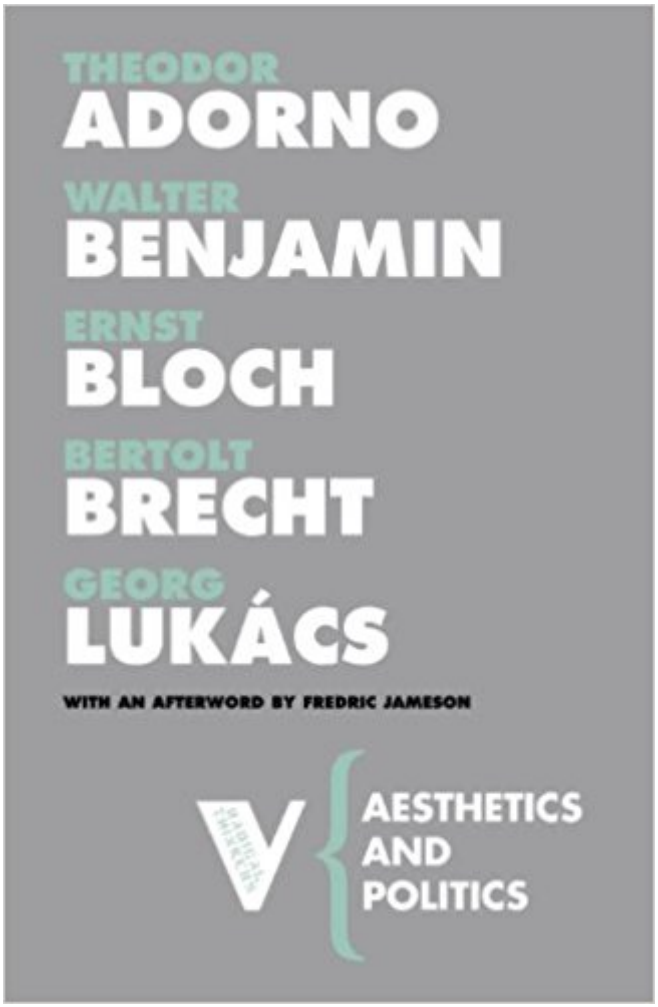
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Aesthetics And Politics (Radical Thinkers)



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Synopsis

No other country and no other period has produced a tradition of major aesthetic debate to compare with that which unfolded in German culture from the 1930s to the 1950s. In Aesthetics and Politics the key texts of the great Marxist controversies over literature and art during these years are assembled in a single volume. They do not form a disparate collection but a continuous, interlinked debate between thinkers who have become giants of twentieth-century intellectual history.

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Customer Reviews

Ã¢â ¬Å“This is vital reading for anyone concerned with the relationship between art and socialism.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •John FowlesÃ¢â ¬Å“They are key texts in the study of modernism, of expressionist drama and of realism, and of many closely related general questions ... It is genuinely an indispensable volume.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Raymond Williams

Text: English, German (translation) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Fruitfully contributes to discussion on the historical role of art and how art relates to the struggle for revolutionary socialism/communism. The kind of revolutionary communism that existed in China when Mao Tse-tung was the primary leader. That China (unlike today’s China) was a true socialist

society. Maoist China strove to eventually abolish all classes and eliminate all exploitation and oppression.

Great

This is awell-chosen and well-done collection of critical essays that with both its chronological structure and its particular selections highlights the interplay between a select group of thinkers that were central to a certain Germanic-Marxist tradition, including representatives from the famous Frankfurt School of philosophy. It traces the central problems and positions debated within this tradition during the crucial years between the two world wars, before Marxist-oriented cultural criticism was taken over by the French post-war Marxists such as Debord et al. and the New Left, who radically shifted the debate into new directions. The book is edited with a critical conclusion by Frederic Jameson, one of today's major thinkers in this tradition, so I am not sure why it is listed as by Adorno, or in some cases Adorno and Benjamin: It is a collection of critical essays, not a book by Adorno or Benjamin, though both have pieces in it. A previous reviewer has already given a fairly good synopsis of the flavor of the debate involved [see the "an invaluable volume" review].It is an excellent primer for anyone studying 20th century criticism or interested in Marxist cultural critique. However, if a reader is to use this text as their only look at Marxist criticism, they should be warned that this book does not reflect the full range of the mature work of several of the writers involved, in particular Adorno and Benjamin, both of whom dealt forcefully with problems well outside the confines of this collection; and such reader should also be aware that that the Marxist tradition contains texts, such as those within the aforementioned French post-war tradition, that take the line of discussion into entirely different directions. Jameson's editorial essay is a welcome contemporary contribution and will be of great use to the student or newcomer to this line of discourse. The essays are relatively accessible, though it is important to have some sense of the historical context and experience of the literature and artworks discussed. A good upper division or graduate level text.

An outstanding collection of dialogic essays gathered from the key years of Imperial crisis surrounding the rise of Fascism and leading up to WWII. The great figures collected here exchange disagreements vis-ÃƒÂ -vis the status of modern aesthetics in the 20th century. We see here Lukacs' famous critique of the avant-garde movements in literature, which is then rebuked by mordantly brilliant works of criticism from Brecht and Adorno. This is an absolutely vital collection for anyone interested in the history of political aesthetics in the 20th century.

very good

This is a well arranged volume of the essays essential to Marxist criticism from the 1930's to the 1950's. The essayists are all critical contributions are summed-up, and their current relevance traced, in a brilliant conclusion by Frederic Jameson, perhaps the most important Marxist critic writing today. I like this volume because the choice of essays is great and the selections are placed in a chronological, point-counterpoint format so that the 'conversation' is easy to follow. The essays are mainly concerned with the realism/modernism dialectic. Lukacs lauds the realism of Balzac and Mann as the exemplary approach to historicism in the novel. Adorno posits that high modernism, though it seems apolitical, provides the most ominous image of capitalism, and that it is thus the more viable revolutionary aesthetic. The other essayists chart the space between these (seemingly) polarized perspectives and provide important insights into the more mystical (Benjamin) and pragmatic (Brecht) applications of Marxist theory. Adorno takes Benjamin to task for not thinking dialectically. And, between Brecht and Adorno, Lukacs takes a beating for his reactionary attachment to the bourgeois realist novel. But Benjamin and Lukacs are both vindicated in Jameson's balanced conclusion. This is a short but invaluable volume for anyone interested in Marxist aesthetic theory.

This was the last shuddering crisis in modern philosophy. Fascism was on the rise and those intellectuals who had so much hope in a revolution after the carnage World War I in Western Europe were faced with an aesthetic crisis. This collection of writings by Neo-Marxist cultural critics essentially foretells the insanity of the Holocaust through a careful analysis of bourgeois capital and its effects on society. This is not a light read, but will change your understanding of humanity.

For the true artist and philosopher interested in an Art's era journey. An in depth account of Expressionism's claim to fame.

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