, and Adorno considered the mere reconciliation with reality in thought to be a pleasurable discursive experience, but it is based precisely on 'inhumanity'. The law of dialectics is not the reconciliation of thought, but the possibility of reality for thought, the possibility of the two in order to liberate the non-identical. So Kant and Adorno start from a clearly different point of view. When the view of theoretical reason encroaches on the view of practical reason, natural causality becomes a threat to freedom, making the view of practical reason the object of scepticism. As the concrete sciences of psychology, chemistry and physics develop, the space for freedom slowly fades. When theoretical causes become authoritatively controlled, our self-connection and social connections are naturally damaged.

4. Individual Freedom and Community Freedom

Without the idea of freedom, the organised society (community) can hardly be theoretically justified, but in turn, society cuts down on freedom. Adorno argued against Hobbes' view of an 'all against all war'. According to Hobbes' determinism, no one is free, all are struggling for self-sustainability. "There is no sense of self without society, just as the individual who transcends society is not society." [1] Adorno argues that self-consciousness exists only in modern society. "Individual in the modern sense does not simply mean the existence of a single person in biology, but implies a unity that can be constructed only through self-reflection." [1] Adorno argues that society as a

whole lacks both the concept and the fact of freedom. Kant's presentation of freedom as an objective self is at odds with an a priori principle grounded in subjective consciousness.[5] Adorno draws on Nietzsche's genealogy to argue that society, in terms of an internal genealogy, also prescribes that individuals become what they are, and therefore their freedom or lack of freedom is not primary; the key is to understand the principle of individuation. The total concept of individuality in the name of totalising freedom for society as a whole is contrasted with all that limits individuality. Similarly Marx, in his critique of the immorality of capitalist society, did not go so far as to point out the immorality of the capitalists, but rather to expose the unfreedom behind them. But the principle of individuation is not really freedom because it is not the ultimate metaphysical thing. Similar to the individual breaking through all the rules, freedom that appears to be the extremity of the individual is not freedom. This is why Adorno opposed liberalism. Liberalism sees the freedom of the subject as antithetical to society; it fails to see that freedom is freedom within society. Adorno has pointed out that "the community always has the advantage over the individual, and we have gone through the innumerable process of being forced at all times to adapt to the community, so that it is simply no longer possible to produce as much coherence as before between our own individual vocation and that which compels us by the objectivity of association." [6] Freedom is thus intertwined in the dual sense of the individual and the community. If freedom depends only on individual experience, context, facts, etc., then the real individual is trapped in a kind of deconstruction by virtue of the moral law he or she reflects upon; if the collective general moral law does not recognise particular individual experiences and ignores the particular, then society is trapped in a top-down "power" and "centralisation".

In confronting the dialectical relationship between the individual and society, Adorno inherited Hegel's view. Hegel argues that the subject can only gain the freedom and unfreedom of the subject redirected towards itself by escaping from the external and opposing the necessary elements in the subject. Previous philosophies, on the other hand, have either fallen back on the absolute freedom of the subject or have moved towards the limiting nature of the environment. But the limits of the environment are not obvious to the subject itself. Hegel argues that "the freedom insisted upon by the bourgeois subject is also a negation, a mockery of true freedom, an expression of the contingency of each individual's social destiny." [1] Hegel's dialectic is always an affirmative dialectic. According to Hegel, freedom in society is a combination of negative and positive freedom after they have been renounced. Whereas the negation of negation results in affirmation, Adorno argues precisely that the negation of negation still results in negation. After the negation of unfreedom, the freedom one obtains still contains unfreedom. Adorno carries on the tradition from Hegel that freedom is historical in conceptual and empirical terms. Hegel must keep his promise to the object, 'only then is it possible to return to philosophy the freedom that Hegel calls and becomes the object. Philosophy loses this freedom in the magic of the concept of freedom, in the magic of the autonomy of the subject who sets the senses in motion.' [1] Adorno argues that the subject first acquires the concept of freedom and unfreedom through the experience of frustration, failure and constraint, and then internalises it. Thus, free will or the freedom of the will is inseparable from social institutionalisation. For Adorno, it is impossible to consider the question of free will in abstraction from the practical, social and political freedoms enjoyed by modern citizens.

For Adorno, individual freedom has to break through the psychological problem and move into the midst of society. Psychology elevates the superego to internalised social norms. "The more radically the individual loses what was once called his sense of self, the more depersonalised he becomes." [1] On this basis, both Schelling's "ego as individuation" is based on the capitalist flaunting and devaluing of the individual; and the "essence of being" ontology of existence, where subjectivity is interpreted as a mode of thinking prescribed by the mode of being. The way of thinking. Under depersonalisation this is now commonly analysed as depersonalisation. But in this case Adorno argues that freedom becomes self-deception. We cannot understand the forgiveness of later Nazi atrocities because of the childhood experiences of Hitler and his cohorts. Adorno argues that Kant's third dichotomy places "the subject is free" above psychology. This argument certainly gives the "worst villains" the tool that I know I have a better personality when I am in the position of a member of the intellectual world. Because of the causal law of freedom under the sensual world, I went to the villain, even though I could be forgiven. It turns out that we are not allowed to do so. So Kant uses the causality of nature to make freedom retreat. Adorno differs from Kant in prioritising the individual life rather than allowing thought as a form of authority to override life, as this would create a form of centralisation. As Adorno says in his introduction: "Dialectics also brings all objective things together for reflection, and eventually they enter into reconciliation. Reconciliation liberates non-identical things from mental coercion and opens the way to the diversity of different things, so that the dialectic can no longer dominate them." [1] The dialectic of negation does not give priority to a particular, singular objective, but "brings" them together

(not with a supreme object) and "smiles at each other", a reconciliation that maintains its own difference and This reconciliation allows the non-identical to break out of the conceptual mesh, free from the compulsion of homogenising thinking, and thus to move towards pluralism, openness and inclusion. The subject is not free in the measure of the principle of sameness, and freedom can only emerge in the dialectic of negation, and therefore freedom must be negative.

The question of freedom cannot be answered by a simple "yes" or "no", and the superego cannot be the ultimate judge of theoretical questions. The subject represses freedom on the one hand and transcends it on the other. This aggressiveness is evident in freedom when the individual person operates in generalized unfreedom as if it were in freedom. Adorno sees collectivism and individualism as falsely complementing each other. The theme of man's powerlessness is embodied by F. Kafka in the work *The Castle*. He depicts a man who wants to get in touch with the mysterious inhabitants of the castle, who can tell him what he should do and what place he should have in the world. But he is unsuccessful throughout his life and in the end is a useless and helpless loner. People want to be free, but they are not free. For the individual, their freedom or lack of freedom is shrouded in a veil of the principle of individuation. In this state of utter unfreedom, people do not know what to deny and what to desire. Adorno links Kant's freedom with Adam Smith's freedom (in the sense of political economy), which is the freedom of the subject in a modern market economy. Adam Smith's 'invisible hand' opposes the artificiality of human subjectivity in a traditional natural economy with the objective operation of the market. The law of value operates above the formally free individual. From Marx's point of view, the more confrontation there is in society, the less freedom there is, due to the lack of consciousness of the law on the part of those who enforce it. The bourgeoisie itself faces the dilemma that it does not grant real freedom to the individual, on the contrary, it is extremely susceptible to being enlisted by special interests and makes it free to enslave the majority. On the one hand, it launched a revolution to break out of the tyranny and irrationality of the feudal system, but on the other hand it fell into a kind of "freedom under obedience", putting a blindfold not only on the concept but also on society as a whole.

Adorno's identification of the relationship between individual and communitarian freedom reflects a strong dialectic of non-identity. First, "the freedom that emerges in the organisation of a free society is found only where the existing society rejects it: in every man who needs freedom, as he once was free, he is not guaranteed freedom is universally and secretly obtained from existing forms of domination." [1] As in Marx's discussion of *Capital*, 'alienation' no longer plays an important role, but rather the analysis of political economy. Freedom under the dialectic of negation does not remain in the self-fixation itself, but lies in the recognition of unfreedom and then the negation of the elements of unfreedom. Secondly, the archetype of the idea of freedom is the man at the top of the hierarchy, but the idea of freedom is always generated in the reality of unfreedom. Freedom is the negative image created by social coercion, and unfreedom is the positive image created by social coercion; to turn freedom into the supernatural is a form of self-deception. Thirdly, freedom is the knowledge of necessity; freedom is not merely a self-deception, but is in fact the ruling power of the human subject under sameness. True practice is the notion of action that satisfies the idea of freedom. Practice requires at the same time an Other. The human being as more than a personified human being cannot escape the attachment of actual content. Man is respected as a person, not merely as a use value. It can thus be seen that Adorno's reflection on the free individual, the community, is always embedded in the question of moral life: whether we can still talk about freedom after Auschwitz.

5. The Conclusion: Negative freedom: the search for the right life

Through the analysis above, Kant treats freedom and its highest principle, the moral law, as a given in practical philosophy, as something that one simply cannot continue to deduce in a certain sense. Adorno argues that Kant is opposed to the absolutization of mechanistic principles and that Kant's fatal error is to assume the category of absolute unity as an entity. But the critique of Kant's moral philosophy was only a target for Adorno; at its heart lay the question of the relationship between subject and object, between the same and the non-identical, between reason and practice. The object and the concept are the theory and the actual. Adorno's emphasis on possibility, the transition from theory to practice, is a prerequisite for theory to be possible. It is thus clear that Adorno's critique of Kant's metaphysical view of freedom is not a mechanical reductionist operation, but has practical implications in a moral philosophical context.

In his book *The Problems of Moral Philosophy*, Adorno concentrates on right living in Lectures I, II and XVII. Adorno argues that if practice is less certain, then the less we know in fact what we ought to

do, and the less assurance we have of living rightly. So, while the right life is supposed to be guaranteed, in the end the actions we take in relation to it are only reckless and haphazard. Practice now creeps into theory, and it is only by dealing with theory and practice that one can think about freedom. For theory and practice ultimately derive from life, and the inquiry into freedom is ultimately a reflection on the possibility of right living, i.e. the right life.

Reflection or criticism opens the way to right living, to understanding what is true and what is false, what needs to be denied. "What might still be called morality today has transitioned to questions about the construction of the world, and one can say that questions about right living will be questions about the construction of the world", and one can then say that "questions about right living will be questions about right politics, if today such a right politics still exists today in the realm of the realisable." [1] Political and moral questions, practical and moral philosophy are two sides of the same coin. In exploring whether the individual in society can deny freedom from the compulsion of sameness, Adorno is in fact thinking about where moral philosophy is going and how right living is possible. The aim of critical theory is to help liberate man from slavery, and Adorno's negative freedom resorts to reflection to criticize the contradictions in Kant's moral philosophy, pointing out that man is not only naturally connected but also socially connected.

Adorno believed that right living exists in the form of resistance to certain forms of wrong living, that is, we need to deny unfreedom. Such resistance needs to prove itself in ourselves against all those things that work together in development. One cannot necessarily see what is right by seeing the error of an oppressive ideology. Adorno makes it impossible to say. The negation of the dialectic is the problem of the generalisation of the concept that is targeted. During this epidemic, the paradigm of the individual human being as life, of true life, has provoked a great deal of reflection. Through the dialectic of negation, Adorno establishes the primacy of the object and the relative independence of the subject, as the subject and the object are mutually mediated, so that they are equal to each other, thus moving towards the 'star cluster'. Adorno's philosophy starts its critique of capitalist society from the logic of the "star cluster", taking a critical stance that is not aligned with any idea, while at the same time searching for the possibility of transcendence as a stance itself. But the "star cluster" completely dissolves the possibility of a mass proletarian revolution and becomes a "hopeless hope", which takes on a negative tone and cannot emerge from the dialectic of the unity of subject and history.

'Star cluster' logic can also be understood as a philosophy of heterogeneity, a philosophy of non-identity, the possibility of nature in the midst of history. Adorno's philosophy of heterogeneity is a development of Marx's practical way of thinking, but he does not go beyond Marx's historical materialist position. It is only a logic of disintegration of thought and being, concept and conceptual object, subject and object, from within metaphysics. In contrast to Marx, Adorno did not pay much attention to the question of how subject and object are formed and placed them in imaginary relations, for which he was criticised by some scholars. Marx's mission to 'change the world' by integrating the practical sphere into non-identical thinking, thus rescuing the tension between subject and object. At the same time, it is worth acknowledging that Adorno's critique of the homogeneity that is the home of the critique of political economy has inspired later scholars, such as Žižek, who developed a structural analysis of the symbolic order of capital for this purpose, and Negri and Hart, who have been interested in the substitution of 'immaterial labour' for "The hegemonic position of 'labour production' was examined by Negri and Hart. It is when the violence of sameness is grasped and its inner blast is prompted that the primacy of the object is truly respected and freedom develops from it.

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