

THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL AND ANTONIO GRAMSCI:
THEORETICAL CONCERNS IN THE PRACTICE OF CULTURAL
CRITICISM, AND THEIR “MEANS” TO PRODUCING A NEO-MARXIAN
APPROACH

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The Frankfurt School and Antonio Gramsci: Theoretical concerns in the practice of Cultural Criticism, and their “means” to producing a neo-Marxian approach

Frankfurt Okulu ve Antonio Gramsci: Kültürel Eleştiri pratiklerindeki teorik bağlamları ve neo-Marksist yaklaşımın gelişimindeki yerleri

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- 2) Culture Industry
- 3) Cultural Hegemony
- 4) Fascism
- 5) Working Class

ABSTRACT

In this thesis, the rise of Cultural Marxism is correlated with the rise of fascist regimens throughout the early period of 20th century in Italy and in Germany. The distinguished scholars of the Frankfurt School in Germany and the well-known philosopher Antonio Gramsci in Italy had great influence of the reinterpretation of Marxism with their sociological and cultural analysis. Taking fascism as a trigger effect, this thesis aims to expose the means and ends used by the Frankfurt School and Gramsci in their approaches to Cultural Marxism under the influence of cultural hegemony and the culture Industry. The pushing effect of Fascist system and ideology cannot be denied as the ground of their theories, since this pushing effect forced them both to leave their countries and homes, and it led to exile and imprisonment.

Gramsci interprets fascism within the framework of the historical process and historical issues, whereas Frankfurt School members are more into the human nature to explain fascist ideology.

Although they held common views, especially on cultural criticism, the pessimistic approach of Frankfurt School is what particularly distinguishes it from Gramsci. For the members of Frankfurt School, the separation of “reason” from objectivity causes the separation of intellect and “will”, which prevents human beings from acting on their desires. While Gramsci

constantly believed in the “will” of working class, on which he grounds his fundamental theory, the members of the Frankfurt School grounded their hopelessness in the separation of will for the working class. In this thesis, I aim to compare both the Frankfurt School members’ and Gramsci’s theoretical grounds on Cultural Marxism.

ÖZET

Bu tezde, Kültürel Marksizm ile yirminci yüzyılın başlarında İtalya ve Almanya'da yükselen faşizm arasında bir ilişki kurulmuştur. Frankfurt okulunun seçkin düşünürleri ile ünlü İtalyan düşünür Antonio Gramsci'nin Marksizm'in kültürel ve sosyolojik açılardan yeniden yorumlanmasında etkileri büyüktür. Bu tez, faşizmi tetikleyici bir etmen olarak alarak Kültürel Hegemonya ve Kültür Endüstrisi kavramları altında Frankfurt Okulu'nun ve Gramsci'nin Kültürel Marksizm'e yaklaşımlarındaki araç ve amaçlarını ortaya koymayı hedeflemiştir. Teorilerinin kökenindeki faşist sistemin ve ideolojinin itici gücü yadsınamaz, öyle ki bu itki onları hem evlerinden hem de yurtlarından uzaklaştırıp mahpus hayatı ve sürgün hayatı yaşamalarına zorlamıştır.

Gramsci, faşizmi tarihsel süreç ve tarihsel olgular çerçevesinde yorumlarken, Frankfurt Okulu üyeleri daha çok insan doğası üzerine yoğunlaşarak faşist ideolojiyi açıklamışlardır.

Özellikle kültürel eleştiri üzerine olan ortak görüşlerine rağmen, Frankfurt Okulu'nun kötümser yaklaşımı onları Gramsci'den ayırır. Frankfurt Okulu üyeleri için nesnenin akıldan ayrılması, aklın arzudan ayrılmasına neden olur ki, bu da insanlığın arzuları doğrultusunda hareket etmesini engeller. Gramsci yılmadan teorisini oturttuğu işçi sınıfının arzusuna inanırken, Frankfurt Okulu üyeleri işçi sınıfı için bu arzunun eksikliğinden kaynaklı

inançsızlıklarını belirtirler. Bu tezde, Frankfurt Okulu üyelerinin ve Gramsci'nin Kültürel Marksizm temelli teorilerini karşılaştırmayı amaçlamaktayım.

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ABBREVIATIONS

KPD	(Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands) The Communist Party of Germany
PCI	(Partito Comunista Italiano) The Italian Communist Party
PSI	(Partito Socialista Italiano) The Italian Socialist Party
SPD	(Die Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands) Social Democratic Party of Germany
USPD	(Unabhängige Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands) The Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany
USSR	The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WWI	World War I

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, there have been periods called milestones. 1920's and 1930's could be called turning point decades that engendered difference in the perception of historical development. During that period, cultural criticism of Marxist orientation arose and its revolutionary nature caused a huge effect on the prospective interpretation of cultural Marxism, Cultural Critique and Cultural Studies. Perry Anderson interprets the turn from economic and political analysis to cultural theory as a symptom of the defeat of Western Marxism after the crushing of the European revolutionary movements of the 1920's and the rise of fascism. (Anderson, 1976) Degenerated high culture in the pseudo-democratic culture industry in relation with the totalitarian system being represented by state capitalism are the elements that shaped the development of Cultural Theory.

In the years following the Soviet Revolution and the World War I, some European theorists such as Lukacs, Korsch and Gramsci, impressed by German idealism, proposed Marxist Cultural Critique and the theory-praxis union that has been inspired by Hegelian dialectics. The 'philosophy of praxis' developed by Korsch, Lukacs and Gramsci responds to the deficient parts of the Orthodox Marxism and its emphasis on the unity of theory and practice, subject and object pointed to Hegel's dialectical

method and Critical Social Theory. If the names mentioned above are grouped as the first phase of the Critical theorists, the members of the Frankfurt School can be deemed as the second phase.

In addition to the contribution of these names to the Marxian literature, Italian philosopher Gramsci, known as the producer of Cultural Theory, contributed to the progress of Marxian analysis with his theoretical concerns in the practice of Cultural Criticism. It was not a coincidence that “Marxian Cultural Criticism” and “Critical (Social) Theory” appeared especially in two of the European countries suffering from fascist ideology. On the one hand, a group - at the heart of fascist world- emerged in Frankfurt and constituted the “Institute for Social Research” at the University of Frankfurt, informally called “Frankfurt School”, on the other hand Antonio Gramsci developed his theories on the basis of sociological and cultural analysis in Italy.

“Critical Theory” is the term used by the members of the School to describe their own work involving critique of positivism, bourgeois ideology, alienated labour, mass culture and so forth. In Germany, the members of the Frankfurt School, and In Italy, Gramsci were the philosophers struggling against the coming fascist regimen and producing their theories aiming at cultural and social critique, and they became the leading theorists of Marxian Cultural Critique. All branches of art including literature, drama, music, painting, and so on were of interest to them as part of the social formation of culture and were instrumental in forming their theoretical structure. The tension between culture and (the

way of life of) public, the positivistic separation of subject and object, and of theory and practice were the issues preoccupying these scholars' minds who defended the totality of the objective world. Frankfurt School and Gramsci developed a similar approach against historical materialism, and they all, contributing to the interpretation of it, produced a neo-Marxist approach dealing with not only economical and political structure but also cultural and social formation.

Considering the difficulty of distinguishing the periods of the Institute and the members' various approaches, this thesis will only analyze the Institute's early periods, and some of the members' distinctive approaches will be compared with the Italian cultural-Marxist Antonio Gramsci.

In this thesis Frankfurt School's Critical Theory based upon reflexive reasoning and Gramsci's Cultural Critique through the perspective of "hegemony" and their approaches towards Praxis and Marxian Cultural Critique will be analysed in a comparative manner.

1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1.1. The Rise Of Cultural (Critical) Marxism

With the failure of German Revolution and the success of the Russian Revolution, the political legacy of Marx and Engels was degraded by the conservative and nationalist behaviour of most Social Democratic parties and unions during World War I. The unexpected success of the Russian Revolution separated the Bolsheviks, who inherited the revolutionary orthodoxy from the second international, and created a severe dilemma for the left-wing intellectuals in Europe specifically in Germany. Therefore the Bolsheviks put the authoritarian implication into practice ignoring the world view of the 19th century Marxism. As a consequence of this split, the left-wing intellectuals had to either support the moderate socialists and the Third Weimer Republic or accept Moscow's leadership and join the newly formed German Communist party and work to undermine Weimar's bourgeoisie compromise (Jay, 3).

“The period of European working class history which began with the successful revolution in Russia, led to the formation of revolutionary movements in other European countries, but not victory. Although social advances were made, the working- class movement had been split. It was not really a split separating reformists from revolutionaries, since here were no revolutionaries outside communist parties and, in the coming period of the popular fronts, there were to be many reformists within them. The

attitude towards the USSR was and remained the cause of this split”
(Abendroth, 100).

Marxian theory which was carried back to the 18th century materialism by Lenin himself did not leave any space except turning Marxism into pseudo-scientific dogma. The Russian Bolsheviks reduced the councils to organs of state administration, so the council governments Russia, Germany, Hungary and Italy couldn't receive any adequate interpretation of Marxism.

“The deterministic, evolutionist, economistic social theory of classical Social Democracy, the first political heir of Marx and Engels, was discredited by the generally conservative and even nationalist behaviour of most Social Democratic parties and unions during World War I” (Arato, 4).

The Hungarian Georg Lukacs, German Karl Korsch and Italian Antonio Gramsci, who reconstructed Marxism, remained at the periphery of some of the Western Communist parties, but they finally came into conflict with the party. They developed the “philosophy of praxis” in opposition to objectivistic Marxism and stressed the importance of subjectivity, culture and action. In contrast to Orthodox Marxism whose tendency was to interpret the dynamics of history in terms of economic development, they remained outside of traditional Marxism and represented “Critical Marxism”. They didn't give up believing the socialist society in transition to communism would replace capitalism, and always believed in interrelation of human subjectivity.

“The new socialist society, whatever the necessary historical tendencies of the present, could be predicated only on the conscious and self-conscious actions of human subjects who anticipated in their self-organization and intersubjective relations...” (Arato, 6).

Even though being the founder of Critical Theory, Horkheimer and the other members of the Institute didn't admit the scientific epistemology of Social democratic and Communist orthodoxies; they didn't alienate themselves from Marxism. Horkheimer stressed that he didn't mean to reduce economy into culture, but he emphasized the reciprocity of these two. Both Gramsci and the members of the School took culture as the heart of their critique, and the former developed the notion of Cultural Hegemony, while the latter developed the notion of Culture Industry linked to the massification of culture. Cultural hegemony shows how social institutions impose socio-political domination by forces like fascism, communism and state market. Furthermore, the analyses of culture industry by the Institute, where the theories of hegemony and ideology were developed further, exposed new forms of state power under the topics of fascism, Russian Communism and state capitalism. Hence, Frankfurt School developed a critical approach to cultural studies and stressed how “domination” is used by certain groups in media to industrialize the mass-produced culture, while Gramsci's contribution to Marxist terminology, the cultural hegemony, developed a critical approach signifying the domination of the civil institutions. Both Gramsci and the members of the Institute used the instruments of culture to shatter the submission of fascist culture and society. They developed their theories not

only in the field of culture but also in other various fields such as politics, philosophy, sociology and so forth.

The growing proletarianization of modern man and the formation of the masses are the two different but much related aspects of the same process. Fascism, without changing the property structure, attempts to organize the newly created proletarian masses. The masses must have the right to change the property relations. However, although fascism gives them the chance to express themselves, it doesn't give them the right to change it. As an expanding field, Culture Industry, enables art to reach the masses. The distribution of art to the masses makes it a mode of commodity and a good way of consumption. When art becomes a part of consumption in monopoly systems, the distribution of art is controlled by the authority. Hence aesthetics and art have been used by the ruling classes and fascist regimes to reinforce their hegemony. Benjamin states that the result of fascism is the introduction of aesthetics into political life (Benjamin, 251). While European fascism was experienced by the members of the School as the Nazis' instrument of mass culture to encourage submission to fascist society and culture, it was experienced as the dominant instrument producing ideological legitimation of existing institutions by Gramsci.

After the World War I, the world market's increasing difficulties of utilisation and the labour movement's protective and defensive policy towards social legislation caused an obstacle to the development of the productive forces without any pressure on human needs. The totalitarian control over social and individual relations was required, and roots of

fascism were constructed between the contradiction of the industrial monopolisation and the democratic system (Marcuse, 410). The daily struggle of the working class weakened the anti-fascist movement and disappointed the ones who believed in revolution.

“After the outbreak of the world economic crisis, there was a wave of fascist counter-revolution. The split in the working-class movement, which ended in mutually embittering both camps, made them defenceless against fascism, the further advance of which was clearly only going to be blocked if the two rivals would at least unite to defend democracy” (Abendroth, 100).

Establishing the hierarchy, the emergence of centralised control split up the contact between state and the mass, which caused pseudo-democratic mass democracy and culture industry. Cultural hegemony, by disguising the class hierarchy, was exposed as equal exchanges while reinforcing the ruling culture. Popular and standardized culture was imposed by the bourgeoisie and the ruling class for the sake of the mass, and its production and diffusion were their concern in the forthcoming totalitarian ideology. In every living part of society- schools, family, churches, factories- in short, in civil society, the centralized control limited the way of life, the way of thought, the way of act, and the way of critique, which would be reflected in art.

While the 19th century became the age of the highest degree of historical experience, research and interpretation of the new critical philosophy of history, the 20th century was dragging back to the 18th century materialism.

Under these circumstances, the political theory was considered under the heading of political sociology, and multidimensional cultural criticism and analyses of cultural production, consumption, domination were developed. When natural science was in its golden age, German and Italian (but also French) thinkers attempted to replace nature by culture, science by history on the basis of their philosophical concerns (Piccone, x). The major theorists of the School

“...judged the movement from autonomous though undemocratic “art for art sake” (the cultivation of high culture as an end in itself) to a mass culture produced and manipulated by culture industries in exactly the same terms as Kirkheimer did the changing structure of political compromise: as the surrender of the last aspects of individual autonomy, as the preparation of key elements of the fascist system.” (Arato, 12).

Manipulation of the masses through culture was the biggest and the strongest instrument for the fascist system, where people are deceived by the pseudo feeling of changing the system while reinforcing the strength of bourgeoisie in reality.

1.2. The Institute for Social Research

The Institute for Social Research (the Frankfurt School) was officially established in 1923, by the left-wing German-Jewish intellectuals from upper and upper-middle classes of German society. The scholars, from different disciplines, aimed to construct a theoretical critique of modern

capitalism by revealing the social contradictions of the capitalist societies and their ideology. The need for an innovative Marxist theory by the analysis of the theory-praxis relationship can be seen as a response to the WWI, the unexpected success of Bolshevik Revolution and the creation of the third Weimer Republic¹. The power relations began to change, the success of the Bolsheviks gave rise to certain discussions and different approaches towards Marxism emerged. The institute refreshed the Western European Marxism by unifying theory and praxis: self creating action. The criticism of the orthodox Marxism and the conventional approaches - economic determinist analysis concentrating merely on the base- were the focus of the members' theoretical approach. Even though the members agreed on the purpose of the Institute, there were major differences among the members, which is highly expectable considering the variety of fields they were focused on. They reformulated the German idealist thought and placed history at the centre of their approach. The school was engaged in the critique of Enlightenment to extend human freedom by criticising scientific and rational progress. The positivist approach, which finds natural science adequate to explain cognitive structures, was seen as an obstacle to human emancipation. Accordingly, the criticism of positivism was the heart of the critical theory. Distancing itself from orthodox Marxism, the Institute emphasised the importance of culture and ideology and abstained from the emphasis upon economy. Although all of them

¹ Weimer republic is the name given by historians to the parliamentary republic established in 1919 in Germany to replace the imperial form of government. The name *Weimar Republic* was never used officially during its existence. Despite its political form, the new republic was still known as *Deutsches Reich* in German.

believed that all knowledge is historically conditioned, they also thought that truth claims could be rationally determined independently of social interests.

Tom Bottomore distinguished four periods for the Institute: The first is between 1923-1933 as the establishment of the Institute and the embodying of the critical theory, the second is that of exile in North America from 1933 to 1950, the third starts from the return to Germany in 1950 and follows the emergence of “new left” and the Institute’s great influence in the late 60’s. The last period of the Frankfurt School starts with Jürgen Habermas’ original contributions in a renewed critique of the conditions of possibility of social knowledge, and in reappraisals of Marx’s theory of history and of modern capitalism (Bottomore, 13). The key figures of the Institute are Max Horkheimer (philosopher, sociologist and social psychologist), Theodor Adorno (philosopher, sociologist, musicologist), Herbert Marcuse (philosopher), Frederick Pollock (economist), Franz Neumann (political scientist), Eric Fromm (psychoanalyst, social psychologist) and in the outer circle of the Institute, Walter Benjamin (literary critic and essayist).

This study’s main concern –while comparing the members’ approaches with Gramsci- is to overview both The School’s and Gramsci’s sociological and philosophical approach and their contributions to the new left as the critics of orthodox Marxism, mainly in the early period of the School, and the imprisonment years of Gramsci, and the emergence of

Critical Social Theory, emphasising the importance of cultural and sociological analysis of the superstructure.

1.3. Antonio Gramsci

Antonio Gramsci was born in 1891 in Sardinia. His parents were literate in an area of 90 per cent illiteracy. His father was arrested on suspicion of peculation and sentenced to nearly six years of imprisonment and his mother had to bring up seven children. He had to give up school to earn money when he was in primary school and at the same time he had a health problem, malformation of the spine, which would cause a hunchback when he grew up.

The social protest wave in Sardinia was repressed by troops from mainland and that military and legal repression ignited Sardinian nationalism. Gramsci, in that period, was affected by the nationalist notions till he left the town. During his university education in Turin, he lost his interest in nationalism but never lost his interest in peasant problems and the complex dialectic of class and regional factors (Hoare and Smith, xix). Along those years he was engaged in journalism and political activism. He was an active member of the Italian Socialist Party and became one of the founders of the Italian Communist Party. The triumph of fascism in Italy in the 20's actuated his politics. He provided an alternative both to fascism and to the mistakes of the left by constructing a progressive politics, especially by developing the concept of hegemony. When he was arrested

and sentenced to 20 years of imprisonment in violation of parliamentary immunity in 1926, he was an elected parliamentary deputy. He never stopped writing during the eleven-year imprisonment and left a collection called *Prison Notebooks*.

Besides his political life and the political theories he developed, Gramsci was engaged with Hegelianised “philosophy of praxis”. He used “philosophy of praxis” partly as a euphemism to deceive the censor in the prison. The first Italian Marxist Antonio Labriola introduced Gramsci to Marxism and his interpretation of history, and his differentiation from Hegelian school by his insistence on the primacy of concrete relations over consciousness had a great influence on Gramsci’s theoretical establishment. The essence of Marxism, established between theoretical and practical activity and the unity of philosophy and history, is the origin of Gramsci’s approach (Hoare and Smith, xxi). He defined hegemony as a cultural and ideological means in society where the dominant groups maintain their dominance by the spontaneous consent of subordinate groups. Subordinate groups, in his theory, accept the ideas, values and leadership of the dominant groups because they have their own reasons, not because they are forced to it. It is the civil society’s consent that produces cultural hegemony by the institutions involving cultural production and consumption.

Gramsci draws attention to the political strategies by using an analog with military terms. “War of position” is a term used for more complex societies, in which the hegemony of the dominant groups easily

participates civil institutions in Western societies. “War of movement” (manoeuvre) refers to a frontal and direct attack on enemy as in the Bolshevik revolution. Gramsci suggested that, the war of position is needed for revolutionary forces to invade civil society, not the “State”. The Gramscian approach’s predominant argument about the intellectuals is grounded on the theory of hegemony which is produced by intellectuals.

This context calls for the introduction and classification of the notions of the ruling classes and the subaltern² classes within the perspective of Gramsci. The history of the ruling classes is the history of States and of groups of States. However this historical unity of the ruling classes is not only juridical and political, it is also in the organic relations between State or political society and civil society. Subaltern classes are not unified or cannot unite until they are able to become “State”. Their history is intertwined with that of civil society and with the history of states. The history of parties of the subaltern groups is very complex, because they include the elements of hegemonic groups or of the other subaltern groups which undergo such hegemony. The birth of new parties of hegemonic groups intended to conserve the assent of subaltern groups and to maintain control over them. Subaltern groups are always subject to the activity of ruling groups even when they rebel and rise up. In order to become State, subaltern groups have to give up the idea of taking over the state but obtain the active and passive consent of the civil society. (Gramsci, 1998; 52-55)

² He uses the military term “subaltern” as a code of peasant classes to deceive the prison control. He believed that communist revolution in Italy could not be possible if the peasantry classes were ignored.

It can explicitly be inferred from this that the organic intellectuals could provide the basis of proletarian culture for the permanent victory or revolution and for invading civil society through the war of position. Otherwise, victory becomes temporary through the war of manoeuvre.

Gramsci rejected crude dialectical materialism, and he attempted to reformulate the doctrine of historical materialism which allows room both for the influence of ideas on history and for the impact of the individual human will. Cultural influences enabled him to develop his doctrine of hegemony. The rule of one class over another doesn't depend on the economic and physical power but depends on consent which works by persuading the ruled to accept the system and to share social, cultural values. Culture, education and philosophy were more central to Gramsci than Trotsky and he was more involved in political practice than Lukacs (Joll, 8). The participation of the masses in the political decisions of party was also his concern. His emphasis on and awareness of the importance of cultural factors indicated how to form revolutionary organizations with effective leadership and real participation.

1.4. The Weimer Republic and the German Working Class

The monopolistic economy and the production process exposed the need of capitalism and the dictatorship of the production to reproduce itself. In the Weimar Republic the task of smashing capitalism resulted in failure, and fascism took power.

In England with the Puritan Revolution in 1642 and in France with the French Revolution in 1789, the feudal lords disappeared and new land owners with capitalistic economic methods, peasant proprietors, appeared. The transition in Germany was slow and it left old feudal lords in possession of their land.

“The feudal element was so strong that in the Germany of this period even the workers on the land could not be confidently included in the working class... In other words, the working class in Germany during the period under review was still relatively small, as whole groups of workers which in England and France formed part of it were missing. Also, they began their development two generations later than in England and one generation later than in France, since important feudal ties did not fall away until much later, between 1805 and 1810.” (Kuczynski, 212 - 213).

The above quote suggests that the German working class movement faced the most difficult situation throughout Europe because of the influence of the fascist regime’s power and of the feudal elements.

“The fascist regime’s control of society had gone furthest in Germany. Up to the outbreak of war about 225,000 Germans had been condemned for political reasons and were given prison sentences totalling 600,000 years. About ninety per cent of the condemned belonged to the labour movement. In April 1939, according to Gestapo figures, almost 168,000 Germans were being detained in concentration and internment camps, 112,500 were serving prison sentences, and 27,500 were being held in custody. Most of these were political prisoners, and the vast majority were members of the labour movement.” (Abendroth, 117).

Vast capitals were accumulated in Germany following the WWI, the establishment of the Weimar republic, and the imperialist Treaty of Versailles. Large enterprises bought out smaller ones at ridiculously low prices, and debts were paid off with worthless currency. Thus the growth of monopoly advanced rapidly. The operating capital at the republic's capitalist base was lacking, thus after the First World War, defeated Germany with its working class became a high capacity production center for the US. With the Dawes Plan of August 1924, huge loans were taken. Consequently, mass production in Germany was taken up on a monopoly base. "The profits that German monopoly capitalism had to generate were thus phenomenal, as were the concomitant burdens to be shouldered by the country's working class." (Slater, 18). Paying out the reparations of the WWI to the Americans was a double burden for the working class. That means that recovery of the economy had to be the burden of the working class. The parallel rise of the accident-rate was observed depending on both the number of workers and the low level of wages. Between 1924 and 1930 the rise of the wages was misleading, because first of all, that rise was even lower than the substance-minimum and the second, it was taken back soon. The deduction from the wage packet rose 200 per cent between 1924 and 27, 300 per cent by 1932, and accordingly, second job or working over-time became urgent even though Social Democrats defended the principle of eight-hour per day working condition. The rationalization and the American production techniques in the German factories went along with the reduced number of workers and much hard work. The

unemployment rate between 1924 and 1932 was higher than pre-war years, and in the second half of the 20's up to one-tenth of workers were only temporarily employed. This miserable condition of the working class could have been diminished by some social welfare in the Weimar Republic, but there was no attempt to mend the unemployment because the government was unable to determine the rate of unemployment and the short-time employment was never appreciated. The fund set up after 1927 was sufficient for the one third of the 3 million unemployed excluding short-time workers (Slater, 18-19).

Both the Reformists and the Communists were impotent to deal with the world economic crisis. On the one hand, the reformist unions, had faith in bourgeois democracy while they had distrust of potentially revolutionary extra-parliamentary mass actions, on the other hand, the communists were alienated from the factory workers because they had attacked their reformist organisations and because they found no reality in their abstract demands for action. KPD became almost exclusively the party of the unemployed, and it was incapable of organizing real struggle for power. Because the working class, which was appeared to have no more political strength, the middle class, white-collar workers and civil servants throughout Europe, began to lay their hopes on fascism.

“In both Germany and Great Britain, Europe's most important industrial countries, the two largest parties of the Second International participated in governments which kept wages and social progress stagnant during a period of economic

prosperity. One of the reasons for this anomalous situation was that they allowed their hands to be tied by bourgeois parties; the SPD by its coalition parties, and the Labour Party by the Liberals whose vote they relied on in Parliament. Secondly both parties regarded themselves as guardians of a paternalistic and only apparently democratic tradition of public welfare, based on the passivity of the masses, ignoring the great concentrations of capitalist wealth and the ruses of the market system, and obeying bourgeois law and political science” (Abendroth, 91).

The miserable conditions of the working class and the hypocrisy of the so-called left parties continued till the final phase of the Second World War. The living standards of the German workers had fallen considerably, and after the end of the war they fell even further. The German workers were only occupied with daily struggle for their existence, and they were unable to develop their own political strategy.

1.5. Coming of Fascism and the Italian Working Class

After the WWI, most of the workers and socialists thought that the revolution was inevitable. However in 1921, by the time PCI was founded, the workers lost their confidence in the possibility of revolution. The economic, social and political crisis and the end of war resulted in the rise of the Fascist regime, and during the Two Red Years and the rise of Fascism, trade unions increased their membership. This increase in membership numbers empowered the faith in the success of socialist

movement. Peasants and landless labourers began to demand land reform while the industrialists and middle classes were dragged to Mussolini's view because of the strikes and the economic crisis based on these strikes (Joll, 36).

There were no ruling class parties; the country was governed by makeshift coalitions of parliament. The lira lost 80 per cent of its value between 1914 and 1920, and the budgetary deficit rose from 214 million in 1914-1915 to 23.345 million in 1918-1919 with the tax burden falling on the petite bourgeois.

“Wheat production fell from 52 million quintals in 1911-1913 to 38 million in 1920, and 40 percent of the balance of payment deficit was accounted for by food imports; production dropped after the war by 40 percent in the engineering industries 20 percent chemicals, 15 percent mining, etc.; coal prices were over 16 times higher in 1920 than they had been in 1913” (Hoare and Smith, xxxv).

Turin was the most industrialized region in Italy and was the red capital of Italy. Fiat was the biggest producer of Tractors in Europe and its workers increased from 4.000 in 1913 to 20.000 in 1918. Turin's population rose from 4.000.000 in 1911 to 5.000.000 in 1918 (30 per cent of them were industrial workers) (Hoare and Smith, xxv). In Turin, there were two influences on the socialists: One is Salvemmi, the other one is Mussolini, who was the editor of *Avanti!* and the acknowledged leader of the party's left-wing. Salvemmi was opposed to the imperialist expansion into Libya and supported the unity of South and North. Mussolini who was an

opponent of all forms of militarism in that period won the admiration and loyalty of younger generation gradually.

PCI was formed in the first period of fascist terror. In April 1921 the communists won 290.000 votes in the general elections, while the socialists won over a million and a half. The number of party members was around 40.000 and 98 per cent of it were workers and less than 0.5 per cent were intellectuals. PSI signed a pacification pact with the fascists, for it was opposed to any armed resistance against fascism. When Mussolini marched to Rome in October 1922, PCI couldn't get any response to their call for a general strike. Even though resistance against fascists was more powerful in PCI than other left parties, the number of members dropped about 25.000 (Hoare and Smith, liii-liv). The fascist power almost crushed all opponent parties by a wave of repression. In a week the police arrested more than 5.000 comrades, including all communist trade union organizers, local councillors, and secretaries.

“The Revolutionary Party”, according to Gramsci, was the only force to play in such a complex internal life in Italy and party leadership gained importance in this conflicting situation. On the one hand there was growing unpopularity of the war, and on the other hand there was increasing militancy of industrial workers. These conflicting situations created the maximalism (centrism) which was the most important expression in German USPD until the left was crushed by fascism (Hoare and Smith, xxvii). As a deputy of communist party, even though he was formerly influenced by nationalism, Gramsci believed in the importance of

a revolutionary party as a resistance to fascism. Since he always rejected obedience, and indifferent attitude, he sometimes got into a conflict with the communist party, because he believed that revolutionary party must be based on a specific class consciousness and must be free from bourgeois ideology. However fascism was not different from other bourgeois ideologies and Catholicism. They keep their social and economic position by destroying what they have built. They struggle for maintaining authority by constructing a mass organization.

The success of the Third Reich upheld the fascist movement elsewhere in Europe. The right-wing bourgeois parties saw no acceptable alternative but fascism for Germany, and they hoped to steer the Reich's expansionism against the USSR. At the same time, the pushing effect of the Catholicism under the name of Vatican and the Holy Roman Empire shouldn't be ignored. Vatican had shown that, with its collaboration with the Italian and the German fascist governments in 1929 and 1933, it was by no means fundamentally opposed to fascism, and Vatican policy influenced that of the Catholic Right throughout Europe (Abendroth, 96).

The small quantity of industrial proletariat in the North West of Italy made it necessary to construct a hegemonic alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry and petty bourgeois intellectuals. The northern industrialists and the southern landowners, cemented by petty bourgeois consent, constituted the backbone of fascist power according to Gramsci (Forgacs and Smith, 196). Although he knew that making revolution popular was not as straightforward as making fascism popular, Gramsci never lost his faith in

gaining mass support of the peasants and of the proletariat to make revolution popular under pessimistic circumstances.

2. THEORY OF CULTURE

2.1. Culture Industry and Critical Theory

Critical Theory, which is occasionally called “Cultural Critique”, is mainly produced by the thinkers associated with the Frankfurt School in the early 1930’s. Cultural Critique is mainly developed by Kant’s critique of reason and the critical reconstruction of Enlightenment, and it is “characterized as an ongoing dialectical interpretation of philosophy and empirical research, a form of ‘philosophically oriented social inquiry’ ” (McCarthy, 127). The Frankfurt School privileged culture, as it is the curial part of the “totally administered society” to decipher the general social tendencies. While the modern age cultivates individuality, it also drags the individual to the totally administered society. That is to say, the reification and the rationalization of the social life result in the decline of the individual and create pseudo-individuality, which is the fundamental issue of the cultural critique of the School. Under the fascist, communist and capitalist systems of domination, the individual loses meaning in oneself and finds its existence only as part of a totality as opposed to the idea of the autonomous individual. Administration and domination takes place in all spheres of social life as a consequence of rationalization, and domination pulls back the fragmented self into a consistent unity. The individual, then,

can survive as long as he adapts to the technical apparatus of the administered society which he actually serves.

Critical theory is the criticism of western rationality and positivism. It analyzes the cultural forms that are located in the contradictions of the rules and the system. Immanent critique as opposed to transcendent critique is used as a tool to analyze positivism, Enlightenment and popular culture. Immanent critique aims to show that the object of its investigation belongs to a historical process. By this way the self understanding of the object itself and its actual conditions is revealed. Rather than seeing itself as a historical stage, Enlightenment tends to totalize itself, and to dominate everything. The task of critical philosophy here is “not the conservation of the past, but the redemption of the hopes of the past.” (Horkheimer and Adorno).

Science and technique are integrated, and instrumental reasoning is the ideal of Enlightenment. What happened in history is the failure of substantive rationality and the victory of the instrumental rationality. Therefore thinking has become incapable of seeing objectivity or begun seeing it as a delusion. As opposed to instrumental rationality, Critical Theorists went for substantive rationality, because instrumental reasoning pays little attention to whether the ends are rational; it only cares about the means. The members, especially Horkheimer and Adorno, claimed that capitalism was just a manifestation of Instrumental Reason. Therefore, while they were critical of capitalism at first, they eventually took instrumental reason as the primary issue about what they were against.

The aim of critical theory was the liberation of humanity from the condition of alienation. The members of the Frankfurt School sought ethical and political objectives. They aimed to achieve these by revealing the alienated untruth of modern culture, showing that a more fulfilling and authentic social order is possible. The school rejected the distinction between facts and values, between how things “are” and “ought to be”. They refused to respect Descartes’ dualistic conception of the self as a composite of quite distinct mental and physical elements, which they took to be a form of idealism. Rejecting the dualistic conception of the self, distinction between mental and physical elements, Critical Thinkers supported that thought could be self-sufficient, taking place independently in material world. Hence, thought can only be understood as the product of collective social process and praxis.

Critical Theory performed an immanent critique of modern western society, and it was concerned predominantly with the scientific criticism and the criticism of Enlightenment. The aim of Critical Theory was the liberation of humanity from the condition of alienation. Critical thinkers aimed to achieve these by revealing the alienated untruth of modern culture, showing that a more fulfilling and authentic social order is possible.

Horkheimer and Adorno, for David Held, discuss several issues in Critical Theory. These are; the idea of myth and its relation with the narration of Beginning, myths in Greek Culture, domination of nature, domination of

humanity over nature, and development of capitalism and its systematic exploitation of the new forms of knowledge (Held, 153-154). The concept of rationalism had become the predominant and irresistible organizing principle in modern western societies. Consequently, the more social life is organized according to rationalized principles, the fewer individuals can exercise choices, freedom, and spontaneity in their life.

Enlightenment distances itself from its initial ideals of morality, autonomy, individuality and freedom, and it leaves no place for justifying ideals by leading to an empiricist kind of science and being concerned only with facts. Thus, ideals turn into myths themselves. Positivism always claims that facts are proven by scientific data. The objective concept, the norm (value) loses its sense as being an object. That is to say, the norms are explained in the sense of scientific facts. Therefore positivism cannot explain the norms and values in its notion, because they are not concrete and absolute as the facts.

Encountering with a situation where the working class movement coincided with the rise of fascism, Frankfurt School emphasized the importance of culture and ideology and their pessimistic view towards the prospects of the working class and social revolution. They were pessimistic about not only the pacified working class who are valued only as customers in capitalist society but also the pacified individuals absorbed by social control and scientific rationality. The consciousness of the masses including their tastes and preferences are shaped and moulded by the culture industry which secures capitalism and encourages obedience to

authority, so that standardized individualization is inculcated by the desire for false needs suppressing the true needs. Generating vast amount of wealth, false needs manipulate real needs as waste production. False needs are the ones given as the real (true) needs under the unconscious obedience to authority. True needs are deflected by the false needs, which are shaped by the industry, and prevented to be felt and needed as real.

The concept of Culture Industry emphasizes the relevance of the theory of culture to capitalism. The commodity fetishism is inextricable with the production of commodities and the circulation of products, which dominates social relations in capitalist society. The term Culture Industry refers to both the super structure and the base in Marxian terminology, as cultural forms of life are considered as super structure and the term industry refers to economy as the base. “The use value of art, its mode of being, is treated as a fetish; and the fetish, the work’s social rating (misinterpreted as its artistic status) becomes its use value- the only quality which is enjoyed.” (Horkheimer and Adorno, 158) Use value is alienated and art is fetishized by the customers who are treated as commodity in the concept of culture industry. It makes every cultural item just another commodity in the principle of capitalist market. It not only makes individuals and the masses commodity, it also makes the individuals fetishize the commodities. As Adorno states “The customer is not king, as the culture industry would have us believe, not its subject but its object” (Adorno, 99)

The ideology of Culture Industry is so powerful that obedience is replaced by the consciousness of the individual, which resembles the unfortunate termination and the inaccurate dream of Enlightenment. Enlightenment and myth are a unity of opposites; both of them find their roots in the same basic needs: self-preservation and fear (Held, 154). The fear of the unknown is also a way to dominate oneself, the society and nature, causing self-destruction, totalitarianism and destruction of nature respectively.

“For in its figures mythology had the essence of the status quo: cycle, fate, and domination of the world reflected as the truth and deprived of hope...In the most general sense of progressive thought the Enlightenment has always aimed at liberating men from fear and establishing their sovereignty. Yet the fully enlightened earth radiates disaster triumphant.” (Horkheimer and Adorno, 2-3).

While the means of Enlightenment was to emancipate reason and the fear of unknown, it controlled the faculty of human. However, Enlightenment betrayed reason and became antagonist to reason. The positivist approach is not regarded as a form of knowledge under modernity, it is rather considered to be knowledge itself. As Foucault indicated, “power and knowledge directly imply each other” (Foucault, 174). Being an objectifying theory,³ Enlightenment holds reality as an object without

³ Objectification is the process by which abstract concepts like values and senses are treated as if they were concrete things or physical objects to be examined. In this sense the term is synonym to reification. Objectification also commonly refers to the regarding of a person as 'a thing' or 'a machine.'

paying attention to its historicity and it fails to grasp the constitutive relationship between theory and reality. “The new science established a purely rational, ideational world as the only true reality. It understood the world as a scientific universe which could be systematically comprehended only by science itself.” (Held, 160). Science and rationality eradicate human freedom instead of extending it through scientific and rational progress. Thought and mathematics have been thrown into confusion and mechanic and automatic thinking is replaced by the impersonation of machine. The more one is rationalized, the more one becomes dependent on society instead of being free. Scientific knowledge is the potential instrument which can be used to master nature, and science is the key to the control of nature of human beings. Enlightenment annihilates itself because individuality erodes where Enlightenment brings “reason” and it detaches subject and nature. In the end, this absolute separation- disparity causes the reification of the human being, and men learn how to use nature to dominate the others.

As a consequence of rationalization, domination under the fascist, communist and capitalist systems, takes place in all spheres of social life and the individuality loses its meaning and finds sense only as a part of a totality which contradicts the idea of the autonomous individual. Domination here pulls back the fragmented self into a consistent unity. The individual, then, can survive only in the administered society which he actually serves. The evolution of machines turns into the domination of machines, yet the division of labour as a consequence of industrial

revolution and the capitalist mode of production cause the regression of mankind. According to Horkheimer, the social division of labor determines the social role and the structural limits which constrains the self-consciousness of the scientific professional

“Mankind whose versatility and knowledge become differentiated with the division of labor, is at the same time forced back to to anthropologically more primitive stages, for with technical easing of the life persistence of domination brings about a fixation of the instincts by means of heavier repression” (Horkheimer and Adorno, 35)

Culture and art cannot be free from ideology, according to the members of the School. Furthermore, for Adorno, art cannot be free because it is tied to its heritage. Reflecting the society and the culture, art cannot be original and pure, but absorbing them in itself, it can be genuine. What makes art genuine is its ideology, not the form and style and technique which are integrated with science in Enlightenment. For Adorno, great artists keep their mistrust towards style

“In the culture industry the notion of genuine style is seen to be aesthetic equivalent of domination... Style represents a premise in every work of art. That which is expressed is subsumed through style into the dominant forms of generality, into the language of music, painting, or words, in the hope that it will be reconciled thus with the idea of true generality.” (Horkheimer and Adorno, 130).

Culture Industry enables men to adopt the system which dominates men and nature. Repetition is justified by the industry, and it adjusts mind and

universality assuring domination. Repeated forms of music tones, repeated styles of arts soothe the mind and the radicalization of art is blocked. Adorno also argues in *Culture Industry* that the repetitiveness and selfsameness of modern mass culture weaken the individual resistance. (Adorno, 160)

Adorno claims that art and society are placed at different ends of a negative dialectic as the enemies of each other. Art symbolizes the hope for another society as long as it is autonomous and it becomes an area of utopia which cannot reside in this system. As such, it gains the position of both immanent and transcendental critique of the society where it takes part. Dwelling in society, it guarantees its position in immanent critique and at the same time, keeping the utopia and “the other” in itself, it guarantees the position of the transcendental critique (Dellaloğlu, 27). It doesn't necessarily reflect society, but even if it is the part of this society, it needs to be autonomous.

There are some disagreements about mass culture among the members of the Institute. Benjamin believed that the loss of the aura of high art through the expansive distribution of the Industry could bring political consciousness by scrutinizing the world, whereas Adorno criticizes the loss of aura and the loss of aesthetic quality as standardization and mechanical production. The majority of the members of the Frankfurt School shared the idea that the authentic art could preserve individuality. However for Benjamin, it is a revolutionary impact of mechanical

production to destroy the elitist aura of art, while Horkheimer was opposed to mass culture as argued in “Art and Mass Culture” (Kellner, 124-127).

“In *Dialectic of Enlightenment*” the task Horkheimer and Adorno set themselves was nothing less than to discover “why mankind, instead of entering into a truly human condition, is sinking into a new kind of barbarism” (Horkheimer and Adorno, xi). They highlighted the rise of the domination of instrumental reason and the domination of nature. *Dialectic of Enlightenment* does not present a systematic reconstruction of history but develops a contribution to a philosophy of history because systematic philosophies of history tend to distort history (Held, 149). According to Horkheimer and Adorno belief systems like Christianity imposed fixed ideas and universal recipes.

“Christianity, idealism, and materialism, which in themselves contain truth, are ... also responsible for the barbaric acts perpetrated in their name. As representatives of power – even if of power for good – they themselves became historical forces which could be organised, and as such played a bloody role in the true history of the human race: that of the instruments of organization.” (Horkheimer and Adorno, 224).

Their Philosophy of history aims to break all closed systems of thought. That is to say it is a critique of all belief systems that disregard society and only focus on its completeness and organization.

In 1930’s Critical Theory arose as a historical theory of the modern age and of capitalist modernity that represents new stages of capitalist

development. Appraising some positive contributions of modernity, the members evaluate the development of capitalist monopoly and the authoritarian ideologies and institutions of liberal capitalism as the cause of deformation of the whole social structure (Aranowitz, xviii). Critical Theory allows us to comprehend the totalizing view of the world and the “deductive chain of thought”. The traditional concept of theory explains historical events with the formulated knowledge of particular events and happenings. It is based on scientific activity conducted through the division of labour. The cultural and institutional feature of a society is ultimately an expression of the mode of production and relations of production on which the society is founded. The traditional idea of theory is based on scientific activity carried on within the division of labor. It corresponds to the activity of the scholar which has no clear connection with the social function. In this view, theory functions in the isolated sphere and it takes practical applications as alienated and external concepts.

The new structures of bourgeois thought don't assess the world as god given but as being produced, which produces new powers of control over man. Justice, equality, and freedom are placed, by the bourgeois order, at the centre of political and moral philosophy as universal ideals. Critical theory aims to assess the contradiction between the bourgeois order's ideas and reality (Held, 183). Critical theory or a dialectical social theory opposes to positivist social science in three main points, for Bottomore: that positivist social science treats human beings as mere facts and objects

in the scheme of mechanical determinism, that it perceives the world as given in experience, and that it establishes an absolute distinction between facts and values (Bottomore, 16). That is to say, Critical Theory never situates the general as the determinate of the particular; on the contrary the relation between the general accounts and the particular situation is best viewed as the reciprocal influence and mutual coherence rather than a one way determination in either direction. (McCarthy, 134).

2.2. Cultural Hegemony and Cultural Critique

Gramsci's approach to literary criticism was always historical. He was deeply involved in historical as well as political critique, because the concept of culture is never theoretically defined by Gramsci. Culture was used as a middle term not only for the world of art and study, but also for society and politics. His concept of culture was richer than the socialists of his generation. What interests him in art is its complex superstructure of social formation.

In the Socialist Party, in Italy, there were two distinguished groups as culturists and anti-culturists. Whereas culturists supported that there should be given priority to cultural activities, anti-culturists called these proposals "bourgeois". These cultural discussions led Gramsci pose the question of "what form a specifically proletarian culture might take, how it is related to bourgeoisie culture, and how it can be practically organized" (Forgacs and Smith, 18). Gramsci defines culture as "exercise of thought,

acquisition of general ideas, habit of connecting causes and effects” (Gramsci, 1985, 25). For him, everybody is cultured because everybody thinks, everybody connects ‘causes’ and ‘effects’. But they are empirically, primordially cultured, not organically. He sees culture as the basic concept of socialism because it makes the vague concept of freedom of thought concrete.

Gramsci criticizes Italians for their lack of the ability to generalize because of the deficiency in tradition of democratic life. By “generalization”, he doesn’t mean universality, he means carrying different activities instead of doing what the majority do. Gramsci wrote that in England and in Germany, there were and are powerful organizations of proletarian and socialist culture but in Italy, “the Italian populace lacks the spirit of disinterested solidarity, love of free discussion, the desire to discover the truth with uniquely human means, which reason and intelligence provide” (Gramsci, 1985, 23). He linked this socio-historical remark to Catholicism, and asserted that in history, and in social life nothing is fixed and rigid or definite (Gramsci, 1985, 31).

Gramsci stressed the importance of education and new relations between intellectual and industrial work to collaborate mental and manual labour in the Factory Councils. He used the term “proletarian culture” which is derived from prolekult, the organization set up in Petrograd and Moscow in 1917-18. With the notion of prolekult, he emphasised the inevitable position of organic intellectuals to educate proletariat.

“For Gramsci, the notion of proletarian culture is related to his vindication of a historically superior proletarian morality, based on productive work, collaboration and responsible personal relations, as well as his belief in a new kind of educational system in which the division between manual and intellectual labour is superseded” (Forgacs and Smith, 18).

Gramsci’s criticism of culture and art had to be generally limited with language and literature after his captivity in prison. For example, about serial novels, which constitute a powerful factor in the formation of mentality and morality of people especially on women and young people, he stated that they decline literature, with some exceptions. The serial novels, according to Gramsci, have banal form and stupid content, and they have completely lost their character and style. These novels became a rather nauseating commodity and he wrote about the procedure of these commodities and its developing industry. He indicates his discomfort of the dreadful effect of the industry as it is:

“The great majority of its suppliers no longer write their own works. They distribute ‘plots’ to the poor devils who have to extract an infinite number of chapters from them. They pay at two, three or four soldi a line what the newspapers will pay a lira and sometimes more for. Often these authors also patch up novels brought to them by poor starving devils. Someone has even set up an office with a staff that makes novels to measure” (Gramsci, 1985, 36).

Gramsci indicated in an article published in 1919 in *L’Ordine Nuovo* that greedy merchants destroy life and beauty more than the workers who were

thought to be the enemies of beauty and art. He accused the regime of traffickers who appreciate genius only when it is converted into monetary values, who have raised the forging of masterpieces to a national industry (Gramsci, 1985, 37).

Just like the Frankfurt School, Gramsci was against the degrading level of art for the sake of monetary value and capitalist regimen. He always supported, instead of lowering the level of art and the value of it, establishing and evaluating proletarian culture that can be the reign of beauty and grace when there is freedom, because he always believed that proletariat must organize itself, not only politically, and economically, but also culturally to win the intellectual power. To reach the stage of revolutionary development, proletariat needs to understand the full implications of the notion of 'ruling class'. He believed that there will be a proletarian culture totally different from the bourgeois one, and class distinctions will be shattered. Bourgeois careerism will be shattered and there will be a poetry, a novel, a theatre, a moral code, a language, a painting, a music peculiar to proletarian civilization (Gramsci, 1985, 41). Prolekult will destroy the present form of civilization. To destroy in this context doesn't mean the same as in the economic field, but same as in the spiritual hierarchies, prejudices, and traditions.

According to Gramsci, the Futurists⁴ application of destroying was an attempt without worrying the new creations reproducing the superiority of

⁴ Futurism was an art movement including painting, sculpture, ceramics, graphic design, industrial design, interior design, theatre, film, fashion, textiles, literature, music,

the superior that they destroyed. Yet, he interpreted the workers inclination (before the war) of Futurists' attack of cliques of professional artists and *littérateurs* as an unsatisfied need in the proletarian field. What the Futurists did was revolutionary in art when the socialists certainly did not have as precise an idea in politics and economics (Gramsci, 1985, 50-51). While socialists were afraid of destruction, futurists destroyed everything without worrying, which explains the revolutionist part of the Futurists and the reason why workers and some leftists had sympathy for them. After the war, the workers lost their interests in futurism partly because they had to fight for freedom with real weapons, and partly because the futurist movement lost its character.

Gramsci was against the monopolized notion of the theatre industry. While he was working for the socialist newspaper, *Avanti!*, a letter was received from Mr. Giovanni Chiarella, the owner of a theatre, about the column that Gramsci had written, entitled as "The Theatre Industry" in which he complained about the monopolistic goal of that industry about

architecture and even gastronomy. It originated in Italy in the early 20th century. It was largely an Italian phenomenon, though there were parallel movements in Russia, England and elsewhere.

The Italian writer Filippo Marinetti was its founder and most influential personality. He launched the movement in his Futurist Manifesto published on 5th February 1909. In it Marinetti expressed a passionate loathing of everything old, especially political and artistic tradition. The Futurists admired speed, technology, youth and violence, the car, the airplane and the industrial city, all that represented the technological triumph of humanity over nature, and they were passionate nationalists.

Although Futurism became identified with Fascism, it had leftist and anti-Fascist supporters. This association of fascists, socialists and anarchists in the Futurist movement can be understood in terms of the influence of George Sorel, whose ideas about the regenerative effect of political violence, and the influence of the late industrialism comparing to other European countries.

how it lowered aesthetic levels, and about the low payments of the artists while the industry itself was growing. He wrote in another column in the newspaper, as a reply, that they were concerned with the degeneration and destruction of values. Hence, Gramsci demonstrated that he was worried about the industrialized art and culture as was the case with the Frankfurt School. In an other article written in 22nd March, 1917, he wrote about deaf audiences who were passive against Henrik Ibsen's play, *A Doll House*. They didn't show any sympathy to the character who gives up her home, her husband and children to look for herself on her own and her moral being. It is the hypocrisy of men masking the essential spirit. He criticized that our traditional moral standards, which are made up by the high and petty bourgeoisie are used as a means to obedience to the environment (Gramsci, 1985, 71).

In cultural analysis De Sanctis, Croce, and Machiavelli had been of great influence on Gramsci. He shared De Sanctis's ideas about the positivist science's failure to integrate with the interests of popular class. The separation of science and people, and the differences between Renaissance and Reform led him to the description of hegemony as a relation between intellectual strata and the masses. Machiavelli's political involvement between Renaissance as a surface cultural reform, and the Reformation as a mass cultural movement from below led him to criticize Renaissance as a created cultural reform away from the masses.

Gramsci reached an opinion about Italian history as a cycle of divisions between intellectual activity and popular life. He saw Croce's separation of

“history of art” and “history of culture” as a contribution to the reinforcement of fascism. The division between the “artistic” and the “cultural” omitted the moments of struggle and concentrated on those of restoration and reform. Besides distinguishing art from culture and history, Croce distinguished art from politics. Consequently art, as a spiritual activity, detaches itself from the practical activity. Against Croce’s stabilization of bourgeois high culture, Gramsci is less concerned with why a work is beautiful in a fine art sense than with why it is read, what feelings it arouses and how it can act as an instrument of consent in the elaboration of a new culture. Nevertheless, Gramsci is evidently concerned not to relinquish the aesthetic as a distinct category. He always claimed that finding new culture is sophisticated and artistic manner. Whereas, for him, creating and fighting for art can mean finding new individual artists rather than finding a new culture. He always thought creating new culture is very artificial. New artist can be created, but we cannot talk about created poetic aura (Gramsci, 1985, 90-98). By saying that new culture cannot be created but be raised, he implies that he doesn’t give up believing that proletarian culture can be raised when there is faith in the aura of organic intellectuals. He distances himself from Croce’s approach, according to which philosophy of praxis excludes ethico-political history and moral and cultural leadership is unimportant. Moral and political content makes the work of art beautiful, not the form. This is what De Sanctis and Croce excluded. (Gramsci, 1985, 106-112).

3. MARXIST PERSPECTIVE

3.1. Political Consciousness

Marxism tends to be rooted in a primacy of production to explain social phenomena and trends in terms of the dynamics of commodity production and capital accumulation. Horkheimer, by contrast, tends to maintain the primacy of exchange - and thus distribution and circulation - over production, claiming that “The Critical Theory of society begins with abstract determinations; insofar as it deals with the present epoch, with a characterization of an economy based on exchange ” (Horkheimer, 225). At that time Orthodox Marxism explained the dynamics in the base structure and appended historical developments to economic developments. The School members were distant to the orthodox Marxian deterministic approach according to which base structure determines superstructure, and laws of history, embedded in the economy, determines the social life.

“Hegelian Marxists analysed capitalist society as a totality, as a system, and emphasized the relative autonomy of the superstructures and the importance of cultural and subjective factors in historical development” (Kellner, 11).

Critical Theorists admitted that dynamics of economy play an important role in constituting society and social life. However Marxian concepts of

commodity, value and exchange value characterize not only economics but also social relations governed by exchange relations. (Kellner, 47). The critical theorists extended both the concept of exchange (value), which dominates everything in capitalist society, and the interpretation of present in itself, which emancipates present from the established historical materialism. The interpretation of present is the interpretation of the causes of the developments and changes in terms of the sociological changes in society in addition to economical changes. Interpretation of the changes in society cannot only take start from the economical basis; otherwise the interpretation of the present cannot emancipate itself from the historically conditioned perspective, which leaves no place for human subjectivity.

“The latter interpretation of Marx corresponds, they argued, to a form of thought which Marx himself had rejected—‘contemplative materialism’, a materialism which neglected the central importance of human subjectivity. The traditional standpoint of orthodox Marxism, they maintained, fails to grasp the significance of examining both the objective condition of action and the ways in which these conditions are understood and interpreted” (Held, 21).

Adorno had understood that the collapse of the proletariat’s role as the concept of totalizing subject-object of history rendered the concept of totality problematic. At this point critical theorists, especially Marcuse and Eric Fromm, turned to psychology of history to explain the collapse of proletarian class and to indicate the reduction of the proletarian ego to id. Horkheimer affirms that traditional theory is an ideology which justifies and contributes to the reproduction of the status quo. For him, traditional

theory is the consequence of the need of justification of the capitalism itself (Hamilton, 56). Traditional conception of theory was so absolute that theory was grounded in the nature of knowledge or was justified in some ahistorical way. (McCarthy, 136). In the conception of traditional theory, the subject and object are kept apart as a consequence of bourgeois thought, which became a part of the inner nature of the scientific world. Traditional theory changes the theory if it doesn't fit its chosen facts. While Critical theory takes subject as a definite individual, bourgeois thought takes it as self centred. The object in Critical thinking is never isolated from the subject and theory. Subject is taken as both an individual and a collective subject. However in Modern age the individual and the collective subject and their own doings get blurred, because of the isolation of subject and object. In this sense, praxis becomes the crucial point of Critical Theory, because through praxis both the individual and the collective subjects realise their rationalities.

Critical theory made an attempt to clarify and revitalize the dialectical nature of Marxian theory in the category of praxis, in which some problems of ideology and critique, the perspective of totality, the sublation of philosophy and the genesis of knowledge were presented, while in their theoretical work, the members indicated that opposing forces in society must raise the level of self consciousness. Sublation is the negation of the negation; a negation that has a positive consequence. What is sublated is not reduced to nothing, but has a result that originated in what has been negated. For Hegel, a thing is negated by its opposite, and both are

removed from their immediacy but also preserved as items by a higher whole. Sublation of philosophy is the negation of modern thinking which originates in traditional thinking. As a consequence of this negation, the critical thinking, the opposing forces, emerge. Using immanent critique as a tool, critical thinking must keep social tensions alive for struggling. Social tension is the expression of revolutionary class struggle for the Critical theorists. Even if Horkheimer pictured a better world in the historical struggle and stated that action should be conceived as beyond thought, but penetrate theory, Frankfurt School's theory of praxis was in the theoretical category, not in a revolutionary struggle (Slater, 54). It cannot be concluded that they were indifferent to the problems of class struggle, yet the differentiated observations of the members which make difficult to evaluate their judgements, and their struggle in the theoretical category could be evaluated as a hinder. Horkheimer, explicitly referring to Marx or Lenin, seems to agree with the general conception of dynamic unity of party, theory and class. The proletariat's interest must be formed and directed by theory because there is no guarantee of correct awareness. The sharpness of a theory is reflected in a tension between the theoretician and the class (Slater, 57).

Critical theory functions neither in the isolated individual, nor in the sum-total of individuals, which are totally administered by society. It is rather in the individual's real relation to others and his conflict within other classes, that is to say, in his relationship with social totality and with nature that it functions (Horkheimer, 211). The illusion of the individual is caused

not only by standardization and by unquestioned identification with the generality. “The peculiarity of the self is a monopoly commodity determined by society; it is falsely represented as natural” (Horkheimer and Adorno 154).

Critical Theory aims to break the falsely represented understanding of nature and society. For Horkheimer, Critical theory:

“... is motivated today by the effort really to transcend the tension and to abolish the opposition between the individual’s purposefulness, spontaneity, and rationality, and those work-process relationships on which society is built” (Horkheimer, 210).

Horkheimer distinguished the critical intellectuals from and above the theoreticians of avant-garde even if some saw these two as one. Horkheimer defined Stalinism as a dissolution of the dictatorship, but he did not analyse this development in its historical context, and the Frankfurt School in the 30’s failed to develop a practical critique of the USSR (Slater, 57-62).

The authoritarian state was the term used since the 30’s in Frankfurt Schools’ terminology and used in an association with German fascism. Hitler’s solution in Weimer Germany raises the issue of the relationship between fascism and capitalism. German authoritarian state was seen as monopoly capitalism. Neumann and Pollock, who are the members of the School were mainly interested in economics, developed theories which mutually completed rather than opposing each other. Although misunderstood by Neumann, Pollock did not mean that state monopoly

capitalism referred to any monopoly ownership by the state of the means of production. He constructed his theory of state monopoly capitalism starting from the analysis of the Nazi Germany's totalitarian form and stressed the inevitable form of capitalism where the nature of economic command surpasses the concept of simple monopoly capitalism (Slater, 20).

“He argued that capitalist planning would be supported by the leadership of key monopolies and state bureaucracy but only initially by the middle classes. This relative weakness of social base required in Pollock's eyes the authoritarian state” (Arato, 15).

And it is concluded that stabilised monopoly capitalism is the necessary outcome of authoritarian state or vice versa, which underlines the human nature's inclination to dominate.

The Nazi Germany proved that the working class movement would not result in revolutionary upsurge; on the contrary it was too optimistic to expect the collapse of Nazi state holding the common interests bound to the ruling class. Horkheimer was convinced that fascism's inevitable collapse could be expected from the society who endured such a long and terrifying period. However he had no faith in their potential of political leadership and he found it too naive to expect the German workers rise up (Slater, 23). Pollock believed that the authoritarian system still had the original crisis of liberal capitalism. Even if the national socialist Germany differed from the classical capitalist system, the internal dynamics remained the same and Pollock was not optimistic about the state affairs

both in the manner of Comintern orthodoxy and capitalist society. Not just in Germany but in other capitalist societies the subjective factor, the potential agent of transformation and revolutionary proletariat, was missing. The destruction of the skilled, educated working class and new methods of mass manipulation and violent repression were the grounded fear. In Pollock's views, fascist experience can be considered to be formative of critical theory (Arato, 16). Horkheimer, who initially used to support Pollock's idea about the inevitable economic collapse of fascism, had to surrender this hopeful idea, and was convinced that this society can suffer for a long period.

Locating the relations of production only in the sphere of distribution is the inadequacy of Pollock's theory. In his analysis, value is superseded, and the private property is effectively abolished. Commodity production is replaced by use-value production, and this abolition implies the social basis of freedom. The difference between class system and classless society is related to the mode and goal of the administration. Pollock does not place class in the mode of production or of distribution, but of administration and power relations. His analysis however is not sufficient to overcome the traditional theory and its basic assumptions regarding the nature of labour in capitalism. There is a contradiction as to whether labour is regarded as freedom or the source of unfreedom. Pollock located the contradiction of capitalism between production and distribution, and he concluded that there is no immanent contradiction in state capitalism. Pollock saw post-liberal capitalism as a non-contradictory totality as it is

analysed in Postone and Brick's article (Postone and Brick, 215-250). Pollock could not discover any systematic possibility of a conscious challenge to state capitalist integration, he postulated political struggle among elite groups. The critique of political economy addresses the potential consciousness of subjective agents, who could transform capitalist society, in the form of "immanent critique"⁵, while classical political economy disguises social hierarchy and classes. The critique of political economy should be both the critique of civil society in its democratic forms, and the "defetishizing critique"⁶ of illusions of capitalist economy (Arato, 23). In the form of defetishization the same critique unfolds the framework of those economic crises that makes this transformation objectively possible. However, only a critical analysis of the sphere of culture can demonstrate and promote the possibility of conscious resistance by those whom the whole critical enterprise proposes to address. Pollock's critique of state capitalism clearly omits this last step according to Arato. That is the pessimistic outcome of Pollock's critique of politics (Arato, 24). That is to say, Pollock's analysis misses the necessary tension in society and natural contradictions of society which is the basis of self reflexive critique.

⁵ Immanent critique cannot be critical if its object- the society which it is part of- is unitary and static. It cannot judge "is/be" outside of its object, and "should be" is immanent to "be". Immanent social critique, as self-reflexive, grounds its standpoint to the social contradictions. Critical theory, in Horkheimer's essay, "Traditional and Critical Theory", is still grounded on the contradiction in capitalist society, and it uncovers the discrepancy between what "be/is" and what "should be" throughout the intrinsic contradictions of the society.

⁶ Defetishising critique takes the given objectivity and disenchants it to show that it exists in social process. It aims to show that object is not a given fact; rather it is produced and shaped by individuals. Therefore, the given objectivity turns into a produced objectivity which enables us to find the earlier practices and different meanings.

3.2. Class Consciousness

Socialist party, in Italy, like most of socialist parties in Europe, had both a reformist wing who believed in the party's role in improving society and an orthodox wing who believed in waiting for the right time and increasing their numbers till the triumph of proletariat as predicted by Marx (Joll, 28). The labour movement was divided in two; the orthodox Marxists and syndicalists. Syndicalists believed in direct action as opposed to Marxists who waited for the right time to react. The war between Ottoman Empire and Italy in 1911 to win North African province of Libya was supported by some socialists who supported that gaining colonies would raise the living standards of Italian working class. Gramsci's position was close to taking side with the ones who supported war, because he thought that being passive would be wrong for the proletariat and would make their position worse. He was always distant to being indifferent and this way of thinking had an influential contribution to his further conception.

Turin was the most industrialized city in Italy and there was a strong trade union organization and well established factory committees. These councils preserved Gramsci's hope for a new way of organizing the ordinary workers to educate the working class. However, factory Council movement was broken by the industrialists and the reformist trade union leaders. As a consequence, Gramsci developed his own interest in the

international Communist movement (Joll, 44-45). For Gramsci, revolution and utopia could be successful through a specifically proletarian class consciousness which is needed to be fostered and developed. It must make itself free from bourgeois world. Unlike Frankfurt School, he also believed in stray and clear leadership while believing in the importance of Factory Councils. Frankfurt School, foreseeing no way out of the capitalist system, didn't point out any solution, and believed that any idea and attempt in human beings emancipation from dominance could result in another superiority as it happened in Enlightenment. They asserted that not any given solution, but only critical thinking could be useful.

“It was an essential element in Gramsci’s political philosophy that the revolution, and indeed the preparation for it, would involve a profound change in the consciousness of the masses, because henceforth they would no longer be the passive recipients of the measures of government but a vital factor in the decisions about these measures in which they would themselves play a positive part”
(Joll, 79).

Gramsci has a complicated definition of intellectuals. While claiming that every man has the form of intellectual activity, and participates in a particular conception of the world and modifies new modes of thought, he argued that not all men have the function of intellectuals in society (Hoare and Smith, 9). He indicated the importance of the function of intellectuals by dividing them into two: organic and traditional. The organic intellectuals perform tasks of intellectual leadership or have strict connection to the class to which they belong. He interprets the clergy in

the Middle Ages as organic intellectuals because of their relation with the feudal class. However, he argues that they lost their organic function gradually and became an autonomous and independent dominant social group. They no longer have the organic ties with the people as in the middle ages. A particular class necessarily and inevitably forms an alliance with other classes. This is how the leading class exercises its hegemony. Hegemony presupposes the tendencies and the interests of the groups over which hegemony is exercised. Hegemony is obtained by either a spontaneous consent given by the masses, or by direct force or apparatus of state power over the groups when spontaneous consent failed.

The linking of the intellectual to ordinary people and the party to the masses doesn't mean restricting scientific activity or preserving unity at the low levels but constructing an intellectual-moral bloc which can cause the intellectual progress of the mass. (Gramsci, 1998; 332-333). The Italian philosopher, Machiavelli and his political thought together with the historical development of Italian Renaissance helped Gramsci retain his optimism about intellectuals. As he mentions in Prison notebooks, the Modern Prince is an organism and a complex element of society. It is a political party where germs of a "collective will" come together. Therefore, Gramsci believed that the modern prince, the revolutionary party, would educate the proletariat and train them for the future. The aim of the modern prince is to create a new political will. The revolution would be made by the collective body, and any reform, political or economic, must be made by intellectuals.

Taking the organic intellectuals into account, Gramsci used military metaphors to indicate the ways that go to permanent revolution. War of manoeuvre, as in Russian Revolution, aims to invade the state, and there is a movement and action in this concept. However, war of position meets its target by invading the civil society gradually. The permanent revolution is achieved by civil hegemony when the mass organizations are increased by the contributions of organic intellectuals' attempts. Revolutionary Party, the Modern Prince, is to modify people's consciousness to establish civil hegemony, not the state. This is called passive revolution, which is based on gaining people's consent. The concept of organic intellectual is to destroy the bureaucracy and bureaucratic centralism.

According to Gramsci, hegemony is based on persuasion of one class by another, and the agreement of majority. The use of force can be very dangerous if it is used too much. The role of intellectuals and Party can be categorized as a pedagogic relationship with the mass. There must be a bond between each other; otherwise it reproduces an unequal relationship of caste. In this sense, it can be asserted that the Italian society, especially the working class that was dragged by national enthusiasm had a big impact on the theory of "consent". Additionally, Gramsci indicates that consent uses hegemonic power on people's consciousness. Therefore, if the power based on masses works by persuasion, it can be defeated by the awareness and social and political consciousness. If there is persuasion and consent, there must be "will" of the masses to be persuaded. The "will" of agreement can be transformed into the "will" of making their own culture

and making of the working class. Philosophy of praxis, which is the Marxian ideology for Gramsci, is the superstructure on which determinate social groups become conscious of their own social being, becoming, their tasks and strength. The consciousness of their being and becoming is used as the will of making their own culture and class.

Gramsci's understanding of Marxism is to raise either by intellectuals or by factory councils the level of popular understanding of Marxist teaching. He believed in Rosa Luxemburg's ideas i.e., in the spontaneous mass support which can be put into practice at factory councils (Joll, 113).

Gramsci didn't mean to standardize the art or massify popular culture, he, on the contrary, believed in raising the level of art "from below". He believed that subaltern classes need to create their own art and culture except from the art and culture given by cultural hegemony. In this sense, Gramsci's ideas can be compared with Marcuse's who believed that the intensification of art could develop the mass consciousness, but cannot be compared with the intensification of the mechanical production of the given art, because that would be the intensification of bourgeois culture anyway. Yet, he is not far from the ideas of the members of Frankfurt School, especially Horkheimer's and Adorno's, since he is the critic of popular culture as being given and imposed by ruling class and capitalist system.

4. THE THEORY- PRAXIS NEXUS

4.1. Instrumental Rationality and Critique of Positivism

Considering the fact of the triumph of fascism, the defeat of labour, the erosion of revolution, the decline of working class radicalism and the increasing doubts about Soviet Union, it was clear that a new contemplation upon Marxism was required. Critical theory was founded, when Marxist theory was in crisis, to develop materialism and overcome dogmatic application of Marxism with a new form and method. This new method was to combine different academic disciplines to reformulate the questions. For Horkheimer, materialism doesn't mean just a theory, but also a world view.

“Horkheimer's materialist social theory thus focused on human needs and suffering, the ways in which economic conditions produced suffering and the changes necessary to eliminate human suffering and increase human well-being” (Kellner, 30).

While materialism is interested in needs of society, Critical Theory deals with human needs, sufferings and struggles in the present age to increase human well-being. In Horkheimer's materialism, called dialectical materialism, subject and object are reciprocally constituted and all our experiences interact with historical development, which enables autonomy of thought (Kellner, 29-35). In early 1930's, critical theory criticized

materialist version of science, and materialist and bourgeois version of social sciences which are separate from each other. According to Horkheimer, science cannot be reduced to the universality of scientific knowledge and it should be socially conditioned and should evolve itself as a part of the social process. The development should be “double” social-cognitive, however in materialist and bourgeois science they are distinguished from one another, and one is clearly superior (Bonss, 100-102).

As a response to the inadequacies of Classical Marxism and bourgeois social science, distinguished as fragmentation of the sciences, the Institute developed a supra-disciplinary materialist approach to Critical Theory. “One of the broadest goals of a genuinely multidisciplinary research practice would be a ‘critical theory of the present’, that is, a general view of contemporary society and its problems and prospects” (McCarthy, 138). Critical theory has ever changing content and there are no general criteria as a whole, depending on a repetition of events. It rather depends on particular historical conditions. Every thought, idea and is interwoven with the whole societal life process

““On the problem of Truth” Horkheimer affirmed that “the uncompleted dialectic does not however lose the stamp of truth. In fact the uncovering of limitedness and one sidedness in one’s own and in other’s thought, constitutes an important aspect of the intellectual process... The theory which we see as right may one day disappear because the practical and scientific interests which played a role in its conceptual development, and more importantly the

things and conditions to which it referred have disappeared... but a later correction does not mean that an earlier truth was an earlier untruth, ... the dialectic freed from the idealist illusion overcomes the contradiction between relativism and dogmatism” (Held, 182).

The concept of truth for Horkheimer, according to Held, can be explained in three elements: the critique of ideology, interdisciplinary context and the central role of praxis. Horkheimer, as the director of the School, had great influence on the rest, so the School’s major subjects could be generally reduced into these three elements. The critique of ideology is the critique of bourgeois ideology. There is a contradiction between bourgeois ideas and reality, and bourgeoisie places the universal ideas at the centre of its moral and political philosophy. However, through the immanent criticism the social world is investigated in the movement of its development. Bourgeois societies and the liberal capitalism produce reality, which enslaves and treats the masses by means of their own work (Held, 183-184). The interdisciplinary concept reformulates different methods to reduce the dogmatic and superior approach of positivism. The central role of praxis aims to expose the necessity of reciprocal relationship of theory and practice, thought and action, subject and object.

Even if there are differences in the approach and style of Horkheimer with Adorno and Marcuse, they all reject positivism to unfold alternative philosophical and social foundations (Held, 174). In the perspective of Critical Social Theory, the members of the School, grounded on Marxism,

constructed their theory as critique of positivism. Bearing in mind that the critique of Frankfurt School is essentially the critique of ideology, they believe that science and scientific technique are transformed into ideology. In critical theory, the social analysis and the critique of ideology are intertwined and their main objective is not to accept the given issue of the fact but to transcend it (Geuss, 15-26). Theory, under the positivist view, identifies the given facts and their relationship, so that it could reflect the factual reality as it is. The accuracy of a theory is confirmed, according to whether it corresponds to the factual reality, or not. In this perspective, it is inevitable that the factual reality is cemented as “a priori” knowledge, which is independent of experience. On the other hand, as for critical (social) theory, the social reality, as its given formation, is the false reality which is constructed by human beings and the false consciousness curtains the factual reality. The material and institutional processes in capitalist society are misleading the proletariat and other classes, and false reality of the capitalist system blurred the consciousness of the classes. These processes betray the true relations of forces between those classes and it is called false consciousness.

The idea that the critical theorists are against science is unacceptable. On the contrary, they are against the identification of science with the construction of social life and all kinds of knowledge. The purpose of scientific reasoning and the positivists is to keep the control over society. By this way, they reduce the mechanisms of society to the mechanisms of nature and all sciences, including social sciences, to physics. Reducing the

social facts to physical facts, positivists fetishize the facts. The parallel view can be observed between the fetishized social facts and the commodity fetishism. That is the qualified 'technocratic' ideology in its most extreme version.

Positivism is an ideology which affirms the given facts and reproduces and preserves the status quo. Furthermore, it naturalizes alienated social relationships based on capitalism and perceives past, present and future in a one dimensional time perspective. However, for critical theorists, the purpose of the critical social theory is to reveal the historicity of the societal facts and their temporary nature, along with the self reflexive capacity of human actions (Balkıız).

“The transmission of critical theory in as rigorous a fashion as possible is a condition of its historical success. That transmission does not, however, take place via established practices and fixed procedures but via an interest in social change.” (McCarthy, 138).

The members also reject the classification of data according to the predicted future facts (Held, 171). Positivists support the idea that knowledge (cognition, reasoning), in its nature, is neutral and humane values and norms should be excluded from the reasoning process. Thereby, positivism reifies the social world and presents this world as natural (Kellner, 7).

“The external condition for the positivizing of science lies in the universalization of a mode of social perception in which the reality of

the world of social objects is measured according to criteria of utilization, exploitation, and administration.” (Bonss, 103).

4.2. Philosophy of Praxis

Marxism, for Gramsci, is a philosophy of praxis and a philosophy which finds its function in practical activity, not in a self-styled philosophy. Bukharin’s attempt to reformulate historical materialism allows emphasizing individual human will on history, and this attempt enabled Gramsci to develop the doctrine of hegemony (Joll, 8). He was aware of a historical dimension in Marxism, and he was more conscious of its cultural implications. What was wrong with Marxism was its association with positivism with a crude and insensitive materialism (Joll, 78). Gramsci insisted that Marxism was a sociological rather than a historical theory, and he objected to the positivist approaches and the attempts which reduce ‘dialectics’ to a ‘mechanical’ principle.

Gramsci was influenced by Croce’s perspective of history and an awareness of the continuous relevance of the past and present. Croce was more into Hegel than Marx and supported that history was the history of the human spirit and of the development of man’s soul rather than material conditions. Gramsci, while he was deeply influenced by his ideas, was critical of Croce because of his anti-Marxist and liberal position, and his speculative self-styled philosophy of spirit (Joll, 23).

For Gramsci, referring to the Hegelian formulation, the distinction between the part of the world which is explained in scientific terms, and the part which was the subject of philosophy or metaphysics', reduces philosophy to the level of subspecies. Gramsci believed in the unity of the aspects of life and thought and that of human experience, philosophy, politics, science should be combined in a single unit. His view of dialectics sounds much more similar to Hegel than Marx. He supported the reciprocal interaction of one thing with another; the intellectual or the party leader with the masses. He saw the philosophy of praxis as antithesis of Catholicism. The influence of the intellectuals depends on their ability to keep contact with the masses, and Gramsci believed that the intellectuals who are conscious of being linked organically to national-popular masses make the history, and not the ones who are separated from masses (Joll, 81-94).

The reciprocal relationship between superstructure and base structure, led Gramsci to the awareness of objective and subjective forces which brought him to the concept of historical bloc. The relationship between base structure and superstructure, between economic forces and cultural, ideological movements, as well as the dialectical process in each part, influencing and combining each other, helped Gramsci to develop Georges Sorel's conception of "historical bloc" by which historical value of the superstructure was enriched. One must be conscious of one's own social position in the superstructure, because there is a necessary vital connection between superstructure and base structure (Gramsci, 1988, 197). He was

aware of psychological importance of the individual as well as the political importance in the development of societies. He used the concept of historical bloc to describe the unity between nature and spirit, in short, the union of social forces (Gramsci, 1998; 137).

Gramsci doesn't consider philosophy as a specific activity of particular or professional philosophers. He is more into spontaneous philosophy which is applicable to everybody. This philosophy, under the name of folklore, is composed of language, common sense, good sense and popular religion. Philosophy cannot be separated from the history of philosophy; one must have a consciousness of historicity besides having a critical and coherent conception of the world. (Gramsci, 1998; 323).

Philosophy is neither religion nor common sense but religion is an element of common sense which is a collective noun. It is the criticism of religion and common sense. In this sense, for Gramsci, philosophy coincides with good sense as opposed to common sense. There is no general philosophy, but various philosophies and conceptions. That means that philosophy is an individual consciousness as opposed to religion and common sense.

“The strength of religions, and of the catholic church in particular, has lain, and still lies, in the fact that they feel very strongly the need for the doctrinal unity of the whole mass of the faithful and strive to ensure that the higher intellectual stratum does not get separated from the lower” (Gramsci, 1998; 328).

The church established its position between the intellectuals and the simple. It is inferred from the Gramsci's philosophy that Renaissance and

Reform as well as religion, establish the division between the intellectuals and the simple, the higher and the lower, the top and the bottom.

“The relationship between common sense and the upper level of philosophy is answered by ‘politics’, just as it is politics that assures the relationship between the Catholicism of the intellectuals and that of simple... Common sense creates folklore, that is a relatively rigid phase of popular knowledge at a given place and time” (Gramsci, 1998; 326).

Bourgeoisie becomes common sense of all values and working class identifies their own good with the good of bourgeoisie. Hence, by this way, bourgeoisie maintain its status quo. Philosophy of praxis, as an anti-thesis of catholicism, asserts the need for contact between the intellectual and the simple.

History shows how thought has been elaborated over centuries and how a collective effort has gone into the creation of our present method, for this reason philosophy can be performed in the context of history of philosophy. Philosophy should purify itself of intellectualistic elements of an individual character and become life (Gramsci, 1998; 327-332). If there was the same unity between the intellectuals and the simple, as in the theory and the practice, there would be cultural stability which is needed to be fractured. And the unity of theory and practice is not a mechanical fact, it is:

“a part of a historical process, whose elementary and primitive phase is to be found in the sense of being ‘different’ and apart, in

an instinctive feeling of independence, and which progress to the level of real possession of a single and coherent conception of world” (Gramsci, 1998; 333).

5. AUTHORITARIANISM

Authoritarianism is mainly related with fascism and the totalitarianism in Italian and German culture. The rise of Fascism and its correlation between the rise of Cultural Criticism as a departing point of this thesis is analysed in every section. Therefore, in this section, its fundamental causes are examined both for the members of the School and for Gramsci. Authoritarianism, Fascism and anti-Semitism would have to be evaluated in distinct studies, but in order not to divert the main point of this thesis, this part will focus on the basic definitions and approaches of the members.

5.1. Fascism and Anti-Semitism

Up to the late 1930's, Horkheimer could only see Fascism as the notorious last stage of capitalism and Stalinism, despite all of its internal shortcomings, as a transitory stage to authentic socialism. (Arato, xv). Neumann presented fascism as an expression of capitalism in his monumental study *Behemoth*, and on 'The Collapse of the Weimar Republic' and 'The Political pattern of national Socialism', Neumann analyzed German fascism as the Totalitarian Monopoly Capitalism. In his study, "The Monopolistic Economy" he underlined that National Socialism encouraged cartels and monopolies. In "The Command Economy" he showed how National Socialism served and promoted the policies of

capital to destroy the small business. Neumann believed that in monopoly capitalist economy, the elite's direct society and totalitarian apparatus combines each other so well, and according to him, "Totalitarian Monopoly Capitalism" best characterizes the fascist economic order (Kellner, 69). In the essay on "Elements of anti-Semitism" in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* for Horkheimer and Adorno, in the anti-Semitism of Bourgeoisie, there is a specific economic reason to disguise the domination in production (Bottomore, 21).

In his article "Some Social Implications of Modern Technology" Marcuse took technology as social process and asserted that the influence of technology has integral part both for the man who invent or make use of machinery, and for social groups who apply or utilize it. Technology, as a mode of production and as a mode of organizing the social relationships has become a device and instrument to control or dominate. The two-sided nature of techniques can promote authoritarianism both as liberty, the extension of human rights, and as abolition (Marcuse, 1998, 138). As big business grows, on the one hand the number of the capital owners diminishes, on the other, the amount of slavery, oppression, misery increases. This causes the revolt of the working class by the mechanism of the process of capitalist production (Marx, 763).

"National Socialism is a striking example of the ways in which a highly rationalized and mechanized economy with the utmost efficiency in production can operate in the interest of totalitarian oppression and continued scarcity. The third Reich is indeed a form

of “technocracy”: the technical considerations of imperialistic efficiency and rationality supersede the traditional standards of profitability and general welfare.” (Marcuse, 1998, 139).

New functions of technology in business, human needs, nature, and techniques are presented as expedient and rational mechanism.

Individual psychology and psychoanalysis of Marxism was of great influence on the members, especially on Eric Fromm who establishes a relation between Marxism and psychoanalysis through Freud’s explanations. In order to explain the class location of family and historical location of social classes in society, he had to establish Marxist social psychology. The School’s interest in individual psychology became concentrated on personality traits and its relation with authority, and anti-semitism by the rise of National Socialism and Fascism in Germany. In “authoritarian personality”, Marcuse exposed the cultural aspects of modern society on the role of family, on the formation of ideas and attitudes as the negative outcomes of domination oriented society. Being rooted in mass culture, fascism characterized itself with mass mentality and created a pseudo-individuality to delude the masses. Mass culture is the fetishized outcome of collectivism and the mentality of the majority, and this explains why the mass culture is dominated by fascist ideology.

For Adorno, fascism releases the subjectivity of destroyed subjects in the form of paranoia and aggressive protection. Social-psychological manipulation of fascism is prepared by reduction of the mass ego to id. He

inferred that fascism is a general problem of late bourgeoisie. “They want to be governed because they cannot bear their freedom” (Adorno, 138)

5.2. Fascist Hegemony

Fascism, according to Gramsci, would be the sparkling point of the decisive struggle for the conquest of power. He believed that the relationship between bourgeoisie and the fascist strength would be weakened. In this sense, Revolutionary party must have the strength of the masses and shouldn't be isolated from any other classes to weaken the fascist power. The notion of hegemony is extended by consent in the form of a collective and national-popular movement. Constructing the collective will is to gain the support of groups, and this support is preserved by Catholicism since 1815. (Forgacs and Smith, Introduction, 197). International and national unity, while constructing the collective will, establishes the traditional thinking through either religious or political ideologies. Moreover, fascism finds its ways to preserve its strength and position in the capitalist system.

“... Gramsci realized both that Fascism was more than a very transitory phenomenon and that the structure of its support needed a sophisticated analysis if it was to conform both to the observable facts and to Marxist theory... Fascism, Gramsci thought, was the only remaining way in which the capitalists could maintain their authority and preserve their economic system which had been profoundly strained by the war” (Joll, 55-57).

Consent, imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental groups, is historically established by the prestige of the bourgeoisie, which is the basis of the cultural hegemony. The urban type intellectuals have no autonomy for construction; they articulate the relationship between entrepreneurs and the instrumental mass. They function as subaltern officers in the army, and they are very standardized. The rural type intellectuals can be classified as traditional because they are linked to the social mass of country people. They have contact with the peasant masses and an important politico-social function, because professional mediation should not be apart from political life. (Gramsci, 1998; 14).

France offers the example of an accomplished form of harmonious development of the energies of the nation and of the intellectual categories in particular. The new social group was completely equipped for all its social functions and constructed its political appearance on the historical stage. For Gramsci, “the massive intellectual construction explains the function of culture in France in the 18th and 19th century” (Gramsci, 1998; 18). It was the international, cosmopolitan reflection of the imperialistic and hegemonic expansion in the organic fashion which was different from Italy where people did not react on the national base. In England, the new social groups, which can be classified as organic intellectuals, grew up on the basis of modern industrialism and showed economic-corporate development. However, in the higher classes, the old land owning class

preserves its position and is assimilated as traditional intellectuals by maintaining a politico-intellectual supremacy (Gramsci, 1998; 18).

“Germany, like Italy, was the seat of an universalistic and supranational institution and ideology, the holy Roman Empire of German Nation, and provided a certain number of personal for the mediaeval cosmopolis, impoverishing its own internal energies and arousing struggles which distracted from problems of national organization and perpetuated the territorial disintegration of the Middle Ages” (Gramsci, 1998; 19).

The industrial development arose within a semi-feudal edge. In Germany the traditional intellectuals remained as special privileges, and a strong consciousness of being an independent social group made them hold the economic power over the land.

Gramsci criticized Renaissance and its claim to make man the centre of the universe. He believed that Renaissance did not discover “man” but created a new culture or civilization because one must limit and specify nature. Renaissance was a great cultural revolution because a new culture was initiated and a new type of man in the dominant classes was created (Gramsci, 1985, 217)

The war and fascism was a crucial limitation for avant-garde intellectuals and artists in Italy. As well as the whole Ordine Nuovo group, Gramsci had been affected by the futurist movement during the pre-war years. Because of the unsatisfied need in the proletarian field, the workers were likely to

be part of the futurist movement. The Futurists were destroying every old fashion idea of art, when the socialist movement were pacified. Until the end of war some workers were influenced by the regenerative idea of Futurists. The Futurists had played a leading role in the formation of Soviet avant-garde. However, in Italy they degenerated into the barrel organs of fascism (Hoare and Smith, xxiv). The working class lost its interest in Futurism, and were occupied with their daily struggle.

For Gramsci, the Italian bourgeois was not capable of uniting people around itself because of the defeats and interruptions in its development. The subaltern groups who are needed to become “State” to be unified, were always fragmented by ruling groups even when they rebel. They were anxious when they defended themselves, so the permanent victory of the bourgeoisie established the subordination of the subaltern classes (Gramsci, 1998; 53-55).

While Gramsci was mentioning about a kind of party, which refers to fascism, he described it as constituted by masses that have no other political function than a generic loyalty, of a military kind, to a visible or invisible political center. “The mass is kept happy by means of moralizing sermons, emotional stimuli and messianic myths of an awaited golden age” (Gramsci, 1998; 150). They were unwilling to exhibit themselves, and the mechanism worked indirectly by the command of forces, like civil institutes. Traditional parties were unaware of and indifferent to their class. It was not difficult to gather the masses around emotional stimuli, which

lacked in Italy previously because of the late industrialism; therefore fascist ideology had huge impact on people to hold the power.

Masses are soothed by the premise of the unity when they have no intellectual construction of political and historical stage. For this reason it is not very difficult to drift these masses away behind a centralized policy like fascism, but it takes time to make the masses become conscious of their class.

CONCLUSION

Considering the difficulty of analysing the Frankfurt School, since it has various peculiar periods and scholars, this dissertation's object was to compare the critical approaches of the Institute members with Antonio Gramsci. The early period of the Institute can roughly be determined as their exile at the end of 30's which coincided with Gramsci's death in prison. Because of the fact that both Gramsci and the Frankfurt School grounded and engendered their theories before the end of 30's -even if the School members still continue to represent the School- this dissertation mainly focused on the early period of the School and Gramsci's imprisonment years.

The scholars' cultural and critical approach to orthodox Marxism was the basis of this dissertation. The rise of cultural and critical Marxism, which is associated with the rise of fascism, has been the starting point of this study. The failure of the European revolutionary movements of the 1920's and the rise of fascism gave rise to the cultural criticism of Marxist orientation of a revolutionary nature, which caused a huge effect on the prospective interpretation of Cultural Marxism and Cultural Critique. Both Gramsci and the members of the Institute, remaining distant to orthodox Marxism, interpreted the dynamics of history and its sociological outcome. They presented a Critical Marxism instead of adhering to economic

determinist and historical materialist approaches. In spite of the fundamentally similar aspects in their approaches and ideas, there are some acknowledged differences, which have been analysed in this thesis. It shouldn't be ignored that Gramsci's analysis is more historical while the School members' is more theoretical. Considering their distinctive approaches, which are based on these historical and theoretical differences and their interpretation of fascism, which is the ground of their theories, the distinctive ends are inevitable to be revealed.

Throughout the 20's, the control of the non-fascist capitalist powers was in the hands of the bourgeois parties. These parties tried to divert Germany's and Italy's aggressive tendencies away from themselves and therefore they made concession upon concession. Even if the left wing parties seemed to support the working class to overthrow fascism, they were actually concerned with the glorious outcome of the war, which would provide them a stable position.

“The phase of the European working-class movement's history only finally ended with the capitulation of the German Reich. As in Italy, but to a much lesser extent, sections of upper strata in Germany had joined forces with the Social Democrats to overthrow Hitler and end the war when, in fact, defeat was certain... The whole conspiracy in Germany was failure because, unlike their Italian counterparts, the majority of the upper strata did not join it, but rather gambled everything on a successful end to the war.” (Abendroth, 123).

Besides the bourgeois parties' corporation with German and Italian fascist governments, Vatican had shown that it was not opposed to fascism

anymore, and the Catholic Right throughout Europe had been influenced by the Vatican policy. As it has been mentioned above, the coming of fascism and the separations in the working class had a great impact on the approaches and attitudes of the Frankfurt School members and Gramsci towards the class conscious. In Italy, especially in Turin, the working class was organizing itself more vigorously than they did in any other country. Factory councils had great impact on the development of political and class consciousness of the working class. That is why Antonio Gramsci enthusiastically believed that organic intellectuals would break the hegemonic relations and raise the class consciousness of working class in itself.

The belated industrialism in Germany caused its transition from feudalism to capitalism. Agriculture was the main basis of labour power in Germany. This slow transition made it difficult, even for the workers on the land, to be the part of working class. The already undersized mass of working class was reduced not only by the repressive offences of the fascist movement, but was also affected by the ongoing influence of feudalism.

On the one hand, semi-feudal formation of Germany and the Holy Roman Empire of German nation, on the other hand Vatican power in Italy and the late industrialism for both Italy and Germany could be considered as important elements for the rise of fascism and the disorganization of working class. In Europe, England and France, as industrialized countries compared to Germany and Italy, evaded fascism by earlier revolutions, but in Italy and Germany partly because of the feudalism and partly because of

the Catholicism, privileged intellectuals were still independent social groups. The Holy Roman German Empire's accomplishment delayed the national-popular effect on both of the countries because of its universalistic ideology, and consequently with the industrial progress, when the working class was about to arise to distract the hegemonic power, fascist ideology emerged both for the masses and the bourgeoisie. Hence the bourgeoisie held the power as they used to, and the masses were convinced to pursue the fascist ideology. Therefore bourgeoisie was in charge of overthrowing the system that itself had already constituted. However in Germany semi-feudalism was so ossified that the distraction of the working class was more influential, thus the majority of the working class was not able to be tied with any occurrence in working class evolution and the class consciousness. This could be one of the reasons for the Frankfurt School's pessimistic approach towards the evolution of working class. While in Italy, huge impact of Factory Council organizations could be related to Gramsci's optimistic belief in the working class and its own culture.

Even if Gramsci, one of the founders of PCI, was a deputy of Communist party, he was different from the other deputies, because he kept a distance to bourgeois parties. Believing in the importance of revolutionary party as a resistance to fascism, he did not regard PCI about educating the working class and bringing up the prolekt. He believed that passive revolution was needed first, and it could only come true by invading civil society, and not by active resistance as PCI looked for. Gramsci had faith in potential

and political leadership as he wrote in “Modern Prince”. The aim of the party, for Gramsci, is to create a new political will, so the revolution would be made by a collective body, not by an individual, because individual’s action cannot have a long term and organic character by its nature (Gramsci, 1998; 129). The revolutionary party had the collective will which is the revolutionary subjective factor.

In his analysis of political economics, Pollock interpreted that in the capitalist societies the revolutionary proletariat, the subjective factor, was missing. Horkheimer, supporting Pollock’s view, lost his faith in the working class consciousness because of the destruction of the skilled and educated working class. Like Gramsci, Horkheimer believed that education can emancipate the working class, but he never developed a revolutionary action. Accepting the crucial role of education for class consciousness, both the members of the School and Gramsci pointed out the decay of education and claimed that the abolishing of the privileged education system would not be a solution for the consciousness, but would maintain and reinforce the given social conditions in the most standardised way. What Gramsci supported about education is to bring up the working class culture for itself. The factory council’s project was the big step for the concept of political and class consciousness. However, the semi-feudal impact and the fascist hegemony was more influential in Germany than Italy and the Factory Councils in Germany were not as effective as it was in Italy. This could be an explanation of why revolutionary struggle in

Frankfurt School was in a theoretical category and too pessimistic, as opposed to Gramsci.

The term domination preoccupied these scholars under the coming regimen, Fascism, and the cultural issues gained importance. Culture always arises in specific historical situations, so it is not confusing that under such a totalitarian regime, art and culture, which are standardized, were the great area to be criticized and elaborated both for the members and Gramsci. Important social functions, socio-economic interests, ruling classes' interest and ideology legitimate class domination. As Pollock centred in his theory, Frankfurt School was into the distribution of culture under the influence of critical political economy. The distribution of art, in the hands of monopoly capitalism avoids radicalism, which causes the spread of popular culture.

According to Adorno, popular culture under the hegemony of bourgeoisie makes art simple and repetitive, and consequently, the masses are pacified by the uncritical and repetitive content, and this can be called as the manipulation of art. Art, in the production of culture commodities, turns into profitable consumption. In this respect, Gramsci shares Adorno's opinions about it's being a monetary value with cheap content. Moreover, in order to get the masses through the ruling cultural values, the concept of Cultural Hegemony is the invisible oppression upon the masses as an economic deterministic way. While Marcuse agreed with the majority of the Institute about the manipulative function of popular art, and its control over the masses, he asserted that it could be reversed by the extension of

art, which is the affirmative function of art. Here we come to a slight difference between Gramsci and the affirmative function of art as Marcuse asserted. Gramsci is on the side of extension of art but not the one given by the hegemonic class. He is more into the working class art and culture. For him, the massification of culture and art should be kept apart from the capitalist ideology, and the way out from this is the bringing up of the working class culture. As in the Frankfurt School, for Gramsci art should be out of the hegemonic ideology for its liberty. That is to say, Gramsci doesn't mean that mechanical production would destroy the elitist aura; on the contrary, he believes that it would degrade the value of art since it only cares about monetary value. He argues that proletariat needs to build up its own culture apart from the elitist aura. Therefore it can be inferred that he shares the same concerns with Adorno and Horkheimer who reject the unified effect of culture industry.

Form or style serves for hegemony if its own ideology is absent. This proposition is what Gramsci supported, yet Adorno's approach was a little complicated towards form and style. Whereas in their article "Dialectic of Enlightenment" Adorno and Horkheimer claimed that style is the form of domination, Adorno in the following essays stated that style and form could create an avant-garde approach if it were unique. As for the Frankfurt School, as long as a piece of art has its own style, it doesn't contribute to the dominant part of style. Form and style in their widespread utilization could perform as dominant applications of art. Additionally,

Gramsci believed that ideology, not style, is what makes art, and he was convinced that proletariat could create its own style.

As an inevitable outcome of fascism and monopoly capitalism, Cultural manipulation is used as a manipulative force in totalitarianism. For Horkheimer and Adorno, as they wrote in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, culture industry is a repressive feature of modern popular culture. What they were against is the repressive form of the monopoly capitalism over mass culture, not the development of it. Adorno concluded that the production of popular culture is based on “standardisation”. This thesis is the starting point of one of Adorno's first essays on popular music, written after he fled Nazi Germany in 1938, at the Princeton Radio Research Project. The standardisation process enforces us by the culture industry’s monopolies to promote materials and to fetishize them. This process gives the impression of individualism as well. It endows

“... cultural mass production with the halo of free choice or open market on the basis of standardisation itself. Standardisation of song hits keeps the customers in line by doing their listening for them. Pseudo-individualism, for its part, keeps them in line by making them forget that what they listen to is already listened to for them, or ‘pre-digested’ ” (Slater, 123- 124).

While Adorno indicates that the entire process of production and the consumption is determined by unconscious determining force as blind economic determinism of capitalist society, he does not far from the idea that giving the masses what they want is subjected to the manipulation of

the masses by the Industry. Adorno, by referring Marx's critique of commodity fetishism, stated that exchange value is alienated by both producers and consumers. That is what we pay for. For Adorno, the customers are the objects and the products of the same mechanism, and in their spare time they reproduce their working capacity by serving this industry. Their working lives make them get accustomed to the standardised goods and to pseudo-individualism so that they want the standardised goods themselves. (Slater, 124). This is what Gramsci called Cultural Hegemony. For both Frankfurt School and for Gramsci, the repressive outcome of the monopoly capitalism and the totalitarian system, which is an ideological term used only for fascist capitalism, were the reinforced factors for the disguised cultural hegemony. However, a slight difference could be mentioned about their approaches to the masses and their positions. For Gramsci, cultural hegemony proceeds with the consent of the masses, and for the School members it is explained by how the masses habituate the standardised system. Gramsci had never lost his belief that the masses would bring up their own culture and they would not be the objects of the given bourgeois culture, but for the members of the School, there was no escape for the masses when they are kept in the repetitive mentality of the workaday practice. As long as one believes in the collective will and in the consent of the masses, one believes in the subjective power of the masses. That is to say, if the consent of the people can be used to deceive them to accept the ruling culture and their prestige, it can be used as an affirmative function to establish the prolekt. That is

Gramsci's exit point from the system, and for him utopia can be realised by a class consciousness. As opposed to Gramsci, for Adorno, utopia is the art that symbolizes "hope" for another society to be kept alive, but not a concept to come true. In other words, utopia, for the members of the Frankfurt School, although they didn't believe in any better solution for this system, is the belief that one should have to keep the tension inside. But for Gramsci it is the optimistic outcome of the proletariat's class consciousness. Adorno, as it is stated earlier, had understood the collapse of the proletariat as the concept of totalizing subject-object history, which reproduces the problem of totality.

Adorno, in difference from Horkheimer, developed negative dialectics which is the criticism of all philosophical positions and social theories, and which defines any absolute starting point, or ultimate basis of human thought. It is inferred that his philosophy never included a theory of political action, and he differed from Marx, as for Buck-Morss, because his theory was based on both a dialectical and a materialist approach, not on historical materialism. While Horkheimer and Marcuse believed in the revolutionary potential of working class at the beginning, even if their belief was replaced by their pessimism, Adorno seems to have not given any attention to Marx's economic analyses and theory of class. Contrary to Benjamin who affirms the concept of a collective revolutionary subject, Adorno rejected the solidarity of working class (Bottomore, 18-19). The concept of revolutionary subject at this point can be compared with Gramsci's analysis of working class revolutionary party which is based on

a specific kind of class-consciousness. However, Horkheimer did not assert that revolutionary party would bring correct class consciousness as Gramsci asserted, but, he definitely defended that critical thinking or the thinker would extend this consciousness to the working class. While Horkheimer, in the earlier periods, used to believe that class consciousness would work, he was like-minded with the rest of the group who were generally pessimistic about any movement that could alter the monopolistic system.

Both the members of the Frankfurt School and Gramsci made a great use of subjective factors such as the conscious organization of class members, yet the objective factors weren't ignored. They all supported that proletariat, as Lukacs defined, was the subject-object of history. The reciprocal relationship of the subject and the object was the main issue to shape their theories both for Gramsci and the School. "Pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will" is known as one of the famous sayings of Gramsci. In his respect, "will" can be explained by his faith in the proletariat by the support of revolutionary party, and this faith in the collective will can be the expression of optimism, while Frankfurt School turned to a pessimistic theory of human nature. Reciprocally constituted, subject and object interact with historical development and enable the autonomy of thought. The members of Frankfurt School, while criticising the separation of subject and object from each other, and the superiority of one upon another, could not rely on the subjective function of the masses as Gramsci did. When subject and object are kept apart, subjective

reasoning becomes autonomous and “will” in subjective reasoning cannot be grounded by objective reasoning. Consequently, reason becomes autonomous when mechanic thinking dominates the cosmos.

In the Modern age, intellect has lost its ability to desire. For Frankfurt School “will” is so dark that when reasoning gets out of objectivity, it never desires the good. In the saying mentioned above, Gramsci meant that intellect always determines and assesses what the situation is but it never activates beings to change the situation and look for good, which can cause pessimism. However, the “will”, by activating beings, looks for a change, which can be a reason to be optimistic. The pessimism of the intellect and its passivity is what Frankfurt School criticize; nonetheless they cannot help falling into the situation that they criticize.

The pessimism about the evaluation of the working class and the existence of an emancipator force in modern society is reflected by Horkheimer both in ‘Dialectic of Enlightenment’ and ‘Traditional and Critical Theory’. However Horkheimer criticizes reason for being instrumentalized and being lost under the circumstances that leads him to being pessimistic, whereas for Adorno reason always serves for domination as an instrument of authority and power. Although Horkheimer’s pessimism doesn’t seem as stringent and permanent as Adorno’s, they rely on thought and intellect which cannot activate human to desire for the good as the “will” does. Even though they don’t ignore “will”, they never believe “will” is used for good, when it is kept apart from intellect. That is why, for the members,

the “will” of the masses go for Fascism when thought and intellect are separated from desire. The masses don’t desire but want to be governed.

Against the fear and pessimism of The Frankfurt School, in general, Gramsci supported the function of organic intellectuals to bring up skilled and educated working class. Believing the function of organic intellectuals, he relies on the “will” in them. “Pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will”⁷ is the saying that describes Gramsci’s philosophical ground.

⁷ This is a saying used by William James. The original form of the saying was: “Pessimism leads to weakness, optimism to powers”. Gramsci adopted, and used the saying in his own words.

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