Why Did Adorno "Hate" Jazz?

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Adorno's jazz essays have attracted considerable notoriety not only for their negative and dismissive evaluation of jazz as music but for their outright dismissal of all the claims made on behalf of jazz by its exponents and admirers, even of claims concerning the black origins of jazz music. This paper offers a critical exposition of Adorno's views on jazz and outlines an alternative theory of the culture industry as the basis of a critique of Adorno's critical theory. Adorno's arguments are discussed in the context of his wider theoretical commitment to a model of structuration—in both musical and social relations—that establishes a dividing line between a moral aesthetic praxis that can be approved as having "truth-value" and one that betrays and subverts the truth. In Adorno's analysis, jazz finds itself positioned on the wrong side of that line and, accordingly, is condemned. It is argued that it is Adorno's commitment to a formalist model of art works that has been superseded by modern aesthetic practice in both so-called "serious" art as well as in the works of the culture industries that binds him to a regressive model of aesthetic praxis. An alternative theory of the culture industry is outlined that explores its positive functions in enhancing the resources available for culture creation through its transmission of aesthetic codes, and in mediating relations between so-called high and low art.

Although Adorno's music studies are relatively little known among sociologists because of their musicological complexity (Witkin 1998), the few papers that he wrote on the subject of jazz have received substantially more critical attention. What he had to say in these papers has proved something of an embarrassment to his many devotees. At a recent conference at which I spoke on Adorno's treatment of time, a sociology professor with whom I shared the platform confessed that he found it impossible to like Adorno because of what he had said about jazz. To his critics, the jazz essays reveal an intolerant, mandarin snobbishness on Adorno's part. The historian Eric Hobsbawm (1993:300) dismissed Adorno's writings on jazz as containing "Some of the stupidest pages ever written about jazz." Almost every one of his principal assertions on the subject has provoked such derision. These include his repeated denials of the African roots of jazz and of jazz as "black" music, and his denial of the claims that jazz music involved any genuinely improvisatory process or spontaneity or might have introduced important new technical means into music. Critics mocked the premature announcement of the "death of jazz" in Adorno's first paper on the subject,"Farewell to Jazz" (Adorno 1933), while others have been offended by his treatment of jazz as "emasculation" music (Adorno 1989), not to mention his approving citation of a commentator who likened the soaring trumpet of Louis Armstrong to the high notes of the castrati (Adorno 1982). At best Adorno's attack on jazz seems to be out of sympathy with informed opinion on the subject; at worst it appears to be reactionary and possibly racist.

Jazz was the quintessential example, for Adorno, of "rhythmic-spatial music," a type that he contrasted with what he termed "expressive-dynamic music" (Adorno 1980). He saw the many varieties of rhythmic-spatial music as "sprouting forth everywhere as though they are rooted in nature" (ibid.:164). The characteristic of such music, according to Adorno,

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was that it lacked any true dialectical development in its internal relations. Change in music of the rhythmic-spatial type does not take the form of a genuine thematic development, as it does in the case of music he labeled expressive-dynamic, but rather consists in a change of ornamentation. In other words, Adorno claimed, there is an overlaying of superficial change upon underlying musical elements that are repeated more or less unaltered in jazz. This underlying rigidity of the elements—the regular beat or a continuous tone, for example—is masked by displacement, syncopation, vibrato, and so on; by various interferences which, although they help to disguise its unrelenting rigidity, are always beaten into conformity.

Dialectical process was of the essence of Adorno's utopian vision of the social and was, in his philosophy, the mark of everything liberational and grounded in individual expression. The image of an unchanging, rigid, or nondialectical structure made up of elements that are juxtaposed without developing out of each other or elements that are simply repeated or are homogeneous was, for him, a vision of massification, of collective force, and of everything authoritarian. The model of a truly social and historical development, on the one hand, and of mass manipulation, on the other, constituted the central antinomy of Adorno's sociology. These structural categories were treated by him as isomorphic with those he used to analyze musical process, generally. Throughout the discussions of jazz as a musical form, there is a continuous merging of social and musical discourses:

> The objective sound is embellished by a subjective expression, which is unable to dominate it and therefore exerts a fundamentally ridiculous and heart-rending effect. The elements of the comical, the grotesque and the anal which are inherent in jazz can therefore never be separated from the sentimental elements. They characterize a subjectivity that revolts against a collective power which it itself is; for this reason its revolt seems ridiculous and is beaten down by the drum just as syncopation is by the beat. (Adorno 1989:67–68)

Something unchanging—the beat or the tone, is *ornamented* with changes. The elements that would normally develop out of each other sequentially, each bearing a necessary relationship to its antecedent and consequent, are instead strung out beside each other, a juxtaposing of co-incidentals. For Adorno, such forms, from which all dialectical relations have drained, are images of totalitarian control. Collective oppression, massification, authoritarianism thus appear, to Adorno, in the inner relations among the elements of jazz compositions.

WAS ADORNO REALLY WRITING ABOUT "GOOD" JAZZ?

Adorno's principal writings on jazz span the twenty years from 1933 to 1953. The two most significant contributions are his 1936 essay "On Jazz" (Adorno 1989) and the 1953 essay "Perennial Fashion—Jazz," which appears in the *Prisms* collection (Adorno 1981). Nevertheless, compared with his writings on modernist composers such as Schoenberg, Mahler, Berg, Stravinsky, or even Wagner, the jazz articles, taken together, constitute a very modest output. Moreover, whereas his writings on modern composers are replete with analyses of specific musical works, the reader will search in vain for anything comparable in Adorno's jazz texts.

It has, of course, occurred to critics to explain Adorno's views as a product of ignorance, as a case of his not having heard good examples of jazz. Thus some have sought to relocate or transpose his arguments in order to offer at least a partial defense of his views.

J. Bradford Robinson has argued that Adorno's jazz essays are not about jazz at all and certainly not about jazz in the context of American culture. He claims that although these essays appear wrong, even risible when applied to American jazz proper, they are much more defensible when seen as the result of Adorno's astute observations on a specifically German light music that developed in the Weimar republic in the 1920s and 1930s (Robinson 1994). Certainly, it is important to inquire into the more specifically German experience of jazz and the cultural context into which it fitted in prewar Germany. Kater's book *Different Drummers* (Kater 1992) provides an extensive exploration of the cultural situation of jazz during the Nazi period in Germany. Although its brief references to Adorno are unilluminating, they do demonstrate the extent to which the themes of his early jazz papers (for example, "Farewell to Jazz") were very much a part of the cultural scene in which Adorno participated. Others have argued that Adorno was exposed to jazz at the height of the big band era and that he never really heard the better examples of jazz music (the implication being that if he had actually listened to good jazz, his opinions would have been different).

However, this attempt to recover and redirect Adorno's insights makes too many implausible assumptions about his musical experience and sensitivities. In the first place, Adorno's major writings on jazz postdate the Weimar republic. Adorno wrote his most important paper "On Jazz" while a doctoral student in England. Evelyn Wilcock (1996) has described the richness of the jazz scene that surrounded him at Merton College, Oxford, at that time:

> It is difficult to claim that Adorno never heard real jazz. In the University setting, hot music was ubiquitous. One of Adorno's later contacts at Merton College, the New Zealand journalist, John Mulgan, described Oxford in summer 1934, when Adorno first arrived, with punts drifting down the river, accompanied by the sound of jazz. Alan Jenkins relates how he had known many people at Oxford, himself included, who never wrote any essays without first psyching themselves up with swing records. The background music at Elliston's department store, where undergraduates went for morning coffee, included "Mood Indigo" and "Tiger Rag." . . . Adorno was not segregated from Oxford social life. (Wilcock 1996:65–66)

Quite apart from his period in England, Adorno spent many years in the United States and even if we allow that he was less attentive to the best examples of jazz than he should have been, it is certain that he must have been exposed to a great deal of American jazz and his writings make clear that he was well aware of the kinds of claims made for jazz by its devotees. Moreover, although Adorno's last major paper on jazz was written in 1953, he lived until the late 1960s when examples of avant-garde jazz were very much more in evidence and the gap between jazz and other forms of so-called "popular music" was widening. And yet, nothing that Adorno heard caused him to significantly alter any of the judgements he made about jazz from the time of the earliest papers in the 1930s. It is this iron consistency on the subject that needs explaining; it cannot be successfully wished away or dismissed, whether by critics or devotees.

ADORNO'S UTOPIAN VISION OF THE SOCIAL

The intellectual ascendancy attained in recent decades by French poststructuralist thought temporarily obscured Adorno's contribution to the critical deconstruction of modernity. Recently it has been more clearly appreciated that Adorno's critique (with Horkheimer) of the Enlightenment project, of science and reason, and of the grand narratives that consti-

tute bourgeois ideology—his antipositivism and his opposition to identity thinking—bring his ideas within the orbit of current discourses of postmodernity (Adorno and Horkheimer 1986). There appears to be a resonance, at least, between Adorno's critical approach to knowledge and the ideas of French poststructuralists like Foucault, Derrida, and Lyotard. Martin Jay has described Adorno's work as proto-deconstructionist (Jay 1984).

In this article I shall argue that the two Adornos—the denigrated critic of jazz and the admired opponent of identity thinking—are integral. An answer to the question of why Adorno hated jazz is to be found, I suggest, not in a consideration of the man's musical tastes, but in a clarification of the structural imperative underlying his opposition to identity thinking. It is Adorno's inherent structuralism that clearly separates him from poststructural and postmodern positions concerning the positioning of art and aesthetic praxis. Moreover, it is Adorno's insistence upon these structural principles—more accurately, principles of structuration—which commits him, at the deepest level, to a "formalist" defense of a bourgeois model of art works and aesthetic praxis.

All Adorno's critical writings on modern music are informed by a theory of how music works, with respect to the structuration of its elements. For Adorno, music has to reproduce, in it inner relations, the principle of structuration that constitutes true sociality and historicity (Witkin 1998). Adorno's utopian vision of a moral social praxis is of a process of social interaction that is truly historical in character, with individuals changing and being changed by each other in socially productive relations from which a social whole or totality is always emergent. A moral praxis in music means that the elements of a composition are governed by the same dialectical principle of structuration. It is the all-important process of mediation and change among the elements (notes) that constructs temporality and historicity in the music. Moreover, it does so from below, from the free and spontaneous development of the musical elements in their mutual relations and not from above, by the imposition of a transcendental form or order upon them. Adorno was thus the advocate of a social process that was exemplified by what he called "une musique informelle." By this he meant a music that arises spontaneously from the mediated relations among its elements; a music which, at any given instance, does not know in advance how it is to continue (Adorno 1994); but a music, nevertheless, oriented toward reconciliation, toward the production of a larger, more inclusive whole.

Adorno's vision of truth is of experience configured by a desire and longing for reconciliation between part and whole that is impossible under modern conditions—with all the suffering which that denial of reconciliation entails for the subject in modern society. His view here has to be strongly contrasted with that utopian vision of the social that conceives of part and whole, individual and society, subject and object, as *actually* reconciled. This was essentially the idea that bourgeois society had of itself. Adorno believed that the claim to reconciliation was a lie in that bourgeois society never did meet these conditions in reality; quite the contrary. He therefore dismissed all such claims as ideology.

However, we need to make a key distinction here between the ideological claims of a bourgeois society to have reconciled individual freedom and social constraint and the active pursuit of the *ideal* of such reconciliation as a principle of sociality. Adorno holds fast to the ideal implicit in such claims; his stance is actually one of remaining true to that ideal in the face of the impossibility of its realization in late capitalist society. It is in this sense that the ideal of sociality constitutes, for Adorno, both a utopian vision of the social and its truth-condition. When music, in its inner relations, betrays the structuration principle that he holds to be a "truth-condition" of music, he opposes it, whether it is popular or classical. The short answer to the question of why Adorno hated jazz was simply that jazz appeared to him to betray this ideal more completely than other modern musics.

The structuration principle that governs Adorno's music analyses is set within a broadly Marxian account of social relations, of consumerism and commodification. It commits

Adorno, as it does Lukàcs, to a denigration of some (not all) of the most important developments in modernism, both among the products of the culture industries and of avant-garde artists and musicians. Adorno was never in any doubt about the considerable technical skill and brilliance of composers like Stravinsky or musicians like Charlie Parker or Duke Ellington for that matter. However, this did not prevent him from rejecting their innovations as instances of regressive musical praxis. The seeds of his rejection of their musics are to be found in his commitment to what he called the "truth-moment of ideology" (Adorno 1973).

ADORNO'S FORMALIST DEFENSE OF ART AS TEXT

Notwithstanding the moments of resonance and points of convergence with poststructuralist discourses referred to above, it is clear from the recent contributions to the swelling literature on Adorno—a literature dominated by themes drawn from his major philosophical works and especially his book *Aesthetic Theory*—that Adorno's ideas do not truly fit the mold of French poststructuralist thought. The point has been well argued by Dews who reads Adorno's position as an anticipative critique of poststructuralist positions (Dews 1991). The opposition to identity thinking (the identity of subject-object, individual-society, concept-thing, etc.) was as key to Adorno's thought as it was to that of Derrida, Foucault, or Lyotard. However, in contradistinction to the poststructuralist thinkers, Adorno uses the very denial of identity, as a realized or accomplished moment, as a means of preserving the *ideal* of identity. The preservation of that ideal, as the governing principle of action and relationship, is what Adorno means by the "truth-moment of ideology." Unrealizable in any positive sense, it can be brought to a true realization only negatively.

> To define identity as the correspondence of the thing-in-itself to its concept is *hubris*; but the ideal of identity must not simply be discarded. Living in the rebuke that the thing is not identical with the concept is the concept's longing to become identical with the thing. This is how the sense of non-identity contains identity. The supposition of identity is indeed the ideological element of pure thought, all the way down to formal logic; *but hidden in it is also the truth-moment of ideology, the pledge that there should be no contradiction, no antagonism.* (Adorno 1973:149; emphasis mine)

It is this truth-moment of ideology upon which Adorno insists. If *istoria*, becoming, history, change, and development are of the essence of bourgeois sociality, Adorno remains committed to bourgeois sociality, to the being-historical of the subject in the critical negating of a late-capitalist world that has abandoned the historical. This disjunction between the truth-moment of ideology and the reality of the world means, for Adorno, that the integrity of the work of art lies in the negative dialectics it realizes at the level of its internal relations. As I read it, Adorno's position here is tantamount to a defense of the formal autonomy and integrity of the work of art as a text. Of course, he acknowledges that works of art enter into an outer history and are changed in their import over time, through reception and so forth. However, for him, such an outer history is always a kind of secondary reworking of an inner historical process inscribed in the internal relations of the work of art. Ultimately, his most decisive judgements about works of art are not made at the level of considering what happens in the historical commerce that the world has with such entities (their outer history) but in the integrity of their internal relations.

Adorno's defense of avant-garde art is confined to that part of the modernist avant-garde, that Hal Foster refers to as the "formalist avant-garde" (Foster 1996). He preserves the notion of the artwork as a more or less integral text that inscribes the social in its

internal relations and serves as a medium for reflecting the true social condition of the subject. Such a formalist defense buttresses the concept of the autonomy status of art as a social institution in the modern world. As Clement Greenberg argued, the aim of the (formalist) avant-garde is not to sublate art into life (a claim that is the basis of Peter Burger's [1984] study of the avant-garde) but to save it from debasement by mass cultural kitsch (Foster 1999). This was key to Adorno's strategy, too. The autonomy status of art—grounded in the integral and dialectical principle of structuration that is the essence of a bourgeois model of art as text—is set against the false and ideological claims that society has actually met the conditions for realizing that formational ideal, has actually reconciled individual and society.

There were thus two sources of "error" that drew down Adorno's condemnation. The first was the error of claiming that the truth-moment of ideology was or could be positively realized in bourgeois social forms. Such a claim was equivalent to asserting that the individual could see his or her life-process expressed or realized in what Hegel called "the world's course." According to Adorno the conditions did not exist in an antagonistic bourgeois society to achieve any such reconciliation between subject and object, individual and society.

The second error was to assert that because the truth-moment of ideology could not be realized in the world as constituted, the pursuit of such an historical and social formation should be given up. If anything, this second error was the most serious. To give up on the principle of structuration was tantamount, in Adorno's philosophy, to giving up on sociality and a moral praxis. At an aesthetic level, it would mean surrendering both the autonomy of art as an institution and the autonomy of the artwork as a text. Thus, Adorno refused to countenance either the affirmation of ideological constructions as true or the denial of the truth-moment of ideology. This tension at the heart of his theoretic provides the driving force of his negative dialectics and, specifically, of his sociology of music and his critique of jazz.

THE HOMOLOGY OF MUSICAL COMPOSITION AND SOCIAL FORMATION

The central antinomy of a bourgeois society, in Adorno's philosophy, is the conflict between individual freedom and societal constraint. Corresponding to individuals, in his musicology, are the basic elements of a composition, the musical "motives" or, at the extreme, the individual tones that make up a composition; corresponding to the society, in this homology, is the developed composition, the musical totality formed by relations among these elements. Just as individuals, as social subjects in relations with others, undergo development (biography) and in their mutual relations bring about the development of society (history), so, too, in a nineteenth-century classical musical composition such as a Beethoven symphony, the basic elements—the musical "motives"—undergo development through being repeated, varied, and juxtaposed, and contribute to the development of the composition as a whole. In both society and music (considered *ideally*), the process described is a fully temporal and historical one. In each case there is a dialectical unfolding of relations in which consequents and antecedents are *necessarily* connected—develop out of one another—and are not merely coincidentals.

This ideal of a structuration from below informs all of Adorno's music studies. At an ideological level its exemplification is classical sonata form as perfected in the music of Beethoven. The musical motives and themes that constitute the elements of the sonata allegro, as a form, are introduced at the outset of the composition, like the characters in a play. They undergo variation and development in the development section and finally return in the recapitulation section that reflects the development undergone and restores

the equilibrium disturbed by that development. The sonata allegro thus models an historical process in which the elements, developing through their mutual relations, give rise to the larger whole with which each is identified. It, too, is a form of bourgeois ideology. Just as Adorno rejected as false and ideological the claims of an identity or reconciliation between individual and society, while preserving the ideal of identity as a principle governing the sociality of individuals, so he rejected the claims of the sonata allegro to bring about a reconciliation between parts and whole, while preserving the ideal of such a reconciliatory process.

At a musical level, the twin errors that correspond, in his philosophy, to those referred to above are: (1) composing music that adheres to the outworn materials inherited from classical tonality (now unmasked as ideological); music in which the elements (like those of the sonata allegro) give the false appearance of mediating one another and of undergoing an historical development in which they are reconciled with the whole when in reality they are more or less totally constrained in their relations, and (2) composing music in which the elements are not open to being mediated by one another, to developing out of one another, but are juxtaposed as coincidentals—Adorno's *rhythmic-spatial type*. He set himself against all such developments in the visual arts and in literature as well as music. He deplored the absence of dialectical process in the visual arts dominated by the principle of collage/montage and by the transgressive anti-art practices originally associated with Dada and Surrealism, no less than in music. He also deplored this absence in the music of Stravinsky and even of Schoenberg, no less than in jazz.

The draining of dialectical process from the work of art was seen by Adorno to herald the loss of all power of aesthetic praxis to hold sufficient distance from the world—to be an organ of criticism—and to lead ultimately to the sublation of art in mass cultural kitsch, its total colonization by the culture industries, which he saw as the creatures of an overwhelming collective and administrative force. Jazz, in Adorno's theoretic, is a product of the culture industries, a reflex of market relations. It stands convicted of both errors. He saw it as adhering to the system of tonal music undermined by avant-garde classical composers while at the same time abandoning the structuration principle—the temporal developmental principle—that was the truth-moment at the heart of classical tonality (diatonic music) as ideology.

The organization of social production—in mass production factories, for example—realizes an intensification of the technical division of labor in which the exploitation of nature and material has advanced to such a degree that the total mastery of the constituent elements—individual workers and work itself—can be clearly anticipated. Music that is made in such a society also tends to the same rational-technical mastery of its constituent elements, to the same ubiquitous constructivism. Thus, if modern social structures are increasingly rational-technical in character, as Weber argues, then modern music has this character, too. If factory production and the microdivision of labor reduce individuals to fragmentary beings, mere cogs, dividing labor by a process of endless fissiparous differentiation, then we should not be surprised to discover that there is an analogous process of fragmentation that strips down the elements, the basic motives and themes, to the bare tones in the inner structural relations of modern music. Here, too, as in modernist art and literature, there is a relentless process of fragmentation.

However, what was of key importance in Adorno's musicology was not the fact that works of art inscribed social relations and conditions but how they did so. Kafka reproduced, in the inner relations of novels like *The Castle* and *The Trial*, the banality of the legal-rational machinery Weber had theorized as bureaucracy. At every point, however, the subjectivity disfigured by this structure refuses to fill it out, to identify with it. The outer forms of these social relations appear in the inner cells of the novel as empty husks. They

no longer realize or express the intentionality of the subject positively; that subjectivity nevertheless makes itself felt in absence from these forms, in the "frightful" emptiness subjectivity leaves in the wake of its withdrawal.

Whereas in classical bourgeois art the intentionality of the subject fills out forms as the inner spirituality expressed in them, in those modernist works of art that Adorno approved, the abandonment of such forms by the subject forces those same forms to express the subject negatively. The clash between the very forms used and the expressive impulse of the subject is, according to Adorno, made visible in the very incongruity of aesthetic language and intentionality; through, for example, the heightening of incongruity by forcing an anxious and mutilated subjectivity to speak in the cool prose of Kafka or in the grandiloquent symphonic style of Mahler. The twist that Adorno gives to the notion of homology is to insist that while art must necessarily inscribe the structure of social relations in its inner cells, the artist can nevertheless use this inscription critically and negatively, as the expressive vehicle of a subjectivity disfigured by it. An image of the subject-alien power of modern rationalized institutions then becomes the very content of many modernist works of art, literature, and music. The modernism that Adorno approves—Kafka, Beckett, Berg, and Schoenberg—brings the overwhelming force of the totally administered society into the forms of the art work, and thereby into relationship with a subjectivity that no longer fills out these forms nor seeks to identify with them, whose very presence is its absence, its evanescence.

From this point of view Adorno is clearly a champion of certain key developments in modern art and this is something that appears to distinguish him from a more obvious foe of modernism such as Lukàcs (Lukàcs 1963; 1972). However, the distinction may be more apparent than real (Witkin 1998). Although Adorno was committed, lifelong, to the liberation achieved by Schoenberg and his circle (which came to include Adorno) in their development of *free atonality* in music, he was deeply critical of the twelve-tone technique that completed the Schoenberg revolution and which he saw as the imposition of the type of rigid formulaic control represented by science as myth in *The Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Steinert 1998, 1992; Witkin 1998). Critics of Adorno's views on jazz have sometimes failed to acknowledge that it was not only jazz that Adorno saw as having "turned its back on history." Both Schoenberg and Stravinsky were seen as having done that and Richard Wagner, too. In an insightful paper, Andreas Huyssen has pointed to the fact that the elements of Adorno's critique of the culture industry are to be found clearly in his very early papers on the music of Richard Wagner (Huyssen 1983). Huyssen's reading of Adorno, in reverse, from the critique of the twentieth-century culture industry in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* to the critique of the nineteenth-century Wagner that appeared a decade earlier, finds the close resonances between the two. In so doing he underscores the importance of reading Adorno's critique of jazz and the culture industry in the context of his wider critical philosophy of modern music:

> Reading Adorno in reverse, . . . from fascism and the capitalist culture industry back to Imperial Germany, leads to the conclusion that his framework for his theory of the culture industry was already in place *before* his encounter with American mass culture in the United States. In the Wagner book, the pivotal categories of fetishism and reification, ego-weakness, regression, and myth are already fully developed, waiting, as it were, to be articulated in terms of the American culture industry. (Huyssen 1983. Huyssen's italics)

An example of Adorno's typical line of reasoning concerning the musical construction of the antinomy of individual freedom and collective constraint is to be found in his discussion in the 1936 paper of the rondo component in jazz; that is, the division into

"couplet" and "refrain" (verse and chorus). The former represents, for him, the contingency of the individual element in everyday life, the latter the constraint of the society or collectivity. Adorno argues that the individual in the audience experiences himself or herself as a couplet-ego and then feels transformed in the refrain, merges with it in the dance and finds sexual fulfillment. The production process, he argues realizes the primacy of the refrain over the couplet in that the refrain is written first and as the principal component. This deconstruction is an example of the novel ways in which Adorno applies his analytical techniques drawn from his general musicological theory. The unfreedom of the individual, reflected in the unequal relationship of couplet and refrain which, in Adorno's musicology, refers to a subject that is the "victim" of the collective, is finally treated by Adorno in terms of the notion of sacrificing the individual to the power of the collective. This is a theme that he had explored in an essay on Stravinsky's music in which he discussed *The Rite of Spring* (Adorno 1980) which, as it happens, makes effective use of syncopation and jazz technique.

THE SOCIAL SUBJECT AND THE ASOCIAL EGO

It is only as a social being pursuing change and relationship—developing from within itself in relations with others—that the subject can be seen as dynamic and expressive. Whereas expression is the direct and active process through which the subject brings social life and social relations bodying forth in new realizations, egoism is the reduction of all experience to the abstract gratification of bodily needs that are social only in the sense of having been manufactured. At the level of subjectivity, it is the reified ego that is the counterpart of the reified commodity. Just as the latter is abstracted from the social relations in which it was produced—an abstracted objectivity—so the ego is abstracted from the social relations through which it has been constructed and presents as a reified and fantastical subjectivity.

The growing egoism and narcissism of modern society proceeds hand in hand with commodification, in Adorno's analysis; that is, the same forces that bring about commodification give rise to the desociation of the expressive subject. As a desociated ego, the subject is an organ of sensation, bombarded with stimuli. Lacking any kind of articulation in terms of outer social relations, the affects engendered within the body of the individual coexist in more or less atemporalized juxtaposition. Temporality presupposes sociality, an interaction based upon mediation and difference. Thus, in line with his thoroughgoing structuralism, Adorno saw the development of rhythmic-spatial musics as an inevitable consequence of commodification.

The body of the individual, and its "needs," comes to assume a special significance in the instrumentalization of all life. It can be made to "feel," to register the implosive force of a stimulus. In contrast, true sociality is always expressive. It is the spark of reciprocity through which the subject, immersed in social relations, brings social life forth "from within." Instrumentalism reverses the direction of force in the sensuous life; it delivers the subject into the power of a totalitarian and external collective, reducing the sensuous life of the individual to a 'manufactured' affectivity—that is, to an abstract subjectivity. When Adorno rails against the products of the culture industry, against jazz and popular music, he is thinking of them in some such relationship to the individual, as manifestations of objective and external force, as oriented to the bringing about of affects in the body of the subject and as undermining the subject at the level of the latter's expressive agency.

THE IDEOLOGY SURROUNDING JAZZ

It is the ideology that surrounds jazz that can, in part, explain the fierceness of Adorno's attacks. Jazz in the popular imagination appeared to have many of the features that belonged

to Adorno's utopian ideal and which could be compared to the disadvantage of the classical tradition to which he himself belonged. Indeed the latter came closer, in the popular imagination, to embodying many of the negative characteristics of his musical dystopia. Whereas in classical music the dominating authority of the composer was unchallenged and a rigid line existed between composer as master and performer as servant, no such rigid line existed in jazz. If classical music was more or less completely "scripted," leaving little room for variations in response to events, audiences, or mutual interactions among performers, jazz was seen, in some of its forms, as informal, as spontaneously made, as involving mutual mediation among performers, improvisation. It seemed to be quintessentially modern, innovative, and at the same time to be in some measure radical and subversive and to point the way to a genuine sociality beyond stultifying conventions. Jazz appeared so much more democratic in performance, with the leader of the jazz band operating more as a first among equals while the classical concert made something of a fetish of the exalted status of the conductor. Jazz in the popular imagination was live, lively, and living music; audiences felt that they participated in the making of jazz performances. Moreover, jazz appeared to be appreciated by all social classes, to be massively popular, while classical music was more or less the exclusive preserve of middle-class taste publics and was perceived as exclusive and somehow authoritarian at every level—composition, performance, and audience reception. The music that Adorno identified with and composed himself—music of the second Viennese school centering on Schoenberg—was widely perceived not only as difficult and cerebral but as actually unpleasant.

Adorno denied the claims made concerning improvisation in jazz. He insisted that jazz musicians worked with mainly formulaic material into which the most hackneyed and stereotypical variations were introduced. The root formula for jazz was the maintenance of a fundamentally rigid and immobile structure beneath the interplay of superficial deviations, excesses, and interferences. In the 1936 paper "On Jazz," Adorno begins by acknowledging its decidedly modern character. Musically, he argues, this modernity refers to the characteristic sound and rhythm of jazz. Syncopation is its rhythmic principle. It occurs in a variety of modifications such as

> the displacement of the basic rhythm through deletions (the Charleston), slurring (Ragtime); "false" rhythm—more or less a treatment of common time as a result of three and three and two eighth-notes, with the accent always on the first note of the group which stands out as a "false" beat from the principal rhythm; finally, the break, a cadence which is similar to an improvisation, mostly at the end of the middle part, two beats before the repetition of the principal part of the refrain. (Adorno 1989:45)

In all of these syncopations, Adorno argues, the fundamental beat is rigorously maintained and marked over and over again by the bass drum. While the rhythmic phenomena may bring variety into the accentuation and phrasing in the music, they remain essentially ornamental and superimposed on the basic timing that is unaffected by them: "Thus the principle of symmetry is fully respected, especially in the basic rhythmic structure. The eight-bar measure, and even the four-beat half measure, are maintained, their authority unchallenged. Simple melodic and harmonic symmetrical relationships correspond to this as well, broken down in accordance with half and whole closures" (ibid.:46).

Adorno uses this opposition between superficial irregularity and underlying conformity to establish the groundwork of a musicological critique. Jazz music is seen as constituting, in its distinctive sound, an amalgam of deviation and excess, on the one hand, and utter

rigidity on the other. One of its vital components, according to Adorno, is the vibrato that causes a tone that is rigid and objective to tremble as if standing alone. This ascribes subjective emotions to the note without this being allowed to interrupt the fixedness of the basic sound pattern, just as the syncopation is not allowed to interrupt the basic meter. Adorno generalizes the point to argue that the characteristic sound of jazz owes much to the manner in which the music generates a rigidity of form which it causes to shimmer and vibrate; that is, jazz achieves its most decisive effects "through producing interferences between the rigid and the excessive" (Adorno 1989:47) and it is this—even more than the distinctive use of instruments such as the saxophone—that Adorno sees as fundamental in jazz. Adorno typically sets up such oppositions so that one can read collective force and individual protest in the music. In jazz he insists that the structural antinomy underlines the status of the subject as helpless, beaten down.

The *espressivo* of the jazz musician, whose "helplessness" as an "outsider" intersects with his helplessness as a subject in mass society, is important in the production of commercially successful music. "Helplessness" is the characteristic element which Adorno believes to be key to jazz expression, the helplessness that derives from the fear of social power and the desperate attempt to adapt oneself to it. It is this very helplessness which Adorno believes to be so important an ingredient in achieving commercial success. He argues that it is every bit as important as the mundane consciousness of the jazz habitué who deals in the professional production of the "banal." At a musicological level, Adorno interprets the "whimpering vibrato" and the "wailing saxophone" as expressions of this helplessness (Adorno 1989:60).

The musics developed by the culture industries are all commodified musics and their appeal to the subject works in the same way as that of all commodities (Adorno and Horkheimer 1986). The appeal of the commodity reduces all relations, all sociality, to the stimulus-response world of the asocial ego. Jazz and neoclassicism, as commodified musics, were seen by Adorno as oriented to the manipulative control of subjectivity. They were the careful crafting of communicative acts addressed to the desociated ego, the emergence of which was identified by Adorno with the extinguishing of the subject and all expressivity. This asocial ego with its fashion and style was simply the counterpart of the equally desociated and dehistoricized laborer in the production process. Just as the microdivision of labor desociated the worker and stripped work of all intelligence and expressivity, reducing the laborer to the status of an automaton, so this same desociated and dehistoricized condition reappeared in the relationship of the individual to the commodities produced.

Adorno insists that jazz is "commodity" in the strict sense. Its marketability permeates its production. It is the laws of the market and the distribution of competitors and consumers that condition the production of jazz. Those elements in which immediacy appears to be present—the improvisatory moments, the varieties of syncopation, and so on—are *added* to the rigid commodity form in order to mask it but without ever gaining power over it. Jazz, argues Adorno, seeks to improve its marketability while masking its commodity character. Moreover, the mask itself, those moments of excess, of vibrancy, are precisely what increases that marketability, just as the stripping off of that mask—which in Adorno's phrase is "a pasted on ornament" (Adorno 1989:57)—would threaten marketability. The various techniques—rhythmic, coloristic, harmonic, and melodic—are then sorted out—through being market-tested—and kaleidoscopically mixed into the ever-new combinations without there taking place even the slightest interaction between the total scheme and the no less schematic details. All that remains is the results of the competition.

Once the culture industry has generated its "winning" schemata, it can continuously reshuffle the elements into the "ever-new" without any danger of anything really changing at all. In this way, it can bring off its most successful trick, that of "pseudo-individualization,"

arranging the "standards" in ways that appear as new and different, whether tailored for specific artists, audiences, or performances. Adorno seeks to expose all such surface appearances as phony; the deviations are just as standardized as the standards from which they are derived. He is no less scathing of the claims that jazz might make to being artistically avant garde, to transcending its basis in nineteenth-century tonality. "Anyone who allows the growing respectability of mass culture to seduce him into equating a popular song with modern art because of a few false notes squeaked by a clarinet; anyone who mistakes a triad studded with 'dirty notes' for atonality, has already capitulated to barbarism" (Adorno 1981:127). Adorno even offers a psychoanalytic explanation of the jazz phenomenon with its rigid formulae. It represents, according to him, the sado-masochistic identification with the aggressor, with the totalistic force of the collectivity; it is nothing less, he claimed than a "castration" ritual, a masochistic submission to emasculation (ibid.:130).

THE CLAIM TO PRIMITIVISM

The (antibourgeois) "mantle of primitivism," eagerly donned by many so-called serious modern artists and composers, seemed to be the very birthright of jazz musicians. What modern Western music could stake a greater claim to genuinely "primitive" origins? In the context of modernist art, the primitive has often been invoked as the hallmark of all that is antibourgeois, unsullied, and progressive. Adorno is particularly scathing of the argument that jazz represents some elemental force that can revitalize decadent European music. He dismisses the claim as pure ideology. In any case, Adorno argues, all of the formal elements of jazz have been abstractly preformed in accordance with the laws of the market and with the character of jazz works as exchangeable commodities. Adorno dismisses the claim for a vitality introduced into music by the African or black associations of jazz; he likens the relationship between jazz and black people to that between salon music and the wandering fiddle players—the gypsies—who, according to Bartok, are supplied with this music by the cities:

> The manufacture of jazz is also an urban phenomenon, and the skin of the black man functions as much as a colouristic effect as does the silver of the saxophone . . . there is nothing archaic in jazz but that which is engendered out of modernity through the mechanism of suppression. It is not old and repressed instincts that are freed in the form of standardized rhythms and standardized explosive outbursts; it is new repressed and mutilated instincts that have stiffened into the masks of those in the distant past. (Adorno 1989:53)

To this Adorno adds a second argument concerning the black origins of the music. Insofar as there were genuinely African elements in early jazz, these suggested the singing of servant girls and the music of slaves. If this was the vitality with which American music sought to revivify itself, it was not a vitality drawn from the wild but from "the domesticated body in bondage"(Adorno 1989:53). Its apparently liberative gestures—those improvisatory movements that account for its success—express only the attempt to break out of the fetishized commodity world without ever changing it. The formula to which Adorno repeatedly returns is that of the commodity that must be simultaneously "just like" all the others and yet "original"—the hit tune that must unite an individual characteristic element with utter banality on every other level.

Adorno continued to hold throughout his life to his views concerning claims about the African roots of jazz and claims to the effect that this music developed as an original and localized expression with strong ethnic roots long before the culture industry got hold of it

and manufactured the smooth sophisticated sounds of the big bands. Whatever was wild, untrammeled, original, or even African in this music had, according to Adorno, been destroyed by the culture industry when the music was appropriated as the basis of a mass cultural industry.

Adorno locates the true origins of jazz in two European stylistic traditions, salon music and the march. He claimed that the origins of jazz reach deep into the salon style and that the *espressivo* of jazz stems from this tradition; "to put it drastically, everything in it wants to announce something soulful." If the salon style is responsible for the supposedly individual element in jazz, which Adorno sees as merely a socially produced illusion of freedom, the march represents a "completely fictive community which is formed from nothing other than the alignment of atoms under the force that is exerted upon them" (Adorno 1989:61). Adorno generalizes the argument to suggest that all dance, as synchronized movement, has something in common with the march. In the admixture of salon music and the march, bourgeois individuality, as expressed in movement—the casual gait of individuals from the salon—appears to oppose the strict order of the march, to release the dancer from the prison of strict form and give expression to the arbitrary nature of everyday life, a life which, Adorno argues, is not escaped through dance but playfully transfigured there as a latent order.

THE COLLECTIVE NATURE OF JAZZ PRODUCTION

Adorno identified the characteristic element, what one might term the "virtuosic element," in jazz with performance and with the art of the arrangement that is associated with performance. What is essentially banal, as composition, is given a "make-over" in reproduction. The one who arranges the music is a key figure here and is usually close to those who perform the music. Critics of Adorno's ideas on jazz have sometimes resorted to arguing that he treats jazz as "composed" music rather than music in which "performance" and improvised virtuosity are central. The 1936 paper reveals the extent to which Adorno has been falsely represented on this point:

> Jazz seems to be progressive in two directions—both different with respect to the developmental tendency specific to music. One aspect is the reintroduction into the composition of those who are reproducing it. In "artistic music" both the composition and those who are reproducing it are hopelessly alienated from one another; the instructions for playing the "New Music" allow no room for freedom in the process of reproducing it—indeed the interpretation disappears completely behind the mechanical reproduction. In jazz it seems as if the reproducer has reclaimed his rights vis-à-vis the work of art—man has reclaimed his rights over the object. (Adorno 1989:55)

Adorno's criticisms of the claims of jazz performance center on the fact that he believes this claim to freedom to be illusory. The interjection of the performer/arranger in jazz does not permit any real altering of the material in order to realize a genuine subjective freedom. The new color and rhythm are merely inserted along with the banal just as the jazz vibrato is inserted into the rigid sound and the syncopation into the basic meter. Adorno refers to the freedom of the arranger/performer as a "tugging at the chains of boredom without the power to break them" (Adorno 1989:56). In Adorno's view, the subject who does not succeed in breaking through in the composition, certainly does not do so by means of the arrangement; the latter may serve to disguise the inhuman imposition of the commodity and thereby prolong the inhumanity surreptitiously by so doing.

The second claim for the progressive character of jazz music concerns the working process that is involved in its production and reproduction. Again, Adorno acknowledges that jazz appears to be progressive here when compared with so-called serious music. Jazz presents itself not as an isolated solo compositional process but as an obvious division of labor. "Somebody comes up with the 'invention'; another harmonizes it or elaborates upon it; and then a text develops and the rest of the music is written and seasoned with rhythm and harmony; perhaps already by the arranger at this point; finally, the whole is orchestrated by a specialist" (Adorno 1989:56).

However, Adorno does not accept this claim for the progressiveness of jazz practice as valid. He sees cooperation in the division of labor in jazz not as the workings of an organic interacting collective but as the mechanical subjection of material to various treatments from specialists (orchestrators, arrangers, etc.) that are external to it. In a genuine division of labor, the creative process would be spontaneously initiated and developed within the collective through the interactions of the members, through their responsivity to each other. The mere subjection of material to treatment by a variety of specialists denotes only, for him, a mechanical assembly process that might be likened to the treatment that raw materials undergo in manufacture as they are passed along the conveyer belt. To Adorno, who was drawn to the ideal of collective creation in art, "the division of labor in jazz merely outlines the parody of a future collective process of composition" (Adorno 1989:57). This argument underlines Adorno's notion of an isomorphism between structural relations at the level of praxis—that is, in the production of the music—and structural relations among the elements of the artwork itself.

JAZZ AS ART MUSIC

Even in the early 1936 paper, Adorno acknowledged not only that there were different types of jazz but differences in quality too. He observed that the day of the amateur and dilettante appeared to be passing and, at one end of the spectrum, jazz music was achieving a kind of "stabilized" form in which it presented itself as "symphonic," as "autonomous art" and, in the process, abandoned all its former claims to collective immediacy and spontaneity. To the extent that jazz takes this direction it increasingly submits itself to the standards of "artistic music." The musician that Adorno had principally in mind as a representative of "stabilized jazz" was Duke Ellington. Adorno saw Ellington's "tasteful" jazz as an appropriation of the conventions of musical *impressionism*, of the style, that is, of composers such as Debussy, Ravel, and Delius. He saw the most striking influences in Ellington's harmonies, in the nine-note chords and "stereotypical blue chords" characteristic of Debussy. Even Ellington's treatment of melody shows the influence of musical impressionism. "The resolution into the smallest motif formulae, which are not developed dynamically but rather statically repeated, and which are only rhythmically reinterpreted and appear to circle around an immovable center, is specifically impressionistic" (Adorno 1989:59). Adorno argues that all the more subtle features of stabilized jazz refer back to this style which, he notes, may be making its way into the broader social strata of society through jazz. However, he sees the appropriation of musical impressionism as depriving jazz of its formal sense. Here Adorno resorts to an argument that recurs throughout his work and which is applied to different contents. He rejects any music that appears to him to inhibit true development:

> If in Debussy the melodic points form their coloration and temporal surfaces from out of themselves following the constructive command of subjectivity, in jazz they are harnessed, like the mock-beat of "hot music," into the metric-harmonic schema of the "standard" cadence of the eight-bar measure. The subjective-functional dis-

> tribution of the melody remains impotent by being recalled as it were by the eight-bar condensation, into a melodic soprano form which merely toys with its particulars rather than composing a new form from them; this is true in the case of the complex harmonies when they are caught again by the same cadence from which their floating resonances want to escape. *Even yesterday's music must first be rendered harmless by jazz, must be released from its historical element, before it is ready for the market.* (Adorno 1989:59–60; emphasis added)

The line between jazz and popular music generally has always somewhat blurred; its fecundity as a musical form was impressive—ragtime, blues, bebop, swing. . . . Of course, there have always been those who have attempted to effect a more restricted definition of jazz and a clearer distinction between real jazz and popular music. Notwithstanding the fact that there is a vast difference between the best jazz and the worst popular music, hard and fast distinctions are difficult to sustain. It is interesting to note, in this connection, Duke Ellington's hesitations over the term jazz. In later life he eschewed the problem of definition altogether, claiming that jazz was embedded in the history of its performers and performances (Gracyk 1992:537).

The arguments concerning the poverty of musical material in jazz and the stereotyped and rigid application of its basic techniques, including "syncopation, semi-vocal, semi-instrumental sounds, gliding, impressionistic harmonies and opulent instrumentation" are simply reasserted in the later paper on "Perennial Fashion—Jazz"(Adorno 1981:121). Jazz is fashion, according to Adorno and, as with all fashions, what is important is show and not the thing itself. The studied effect, the solo instrumental, the extended drum break, is polished with all the flair of the circus act and incorporated as a more or less self-contained entity without possessing any meaningful relationship to the composition as a whole. The "cliché forms" in jazz are all seen by Adorno as interchangeable, with no organic or developmental coherence.

Specifically, Adorno saw jazz as the dressing up of the most dismal products of the popular-song industry. It is the 32-measure song that he sees as the basic material of jazz. Even where there is real improvisation in jazz the sole material, according to Adorno, remains popular songs. The improvisations are then reduced to "a more or less feeble re-hashing of basic formulas in which the schema shines through at every moment . . . the range of the permissible in jazz is as circumscribed as is any particular cut of clothes" (Adorno 1981:123). Adorno would not allow that the rhythmic and coloristic techniques of jazz were in any way original but claimed that all such techniques had been invented and superseded in serious music since Brahms—a claim that many find preposterous.

SOME CRITICISMS OF ADORNO'S' VIEWS ON JAZZ

Adorno's commitment to the integrity of the work of art as text led him to be less than attentive to the complex mediating relations through which jazz as music was produced in performance or to the culture of jazz performance. If historicity, temporality, and dialectic were not of the essence of the music as text, he made no effort to seek it in the rich interpolations through which jazz and its cultures permeated the prosaic and everyday construction of relations. Insofar as he recognized some such proximity to everyday life, Adorno dismissed it without perceiving its potential. Thus he condemns jazz for being the type of music eminently suited to accompanying the mundane and creaturely acts. Adorno never seriously attended to jazz culture in the way that his serious musicological critics do and they, in turn, have not always been conscious of his larger theoretical objectives or of what may usefully be rescued from his critique of jazz. Nevertheless, the limitation of

Adorno's arguments at a musicological level maps some of the inadequacies of his method as well as his theory. I focus first on some of these musicological criticisms of Adorno's actual treatment of jazz as music and later offer a critique of my own concerning his treatment of the culture industry and modernist art works, generally, and outline an alternative approach to the problems he raises.

Theodore Gracyk (1992) has offered a spirited rebuttal of Adorno's arguments concerning jazz as music. Adorno's habit of classifying nonclassical music as jazz-based, apparently in the belief that jazz was the dominant and paradigmatic form of popular music during his lifetime, is criticized by Gracyk. "Jazz was never synonymous with popular music and, with the emergence of bebop and later, rock and roll, jazz became decidedly less popular" (Gracyk 1992:527). Jazz, in the normal sense, includes Miles Davis, Louis Armstrong, and Charlie Parker but it is a distortion to classify such performers with Sammy Davis, Jr., Dean Martin, Buddy Holly, or the Beatles. The excellence or otherwise of any one could hardly be compared with that of the others. Ironically, it is characteristic of the authoritarian personality to minimize the differences among the range of things to which one is opposed and to insist that they are all fundamentally the same and equally bad.

There are two issues here, that of differences in quality within the same broad type of music and the qualitative differences among types of music. Adorno does concede that jazz musicians differ in quality—he acknowledges that musicians such as Charlie Parker made better music than many others—but for him the fact that there is "good bad music" only underlines the extent to which qualified musicians have sold out to the culture industry. As to the qualitative difference among types of music, while the most subtle differences are entertained when dealing with classical music, jazz is viewed as being indistinguishable within the "filthy tide" of entertainment music.

Those knowledgeable about jazz can easily demonstrate the dubious and often wrong assertions that Adorno makes about jazz as music. For instance, Adorno's belief that the sole material of jazz is the 32-measure popular song is wrong, argues Gracyk, even if we confine our attention to jazz before Adorno's death in 1969. Thus, of Louis Armstrong, a musician referred to by Adorno, Gracyk points out:

> Near the apex of his development, Louis Armstrong extended the New Orleans tradition with his Hot Five and Hot Seven recordings (1925–1927). Yet, at that time, Armstrong had little exposure to popular mainstream standards and did not write thirty-two measure tunes. In fact, his weakest recordings of the period are frequently of music composed by others, and Armstrong's strongest originals are head arrangements that draw upon blues progressions. The masterful "Potato Head Blues" is neither the standard twelve- nor thirty-two measure tune, and the highly admired "Weather Bird" (1928) is based on King Oliver's sixteen-measure tune. In fact Armstrong's breakthrough as a jazz soloist did not derive from the popular standard tunes of his day. (Gracyk 1992:532)

Gracyk goes on to consider those cases where celebrated jazz musicians do work with standard popular songs. A bedrock of popular songs may well support the art of Charlie Parker. However, while "Thriving on a Riff," "Chasin' the Bird," "Ah-Leu-Cha," and "Constellation" are based on Gershwin's "I Got Rhythm," they are not mere ornamentation of the original song. Gracyk argues that it makes about as much sense to argue that these songs are restrictive of the music of Charlie Parker as it would to claim that the use of sonata allegro form was restrictive of Beethoven's symphonies. Schonherr (1991) makes a similar point in discussing John Coltrane's version of the Richard Rodgers standard "My

Favorite Things" from *The Sound of Music*. Schonherr argues that it serves as an example of the successful transformation of aesthetic kitsch into the musical language of the avant garde:

> Within a period of six years he freed this tune from all functional-harmonic and metric simplicity. The contrast to the original shows most radically in the recording from 1966, within which the deconstructed thematic material only resurfaces fragmentarily through the largely atonal improvisations. The treatment of this piece documents beyond the biographical implications also a musical self-reflection on the history of jazz and its aesthetic procedures, which converge in the nineteen-sixties to a large extent with those of contemporary music. (Schonherr 1991:92)

Gracyk considers the examples of jazz musicians who consciously abandoned popular song material and its standard chord progressions, such as Miles Davis's "Kind of Blue" (1959) and Ornette Coleman's "Free Jazz" (1960). Both, he claims, avoid popular song composition and abandon standard tonality:

> Coleman's group in "Free Jazz" also rejects all the pre-determined chord progressions of popular songs and improvises on a few short original themes. But where Davis plays trumpet, saxophone, and piano in the foreground, as individual soloists, Coleman downplays the convention of the foreground solo and offers thirty-six minutes of collective improvisation among as many as eight players at a time. In addition, in many pieces by Charles Mingus and Ornette Coleman, varying tempos and unpredictable rhythmic fluctuations replace a steady beat. (Gracyk 1992:533)

Gracyk's examples are largely taken from the postswing era, whereas Adorno's writings on jazz (between 1933 and 1941) belong to that era. In any case by 1960 there were plenty of examples to indicate that jazz had no essential reliance on composed songs and that it did not require diatonic tonality. Of course, Adorno does not allow himself to be so easily caught. Here and there he does acknowledge departures from the rigid conventions imposed by the culture industry. These are claimed (like the eccentricities of Orson Welles) to be a contrived type of deviation that helps reinforce the rigid schemata which it only appears to challenge. Adorno insists that when jazz avoids popular song forms, diatonic scales, and a monotonous beat, its innovations are merely a recycling of styles that have been made before, in serious music, and are now unchallenged conventions (Adorno 1981:123–24).

Gracyk points to the differences between the tradition of classical composed music and that of jazz. He accuses Adorno of treating jazz as though its should be listened to in the way that he listened to classical music and judged accordingly. Adorno never learned to listen to jazz and never credited either the autonomy of its players nor the high degree of social cooperation and reflexivity that was necessary to make good jazz. Adorno offers nothing in the way of a study of the culture of jazz and jazz musicians nor an account or analysis of how they think concerning the business of making music. In classical music, the interpretation of a score makes the performance appear to be a secondary act of duty and conformity in the service of the written composition itself, which is seen as somehow primary. Jazz has never been comfortable with that kind of division between performance and composition, with its implicit downgrading of the performer. Jazz musicians have often seen the history of jazz as one not only of great performers and those who modeled themselves on them but also a history of great performances through which new music was made and old music made new.

Schonherr, for example, disputes Adorno's claim that the musical interaction of instrumentalist and collective in jazz represents a parody of a future collective process of composition. He insists that all the evidence suggests that it represents a form of communication free of domination and offers the following account by the jazz musician, Charles Mingus about the active involvement of musicians in the composition process. Schonherr claims that it was typical, even paradigmatic for aesthetic production among avant-garde jazz musicians in the 1960s:

> I lay out the composition part by part to the musicians. I play them the "framework" on piano so that they are all familiar with my interpretation and feeling and with the scale and chord progressions . . . each man's particular style is taken into consideration. They are given different rows of notes to use against each chord but they choose their own notes and play them in their own style, from scales as well as chords, except where a particular mood is indicated. In this way I can keep my own compositional flavor . . . and yet allow the musicians more individual freedom in the creation of their group lines and solos. (Schonherr 1991:88)

Adorno's statements concerning improvisation and its significance in jazz music are both misleading and inappropriate. As Berendt has argued, composing, improvising, and interpreting are integral in the work of a jazz musician whereas they are usually separated in classical music. Although a quality of liveness and of individual creativity is essential to jazz, the idea of some utterly extemporaneous process of musical creativity is not. Berendt cites the British jazz musician Humphrey Littleton's claim that "In the full sense of 'composing extemporarily,' that is, without preparation, improvisation has proved to be not essential to, and practically nonexistent in, good jazz" (Berendt 1992:154). Moreover, the improvised/composed/interpreted chorus of a particular jazz musician loses truth-value, according to Berendt, when it is copied and played by someone else since it is inconceivable that it could be played by someone who did not create it from the situation in which it was originally improvised (ibid.:156).

Adorno's musicological generalizations about jazz appear at their least persuasive when they are pushed hard against the facts of jazz composition. In his analysis of the music of Richard Wagner, Adorno insightfully points to the reification involved in the subtle and brilliant developments of Wagner's intimate orchestral sound in which the contribution of each individual instrument to the overall effect is concealed. In this Wagner was developing to the full heights the euphony that was characteristic of the symphonic tradition he inherited (Adorno 1991). However, we do not find Adorno acknowledging the significance of the fact that in jazz the opposite situation prevails and the contribution of each instrument is clearly audible. Those familiar with jazz music can often distinguish the unique sound of a given sax or horn player from that of other sax or horn players, a feat that is difficult in the extreme for audiences of classical music seeking to identify a viola or violin player from the sound alone. The individualistic element in jazz playing is inescapable and a major contribution to the excitement and the quality of personal expression in jazz. As Berendt puts it:

> Sound in jazz is—to give a few examples at random—the slow, expressive vibrato of Sydney Bechet's soprano sax; the voluminous erotic tenor sax sound of Coleman Hawkins; the earthy cornet of King Oliver; the jungle sound of Bubber Miley; the elegant clarity of Benny Goodman's clarinet; the sorrow and lostness of Miles Davis or the victoriousness of Louis Armstrong; the lyrical sonority of Lester Young; the

> gripping concentrated power of Roy Eldridge or the glow of Dizzie Gillespie. (Berendt 1992:150)

No matter how persuasive the examples that Schonherr, Gracyk, Berendt, and others are able to bring to bear against Adorno's negative critique of jazz it is by no means clear that the theory can be brought down by such rebuttals or even that those self-same arguments do not end up by offering some degree of support for Adorno's critique of the culture industry. The critical defense of jazz offered by Gracyk and others can be seen to demand, in opposition to Adorno, a repositioning of jazz in relation to the culture industry. What Gracyk points to, in effect, is a growing division between jazz and rock music, rock and roll, country and western music, and popular music styles of all kinds. The strongest examples he offers, Miles Davis and Ornette Coleman, belong to the late 1950s and 1960s in which this separation becomes clearer; moreover, it is a separation that coincides with the decline of the mass culture appeal of jazz. One might want to conclude that when jazz proved to have a genuinely independent and expressive voice of its own it was no longer usable by the culture industry and was increasingly ignored by it. Gracyk, like Hobsbawm, does not seriously deny the close connection between jazz and popular song and dance music in the period of the 1930s and 1940s nor even the "pseudo-individualization" of its products as claimed by Adorno. The effect of his critique, it seems to me, is to suggest that Adorno failed to recognize the autonomy of jazz culture even in the midst of its integral involvement with popular music and that he underestimated the potential of jazz, from within the culture industry, to develop its own forms of resistance. Heinz Steinert has pointed to the significance of jazz in a world which has passed beyond categories such as art:

> In jazz, there is no work of art; rather, there is an event and a happening. Jazz programmatically relies on incident and contingency, on the manner in which the musicians relate to each other and interact on this particular occasion. . . . Jazz uses sentimental worn-out material—it does not pretend that we aren't sentimental, depressed, or angry—but it takes up, breaks apart, and intellectualizes these moods, making us see them as "typical." Jazz is a deeply ironical art. (Steinert 1998:97)

TOWARDS AN ALTERNATIVE THEORY OF THE CULTURE INDUSTRY

Adorno's critique of jazz reinforces the classical sociological understanding of modernity as a system for the instrumental management of object relations. The emotional or sensuous life of the modern subject is seen as an impoverished reflex of this modernity, a kind of distractive and self-indulgent sensationism. The culture industries are then theorized as designing their products to appeal to this sensationism, to configure the desociated body of the subject in order to render it docile and susceptible to totalitarian organization. Modernity, in the classical sociological cannon, constructs the metropolis as a vast system of object relations in which individuals appear as objects even to themselves. Means-end relations predominate. As Simmel argued, in his famous essay "The Metropolis and Mental Life," life in the city follows the circulation of money and not the flow of the seasons (Simmel 1950). Simmel could see, too, that there was an emotional reaction among city dwellers to a life that reduced each individual to the status of a cog in a machine; in response, he argued there was an exaggerated cultivation of idiosyncratic and assertive personal styles, a cult of personality and emotional expression.

While emphasis is often placed upon the shallow and trivializing aspect of the affective and sensuous life of the city—and Adorno certainly aligns himself with that view—such

an emphasis occludes the positive role that the configuration of affect, and its infusion into the leisure spaces of city life, can be said to play in resisting the totalitarian instrumentalism of modernity. As Berendt, Hobsbawm, and numerous writers on jazz have pointed out, the amazingly direct appeal to the emotions is key to the jazz experience Berendt 1992; Hobsbawm 1989). It is no doubt key to popular music generally. Adorno himself notes that the *espressivo* of jazz is to announce something soulful. But it is this very *espressivo*, its color and its affective charge, that is expunged from the normal praxis of social production in the metropolis. The working day, in the technical and administrative apparatus, puts a premium upon rational, objective, and dispassionate social relations—upon the abstraction of the head from the body (Witkin 1990, 1995). The emotions that surface in the blues and in jazz celebrate a life that is suppressed and mutilated by modernity, and jazz has as much claim to being considered a medium of resistance as does the art of the high priests of modernism. The principal difference is that this suppressed life, the life of the body rather than the life of the mind, has a space in which it can be lived, namely the space of the interpersonal, the domestic and the leisured world. Its dynamic is not that of a negative dialectics aimed at the totalitarian collective, but of a sensuous and charged affectivity, lived and celebrated on the margins of rational-technical modernity, configured in relation to it and always rubbing up against its grain.

As I have argued elsewhere, however (Witkin 1997), the construction, by sociologists, of this distinction between the instrumental and the socioemotional aspects of social relations has been, in itself, part of the process through which the instrumental order acknowledges the socioemotional as its excluded "other," embracing it by seeking to assimilate it to the instrumental order, that is, by treating it in terms of the rational satisfaction of *egoistic* needs for which the instrumental order can provide (Witkin 1997). The development of the culture industry is an inherent aspect of such provision. Its aesthetic commodification of the sensuous aspect of social relations desociates the latter to the level of the egoistic needs of the individual.

However, it is necessary to distinguish here between autonomous culture creation, which is characteristic of social relatedness at the most everyday level, and the culture industry, which works through a relentless process of commodification. Typically, the latter has processed cultural invention that originated beyond the compass of its design initiative. It has never been the case that the culture industry is synonymous with all aesthetic creation that does not belong within the category of so-called serious art (Adorno used the term so widely that it even embraced a large part of that). The culture industry's capacity to process and commodify aesthetic material, to manufacture the marketable item, feeds upon aesthetic process, upon aesthetic praxis and aesthetic choices that it does not invent. Without culture creation on its margins, the culture industry would lack the raw material it needs. The most interesting questions may not be those that result from contrasting the standardized products of the culture industry with the so-called serious works of art but those that explore the aesthetic choices made in the construction of everyday life.

Jazz is not simply synonymous with popular music, as Adorno would have it. For most of its history, jazz has stood in a close symbiosis with popular music but it has, nevertheless, remained distinct. This symbiosis is the key to developing an analysis of the workings of the culture industry that can serve as a critique of Adorno's treatment. Although Hobsbawm and Adorno differ greatly in their view of jazz, they are actually remarkably close concerning their characterization of popular culture:

> So long as variety merely means another unit of standardized production—another young man with gleaming teeth (probably reconditioned by his backer and agent as a preliminary investment in stardom), virtually indistinguishable from his predecessor, another processed loan from the full bag of hillbilly melodies and the like—no

> problem arises. The real difficulty occurs when the public wants something really different. Here the pop industry is helpless. At this point jazz enters it. (Hobsbawm 1989:164)

Hobsbawm sees the popular music industry as necessarily parasitic upon raw material that is not of its making. Its business is to process available material and it remains ultimately dependent upon autonomous cultural creation genuinely expressive of a lifeworld. Because popular culture is governed only by the principle of salability, it is, paradoxically, completely unprejudiced and willing to embrace more or less any development whatever. Jazz overlaps and interpenetrates with pop music. As Hobsbawm puts it, "[jazz] lives within it as water lilies live in ponds and stagnant streams" (1989:167). Although Hobsbawm acknowledges that jazz can sometimes become pop music and be indistinguishable from it, that is not usually the case. He suggests that jazz resists this fate because even when jazz musicians are minded to become pop musicians, they are often not very good at it and, in any case, many actively choose not to "sell out." Unlike Adorno, however, Hobsbawm insists on the distinctiveness of ways of working and of producing in both jazz and pop music and provides an account of these differences at an institutional level in his observations on the music industry and the jazz business.

Hobsbawm is not alone, of course, in pointing to the dependence of the culture industry upon a process of cultural creation that stands outside the design initiative of the ring of commodification. Hall and Jefferson (1976), in their theorizing of British youth culture of the 1960s and 1970s, rejected the notion that these styles were the creation of commercial entrepreneurs. On the contrary, youth styles such as "skinheads" and "punks" developed as authentic responses to social conditions that were class related. Once these styles had crystallized, however, the entrepreneurs of the culture industry pounced upon them, "defusing and diffusing" them (Hebdidge 1979) in order to make them salable to a mass audience. From this point of view, the marketing of the Beatles as a pop group can be seen to have run the gamut of youth culture styles originating in the British class structure although none of them were actually invented (as distinct from developed and exploited) by the culture industry. The Beatles, in their early Hamburg days, presented a leather-jacketed image that was closely associated with the "hard" image of the lower working-class "rocker." Following their discovery by Brian Epstein the group achieved world fame, presenting a carefully defused version of a transitional working-class "mod" culture. The later Beatles developed an equally defused version of a middle-class "hippie" culture. The culture industry that commodifies such developments but does not create them, may, nevertheless, seek to manufacture "copies" (the Monkees) by abstracting the formula. Sooner or later, however, the possibilities of the invention are exhausted and the culture industry must return to the sources of authentic aesthetic creation that lie beyond the compass of its design initiative.

It is necessary, however, to drive this argument concerning the distinction between culture creation and cultural exploitation beyond the point of merely establishing their distinctiveness. Although genuine source materials that derive from the needs of real social groups and realize social processes are actually transformed by the culture industry in its production and marketing of them as commodities, the different aesthetic codes through which local social groups strike their attitudes, configure their experiences, are conserved in these commodities, albeit in abstracted and defused form. Thus, the very activity of the culture industry in exploiting and commodifying this aesthetic creation serves, in the process, to transmit new symbolic resources to a mass audience—new means of expression that would otherwise be accessible only to the social groups in which they originated.

Paradoxically, therefore, commercialization and commodification serve to universalize the aesthetic codes that configure experience for specific social groups. From this point of

view, the culture industry may actually enrich the aesthetic resources and the range of expressive possibilities available to individuals and social groups in everyday life and thus helps to stimulate cultural invention that it then goes on to commodify. If this admittedly conjectural view is correct, it suggests that the greater the degree of commodification, the greater is the degree of opportunity for genuine aesthetic creation to occur on the margins of that process. The polished banalities of the culture industry may also be dynamically reconfigured in aesthetic practices of everyday life. There is a need for genuine empirical research concerning actual aesthetic practices in everyday life and their relationship to the culture industry as a counterweight to an almost theological level of assertion from critical theorists. Is it possible that the draining of dialectical process from works of art and popular culture that Adorno abhorred may actually be a prerequisite for the development of an aestheticizing proxis in everyday life?

Every grief and every excitement presupposes a presence, a relatedness among individuals from which it derives its unique character and qualities. The precondition of all authentic sentiment and affect, therefore, is the social being or social presence engendered by relatedness. It is this social being which is configured in the emotions experienced by the individuals who are parties to that relatedness. In an earlier work I referred to such relations as *subject-reflexive* (Witkin 1974). In the pure subject-reflexive relationship the identities of the parties are reflexively "improvised" in and through relatedness itself. Identities are not things that the parties bring to the relationship; they are modes of being they live out of it.

I want to suggest that subject-reflexive relations can best be thought of as "I-thou" relations. Victor Turner borrowed this term from Martin Buber and used it as the basis of his concept of communitas—a "being present to one another"—that can be said to constitute social being (M. Buber; V. Turner). The term "I-thou" captures a key aspect of this type of relationship, namely its fluid undifferentiation in terms of parts or elements, its variegated and unitary character. Although it is true that I-thou relations are not you-and-me relations, it is also the case that they are not "we" relations. They have nothing to do with homogeneity in the sense that an expressive crowd is sometimes made up of individuals who appear to be moved by one idea. The I-thou relationship is the medium in which individuals can express themselves; that is, can become what they are. In the course of such a relationship, social being undergoes a progressive figuration. It becomes "featured." The process can be likened to that in which a sculptor, carving from a single block, brings out of it the different features of a face, each feature being a figuration of the whole that emerges in an affinity with all the other features. The I-thou relationship has no career and no development; it delivers its affective charge from moment to moment and knows none of the cumulative suspense that dialectical process has made central to post-Renaissance art (Witkin 1998). In all such figurational processes, subjects share a presence or "community" and live out of it a realization of personal being. Like the best jazz, the living out of it is "improvised."

The emotional heat of the personal and interpersonal life may be self-referential but it is, nevertheless, developed in relationship with and in response to the institutional order; it may even issue in or be directed as a howl of complaint against that order, but it remains, to a greater or lesser degree, outside the control of wider administrative structures. It is here, I would argue, that jazz and the popular arts have their home. Jazz helps to articulate the affectively charged but disparate elements of the interpersonal life and it contributes to a discourse of values through which the interpersonal is socially configured. The culture industry, which draws upon jazz as a major raw material, effectively transmits its aesthetic codes, making them universally available as resources in the configuration of sensuous experience.

ART AND THE INTRAPERSONAL

If there is any general or persistent tendency in the development of modernist works of art in the different arts since the middle of the nineteenth century, it has been the draining of dialectical process from the artwork and, with it, the "suspense" and "depth" that such process constructs. The flatness and materiality of the art work, its disdain of illusionary space, and its refusal even of the space of representation has characterized so many of the developments in modern art as have serial iterations and even the obliteration of the sense of any real distinction between part and whole. The latter developments are clearly exemplified in recent times by the blank, deadpan stare of the minimalist works produced by artists like Donald Judd and Sol LeWitt and by the works of musicians such as Steve Reich.

In the metropolis, the density of social relations is low in that a person may be related to many individuals who are entirely unknown to each other. The higher the density of social relations the greater the sense of a unitary social order to which corresponds a unitary sense of personal identity. Conversely, a low density of social relations engenders a sense of plural social worlds and plural selves. Lacking any secure anchorage in an institutional order, these disparate lifeworld experiences no longer add up to a unified or integrated social being. Modernist art, I would argue, positioned itself here, at the level of what I shall call *sensuous intra-action*, juxtaposing the disjunctive elements of the intrasubjective and seeking to realize a sensuous coherence. Bringing all the disparate and disjunct life-world contexts that shape the experience of the subject into the same experiential space—juxtaposing them as in a collage/montage—is a key feature of this intraactional constitution of sensibility and agency.

All the techniques of modernism in "high art," including the fragmentation of structures into their tiniest elements, the juxtaposition of disparate realities in collage/montage, the seriality of forms, their iterations, can be seen as oriented to the realization of just such an intrasubjective coherence at a moment when the unity of the subject and of the interpersonal world had become problematical. To the extent that modernism treated the intraactional and intrasubjective constitution of sensibility and agency as problematical, it transformed the relationship of art to everyday life. The more that the art work became centered on the production of the subjective as sensibility (as an intrasubjective process), the more did the dialectical movement of expressive action (as in lifeworld projects, for example) drain from the art work—and with it the temporalizing moment—embedding itself in the praxis of ordinary life. The work of art itself became a constitutive sensuous machinery (Witkin 1995).

Finding an attunement among different subjects through a juxtaposition of sensibilities at an intersubjective as well as an intrasubjective level is key to the social construction of agency. By agency, I mean the incipient readiness or capacity for action of a given sort and not action itself. Once this shift in the level of abstraction from expression to sensibility and from action to agency is acknowledged, the techniques of modernism in both "high" and "low" art—all of which lead to that draining of dialectical relations from the text, which Adorno abhorred—can be seen to provide a link between the two torn halves of that integral freedom. The deepening division between high and low art reflects the progressive withdrawal of high art from the realm of the interactional and interpersonal. Szondi theorizes this clearly in the case of modernist drama and Lukàcs in respect of the modernist novel (Szondi 1987; Lukàcs 1963; Witkin 1995). By contrast, the popular arts made the intimate and the interpersonal the focus of their attention. It was inherent in the very intensification of this division of labor, which drew apart the intrapersonal and the interpersonal, that a complex interplay developed between them from which what was drawn apart was brought together again. The culture industry had a major part to play in this.

Attunement is conceived of here as the process of opening toward, and participating in, the configuration of a shared presence. It is an intensified sociality that brings together different sensibilities to form a unitary social being in and through the process of "living out of" that social being. Such a process of attunement among disparate subjectivities certainly involves real social relations, but these are not dialectical in Adorno's sense. However, they are key, I would argue, to relations in jazz among the elements of jazz as music, among jazz musicians in the execution of that music, and with audiences in the reception of that music. Adorno took little note of the culture of jazz. He made no proper study of the cultural context of rehearsal and performance, of skill, of relations among jazz musicians, of venues, of conventions concerning the role of an ensemble leader, the development of a piece of music, or its performance. Here, the ideal of a kind of reflexive attunement of individuals to one another in the creation of a performance and an occasion is key, and improvisation as a culture and process is integral to that.

Also, jazz as modern music entered into the framing of sensibilities in everyday life and relationships not simply through the provision of "scripts" that could be used to configure the everyday world but through the very styling of sensibilities and thus the configuring of the agency (capacities) and identity of the subject. Adorno actually recognized the proximity of jazz to the mundane details of daily life but he put a different gloss on it, seeing it as a mark of its banality. In the end, it is Adorno's formalism, his insistence upon the integrity of the work of art as text and the autonomy of art as aesthetic praxis that serves as his theoretic means for opposing the sublation of art in the praxis of everyday life, a sublation which Adorno, like Burger, would not have seen as a genuine reconnection of art to life but a case of art falling into the hands of the culture industry. A consideration of Adorno's views of modernist art and of jazz along the lines I have outlined suggests that there is the need for a much wider critique of Adorno's negative valorization of the culture industry and a reassessment of its relationship to social formation.

Adorno's perception that serious art and the products of the culture industry are two torn halves that *don't add up* needs to be reconsidered in the light of the mediating relations that exist between them. It is not just that so-called serious artists are continuously making forays into mass culture for the purpose of acquiring material—Adorno discusses this frequently—but also that the accomplishments of serious art are diffused (if also defused) in mass culture over time. Familiarity with the "codes" of art is necessary in order to be able to make or read aesthetic praxis. Mass culture and the culture industry have a significant part to play in making those codes more widely available. It may once have been the case that unless you had heard the music of concert hall ensembles you would never have been able to acquire the necessary experience to enable you to make sense of the music of composers like Bach. Bach's cantata widely known as the "Air on a G-String" is familiar to everyone in England who has ever seen the TV commercial for Hamlet cigars. Some classical music lovers are appalled by that treatment, regarding the whole performance as a degraded travesty. If degraded it is, it remains the case that those who hear it grow more familiar with the code governing its construction. Images from the arts continuously fall prey to the voracious appetite of publicity, marketing, and advertising; everywhere, as John Berger saw (1972) the codes of old masters are recycled through the medium of advertising film and television. The reworking of these codes in mass cultural forms is precisely what defuses and diffuses them, loosening them from their moorings in a specific class habitus and making them widely available for reappropriation, reworking, and recontextualization. My point of view might be considered to extend Benjamin's argument in his famous essay on "The Work of Art in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (Benjamin 1992). The emphasis is placed here upon the semiotic abstraction, reconfiguration, and transmission of the aesthetic codes that govern the construction of works of art.

The products of serious art enter, indirectly, into every aspect of modern design; they are refracted, via the culture industry, in the praxis of everyday life. Television, radio, and film have plundered the modernist music repertoire for many of the effects that they deploy in constructing presentations and in composing theme music, just as modern classical composers from the time of Mahler have drawn freely on so-called vulgar music. In so doing, what originated at the level of sensuous intra-action is brought into play at the level of sensuous interaction and vice-versa. Moreover, so-called popular art continuously develops toward high art in its more avant-garde forms. Thus, the label jazz, once applied to any dance band music, now encompasses avant-garde music such as that of Ornette Coleman, Miles Davis, or John Coltrane; moreover, from within the jazz idiom, these composers have developed their own explorations of the possibilities afforded by atonal composition. In terms of the outline model developed here, what belongs to the level of sensuous interaction in "low" art is recycled, used as a resource at an intra-actional level in "high" art.

The oft-trumpeted claim that postmodernity involves a progressive collapse of the distinction between high and low art might conceivably be validated at the end of a long process of mediation of the kind referred to above. Both the works of so-called "serious" artists and those of culture industry professionals can be seen in terms of their mutual mediations. However, the direction in which this development points may be toward the growing possibilities available to individuals in everyday life to deploy aesthetic resources and to make aesthetic choices. Perhaps this process should be seen as one of strengthening an exiled subjectivity, reassembling it, as it were, and ultimately as making possible the reconquest of the praxis of everyday life that Peter Burger assigned, as a failed project, to the artistic avant-gardes (Burger 1984). In my model such a project would have no chance of success without the work of the culture industry.

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