

Adorno's critique of "identity-thinking"

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Philosophy of CAS (Jilská 1, Praha 1)

In my talk, I will first outline Adorno's critique of "identity-thinking" through unearthing within Hegelian thinking what he calls a "logic of disintegration" which functions as an immanent critique of the affirmative logic of such thinking. I then proceed to a discussion of identity politics understood as struggles for inclusion into universal, objective structures of recognition. I subsequently show how Adorno might be able to help us towards a sympathetic critique of identity politics, one that is grounded in the historical experience of precarity and suffering which remains both sedimented and concealed by the philosophical concept. At the same time, because of its abstract negation or rejection of the Enlightenment and therefore reason as such as well as its anti-intellectualism, identity politics is ultimately unable to escape the dialectic of enlightenment whose shortcomings it effectively diagnoses. In seeking inclusion for the historically disparaged and marginalized it often excludes the very difference, which is to say, individuals, that it purports to represent.