

Access and Elitism: On some pitfalls in the relationship between art and politics¹

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It is self-evident that nothing concerning art is self-evident any more, not its inner life, not its relation to the world, not even its right to exist.

Theodor Adorno: *Aesthetic Theory*²

The early years of the 20th century saw an extraordinary ferment of radical artistic creativity in Russia, parallel to the political upheavals starting in 1905. Malevich, Blok, Mayakovsky, Zamyatin, Bely, Meyerhold, Vertov, Scriabin, Diaghilev, all pushed beyond traditional aesthetic boundaries and were influential beyond the borders of Russia or, eventually, the USSR. Not all subscribed unambiguously to revolutionary politics, but all contributed to the climate of revolutionary change.

In the 'Futurism' chapter of his 1924 book *Literature and Revolution* ('Futurism' here is practically synonymous with modernism - which had yet to be named) Trotsky wrote that '[t]he ideological premises which are needed for the revolution are formed before the revolution... It would be extremely flippant to establish by analogies and comparisons the identity of Futurism and Communism, and so form the deduction that Futurism is the art of the proletariat... In the evolution of that

art, Futurism will prove to have been a necessary link.'³

The principle that progressive art need not be identical to 'the art of the proletariat' was anathema to the Stalin regime. From 1932, 'socialist realism' became official state policy. In 1934 a Communist Party official called Andrei Zhdanov described its aims thus: 'the truthfulness and historical concreteness of the artistic portrayal should be combined with the ideological remoulding and education of the toiling people in the spirit of socialism.'⁴ In 1948 Zhdanov, now Stalin's Cultural Commissar, issued a notorious decree that, according to musicologist Julie Waters:

attacked... leading Soviet composers for their 'anti-national' and 'anti-democratic' tendencies, for preaching 'atonality, dissonance and disharmony, supposedly representative of 'progress' and 'modernism,'... and for 'a one-sided cultivation of complex forms of instrumental wordless symphonic music' at the expense of vocal music. Instead, Soviet composers were directed to write in a more accessible idiom, to draw for musical models

¹This essay incorporates material from two earlier articles,. Raymond Deane: 'On Fatwabs and Compressed Frequencies', *Journal of Music*, September 2007. <http://journalofmusic.com/focus/fatwabs-and-compressed-frequencies>, and 'Must Music Be Accessible', *Journal of Music*, July 2004. <http://journalofmusic.com/article/254>

²Adorno: *Aesthetic Theory*, (Trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997)

³Leon Trotsky: *Literature and Revolution*, Chapter 4, http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1924/lit_revo/ch04.htm (accessed 7/05/13)

⁴A. A. Zhdanov: *Soviet Literature - The Richest in Ideas, the Most Advanced Literature* http://www.marxists.org/subject/art/lit_crit/sovietwritercongress/zhdanov.html (accessed 7/05/13)

on the classical heritage, especially nineteenth-century Russian composers, and also to look to folk music.⁵

In a speech delivered to Soviet Music Workers that same year, Zhdanov asserted that formalists ‘compose music which is ugly and false, ...alien to the broad masses of the people, and created not for the millions of Soviet people, but for chosen individuals and small groups, for an elite.’⁶



Andrei Zhdanov

In terms of sheer radicalism, the Expressionist movement in Germany and Austria (and to a lesser degree elsewhere in Europe) had paralleled contemporaneous developments in Russia. Artists belonging wholly or partly to the movement included Trakl, Benn, Toller, Marc, Nolde, Kokoschka, Murnau, Schoenberg, Berg, Webern, Kafka, Brecht, and Klee.

Nazis and Stalinists alike believed that artistic modernism was inherently hostile to their aims; consequently, they drew up

very similar aesthetic canons. For the Nazis the equivalent to decadence was *degeneracy* (*Entartung*), a concept derived from the 1892 book of that name by Max Nordau.⁷ Once more a biological concept was introduced to describe the falling-away from a supposed ideal of vigour and health equated, for the Nazis, with a mythical Aryan race. Nordau, incidentally, became Theodor Herzl’s assistant in founding political Zionism: an irony with a dark future.

For Hitler, ‘the people have had no affinity for the so-called modern art...’ because ‘an art that cannot count on the ready inner agreement of the broad healthy mass of the people, but which must instead rely on the support of small, partially indifferent cliques, is intolerable.’⁸ For the Nazi musicologist Fritz Stein, German music must be based on folk music ‘as long as it remained undiluted and true to its German roots...’⁹

Both dictatorships imposed a conservative/reactionary aesthetic based on forms inherited from a previous historical era (the 19th century bourgeois realist novel, the classical/romantic symphony). For music to be ‘accessible’ and not merely ‘for an elite’ (Zhdanov) or for ‘small, partially indifferent cliques’ (Hitler), it was obliged to incorporate folk music supposedly embodying the unchanging, ‘rooted’ essence of a people.

While for Marxism such an essentialist notion is incompatible with the dialectical dynamism of social transformation, it perfectly suits Fascism’s quest for the sup-

⁵Julie Waters: *Proselytising the Prague Manifesto in Britain* <http://www.music.ucsb.edu/projects/musicandpolitics/archive/2009-1/waters.html> (accessed 7/05/13)

⁶A. A. Zhdanov: *On Literature, Music and Philosophy* (Lawrence & Wishart Ltd. London, 1950) <http://www.revolutionarydemocracy.org/archive/zhdanovlit.htm> (accessed 7/05/13)

⁷Max Nordau: *Degeneration*. (London, William Heinemann, 1898. Translator not named.)

⁸Adolph Hitler: speech at opening of Exhibition of German Art, *Völkischer Beobachter*, July 19th, 1937. http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/docpage.cfm?docpage_id=2374 (accessed 7/05/13)

⁹Adam Cathcart: *Music and Politics in Hitler’s Germany* http://www.jmu.edu/history/mhr/wm-library/2006_-_1_Adam_Cathcart.pdf (accessed 7/05/13)

posed restoration of a mythical primordial identity. Stalinism imposed an aesthetic of nostalgia as a tactic to control and/or suppress radical impulses that might eventually have been turned against the regime.

Much of the more sophisticated theory of socialist realism was drawn up by the Hungarian-born philosopher and critic Georg Lukács. While opposing Zhdanovism, Lukács dismissed all modernist art on the grounds that it was *decadent* and failed to reflect the totality of 'objective reality'; concentrating instead on the subjective fragmentation that was a symptom of capitalist society.¹⁰

As against this, the German Marxist philosopher Theodor Adorno, an enthusiastic advocate of modernism, wrote that:

[t]he idea of decadence can hardly be entertained in the absence of its positive counterpart: an image of nature in all its vigour and abundance. The categories of nature are smuggled illicitly into the mediations of society, the very practice against which the tenor of Marx's and Engels' critique of ideology was directed.

For Adorno, the concept of 'the mere reflection of objective reality' was 'a vulgar-materialist shibboleth...' while 'works of art which ignored their own form would destroy themselves as art,' a formulation that succinctly demolishes Zhdanov's crude use of 'formalist' as a term of abuse.

Adorno was himself a musician, having studied with the composer Alban Berg, a pupil of Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951). Around 1908, the latter had pulled the rug from under tonality, the system of musical

organisation that had unified Western classical music since at least the 18th century. Tonality entails a key (D major, C minor, etc.) functioning as a centre from which a hierarchy of harmonic relationships radiates. Atonality, a term Schoenberg loathed, repudiates centre and hierarchy alike, liberates dissonance, and dispenses with the closed forms (Sonata, Symphony) typical of tonal music. For Adorno, atonality represented the only authentic path for new music, and he condemned composers like Stravinsky and Hindemith who continued to seek salvation in tonality, however extended or modified in nature.

In the 1950s Adorno's influence spread throughout Western Europe, becoming almost hegemonic in West Germany until 1968, partly via his participation in the Darmstadt Vacation Courses in New Music. The most celebrated composers associated with Darmstadt - Boulez and Stockhausen in particular - eschewed explicit political considerations from their work, whereas Luigi Nono (1924-1990) joined the Italian Communist Party in 1952, eventually becoming a member of its Central Committee. Works like his anti-war *The Victory of Guernica* (1954) and anti-fascist *Il canto sospeso* (*The Suspended Song*, 1956) were humanist and emancipatory in intent but uncompromisingly rigorous in their musical language, while his opera *Al gran sole carico d'amore* (*In the Great Sun Charged with Love*, 1974), centred around the figure of Louise Michel, bordered on agitprop in its overt advocacy of revolution.

After 1980 Nono seemed to move inwards. His final opera, *Prometheus* (1984), is wholly without action; musically, it proceeds on the verge of silence; its choice of texts is esoteric (Aeschylus, Hesiod,

¹⁰Georg Lukács, *Realism in the Balance*, in *Aesthetics and Politics* (Verso, London & New York, 2007), 28-59.

¹¹Adorno: *Reconciliation under Duress*, in *Aesthetics and Politics*, 153.

Hölderlin, Rilke, Walter Benjamin), and rendered more so by the fact that whole passages, while present in the printed libretto, are 'omitted' from the music and are, in effect, to be recited inwardly by performers and listeners alike.

The obvious question arises: is a music that seems so austere to exclude the uninitiated listener (whatever her or his class) compatible with a politics dedicated to the emancipation of the proletariat? The English composer Cornelius Cardew (1936-1981) answered this emphatically in the negative. Between 1958 and 1960 he was assistant to Stockhausen, and collaborated on that composer's formidable *Carré* for 4 orchestras and choirs. This experience turned him against Stockhausen in particular and the musical *avant-garde* in general, both of which, however, strongly influenced his compositions of that period (e.g. *Piano Sonata No. 3, Two Books of Study for Pianists*). In the 1960s Cardew composed *The Great Learning*, based on Pound's translations of Confucius, but mostly concentrated on scores allowing a maximum of freedom to the performers, culminating in the purely graphic - and visually very beautiful - *Treatise* (1967).¹² He also co-founded the improvisatory *Scratch Orchestra* and played piano and cello with the legendary improvisation group *AMM*. In the 1970s he joined the Communist Party of Great Britain (Marxist-Leninist) - a minuscule Maoist formation - and took to writing political songs, choruses and instrumental music, often based on folk-tunes (including Irish ones - Cardew was deeply dedicated to the cause of ending British rule in Ireland),

mostly written in a tonal idiom inherited from the 19th century. Cardew seemed untroubled by the contradiction involved in addressing the proletariat by means of an inherited and debased 'bourgeois' musical language.

In 1974 Cardew published *Stockhausen Serves Imperialism*¹³, a collection of essays summing up his political thinking at the time. Stockhausen's music, he tells us, 'is a part of the cultural superstructure of the largest-scale system of human oppression and exploitation the world has ever known: imperialism' (meaning capitalism). He points out that 'the Darmstadt school... had been set up after the Second World War to propagate the music and ideas that the Nazis had banished. The Nazis branded the avant garde 'degenerate' and publicly disgraced it and suppressed it. In post-war Germany a subtler technique was used: instead of suppression, repressive tolerance.'¹⁴ A few pages later, he defines one of the ruling classes' tactics 'to stave off collapse' as follows: 'The attention of the general public must not be drawn to the cultural expression of the collapse of imperialism, namely the degenerate avant garde.'¹⁵ Modern music is 'footling, unwholesome, sensational, frustrating, offensive and depressing', because it is 'decadent'.¹⁶

Thus Cardew unhesitatingly employs the same terms as the Nazis and Stalinists - 'degenerate', 'decadent' - to defame modern music. He seems not in the least uneasy about these associations, nor does he consider that such music's banishment by the Nazis might actually constitute a badge of honour. The overall similarity of

¹²Basis of the following realisation by Shawn Feeney: <http://vimeo.com/24759329> (accessed 7/05/13)

¹³Cardew: *Stockhausen Serves Imperialism* (Latimer New Dimensions, 1974) Free download: http://guaciara.files.wordpress.com/2010/05/cardew_stockhausen.pdf (accessed 7/05/13). Page numbers indicated in this text in brackets after citations.

¹⁴as above p47-8

¹⁵as above p53

¹⁶as above p58

Cardew's terminology to that of Zhdanov ('music which is ugly and false, ...alien to the broad masses of the people...') and of Hitler ('an art that cannot count on the ready inner agreement of the broad healthy mass of the people, but which must instead rely on the support of small, partially indifferent cliques...') should give us pause. Yet similar language has continued to crop up with depressing regularity in the 40 years since Cardew published his squib.

The contemporary British composer Gordon Downie (not to be confused with the Canadian rock musician of the same name) pugnaciously lays his Stalinist cards on the table: 'given that the proletariat are themselves a product of capital, and represent a low revolutionary potential, I would advocate a model... in which a radical intellectual vanguard guides this process through enlightened leadership.' And yet Downie is a rare example of an unconditional advocate of the emancipatory value of modernist high culture in the spirit of Adorno:

It's true that high cultural forms remain inaccessible to both the proletariat and large sections of the petit bourgeoisie. For those writers of the *New Left Review*, and *Culture, Theory and Critique*, the solution is to interpret aesthetic complexity as a means to sustain an unequal distribution of cultural power. By this route all high-cultural endeavour is condemned. But such an anal-

ysis, intentionally or not, conspires with those very forms of domination with which the new left has claimed to be at war. by jettisoning complexity, we disassemble one of the remaining weapons against the process of intellectual emaciation, conformity and passivity that characterises capitalist societies.¹⁷

Nonetheless, although admitting that he is 'unable to argue that complexity doesn't assist the maintenance of the political status quo' given that 'capital deforms and corrupts all that it touches' (thus pulling the ground from his own position), Downie goes on to berate just about every composer whose work fails to conform to his own exacting criteria of complexity, i.e. practically all living composers.¹⁸ The polemical aggressiveness of these arguments actually precludes any rational response, which will always be dismissed as compromise with the class enemy.

One might nonetheless suggest that musical complexity tends to lead to rather uniform stylistic results, evocative of the state *avant-garde* music had reached in the early to mid 1950s. In listening to Downie's own music and that of Brian Ferneyhough (b. 1943), it's hard not to feel that such 'complexity' is in danger of becoming reified.¹⁹ The fact that a 'new complexity' composer like the Scot James Dillon (b. 1950) has in recent years (re)introduced elements of melody, rhythmic regularity and harmonic centralisation

¹⁷Gordon Downie and Ian Pace a dialogue. <http://www.musicalpointers.co.uk/articles/generaltopics/DowniePace.htm> (accessed 7/05/13)

¹⁸See also Gordon Downie: 'Soundtracks for the New American Century', *Weekly Worker* 660. <http://www.cpgb.org.uk/home/weekly-worker/660/soundtracks-for-the-new-american-century> (accessed 7/05/13).

¹⁹Reification (German: Verdinglichung) is the process whereby social relations become objectified, turned into things. Lukács developed this Hegelian/Marxist concept significantly by applying it to ideology and aesthetics.

would doubtlessly be seen by Downie as an ‘intellectually emaciated’ compromise. But perhaps the leavening of complexity with simpler elements could be seen as a dialectical option whereby each modifies the way the other is heard. And perhaps the offer of aural lifelines to the less hardened listener is a kind of courtesy rather than a mere cop-out.

Whereas Downie condemns the hugely successful American composer John Adams as a neo-con with affinities to the fascistic Project for a New American Century,²⁰ the critic Simon Behrman lauds Adams for managing ‘the difficult feat of composing music that is innovative, modern and yet highly accessible.’²¹ Behrman tells us that ‘even when he is not being explicitly political (as in his operas *Nixon in China* and *The Death of Klinghoffer*), his nervous, driven and expressive style accurately reflects life in today’s urban, industrialised world.’ It appears, therefore, that ‘accurate reflection’ of ‘today’s world’ (narrowly defined) is the criterion that defines Adams’s success and that is being generally enjoined upon contemporary composers. Behrman is clearly faithful to the ‘vulgar-materialist shibboleth’ of ‘reflection theory’ decried by Adorno].

Without clarifying in what way Adams is ‘innovative’, Behrman contrasts him with ‘modern classical composers’ who ‘have, by and large, found themselves unable to engage with popular music.’ Such engagement is compared to a time when ‘Haydn, Mozart, and Mahler used contemporary popular song and dance melodies as a reference point for their own compositions. They also frequently made al-

lusions to contemporary social concerns.’ The latter assertion is baseless, while the former would benefit from the insertion of ‘on rare occasions’ after ‘melodies’. Furthermore, however ‘highly accessible’ such music may have been, access to it was almost entirely limited to the aristocracy in the first two cases, and the bourgeoisie in that of Mahler.

The idea that a ‘marriage’ between classical and popular music somehow brings the former closer to the people is either not borne out - Mark-Anthony Turnage has tried hard, but somehow has not become a crossover icon - or is realised (like many marriages) only by suppressing the individuality of one partner. Classical composers growing their hair and brandishing electric guitars are rarely more convincing than rock musicians donning suits and declaiming to the accompaniment of string quartets. Elvis Costello’s *Juliet Letters* is a particularly grisly example of the latter.²²

Behrman, who condemns Adorno as both ‘elitist’ and ‘formalist’,²³ clearly sees ‘accessibility’ as inherent in musical works themselves, rather than in the social, economic and educational structures which condition musical reception and dissemination. This is to conflate ‘accessibility’ with ‘familiarity’. To state that ‘all music must be accessible’ should be as absurd as to state that ‘all music must be familiar.’ Such a requirement would automatically exclude any new work from entering the closed circle of what we call ‘the repertoire’, thus foreclosing emancipation while reproducing conditions typical of today’s classical scene and surely conditioned by

²⁰Downie: Soundtracks... See note 15.

²¹Simon Behrman: ‘John Adams: a musical commentary on today’s politics.’ *Socialist Worker* 2035. <http://www.socialistworker.co.uk/art.php?id=10542> (accessed 7/05/13)

²²http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Juliet_Letters (accessed 7/05/13)

²³Simon Behrman: ‘From Revolution to Irrelevance’, *International Socialism* 121 <http://www.isj.org.uk/?id=511> (accessed 7/05/13)

the ‘bums on seats’ mentality rather than any ethical concerns.

Undoubtedly modernist art entails a new paradigm of (in)comprehensibility, based on the breakdown of a shared interpretation of the world. But even this hypothetical consensus is a problematic concept that begins to crumble under analysis. What at first seems ‘natural’ in it tends to reveal itself as ‘second nature’ and hence ‘unnatural’, indeed ideological. Once again, Adorno: ‘the categories of nature are smuggled illicitly into the mediations of society, the very practice against which the tenor of Marx’s and Engels’ critique of ideology was directed.’

Furthermore, this ‘shared interpretation of the world’ was never shared by or with those outside the Western consensus. Imperialism and colonialism are premised on the imposition of our interpretations on those outside the West whose different interpretations of the world yield different forms of art that are sometimes as incomprehensible to us as the most recondite modernism.

The accessibility of art is primarily a political question, and only secondarily an aesthetic one. We must systematically replace the word ‘accessibility’ with the word ‘access.’ The very concept of democracy may be defined in terms of access: to education, resources, medical care, work, liberty. To define access as something inherent in music is to divert attention from the responsibility of those involved in education, broadcasting and concert promotion to facilitate the access of the greatest number of people to the widest possible variety of music. The lamentable state of Irish music education and the rigid conservatism of our musical life are related to each other

and to the right-wing stagnation of Irish politics.

Behrman is on the right track, then, when he maintains that ‘what is needed is a renewal of the relationship between artist and audience, and this can only be achieved by massive progressive social transformation...’²⁴ This echoes Trotsky who, in the text partially quoted earlier, wrote that ‘[w]hen the cultural and aesthetic education of the working masses will destroy the wide chasm between the creative intelligentsia and the people, art will have a different aspect from what it has today.’²⁵ It is presumptuous and authoritarian to legislate in advance what that aspect should be, and to condemn as ‘degenerate’ or ‘decadent’ all art that refuses to conform to it.

Behrman defines his aim, however, as ‘to help break down the elitism that all too often alienates modernist music from so many people.’ The condemnation of certain artists and art-works as elitist posits the potential listener (reader, viewer, etc.) as someone incapable of evolution, petrified in ignorance. This reification of the ‘consumer’ is itself elitist.

Conversely, the dismissal of all popular (in the broadest sense) music as ‘commercialised’ and/or ‘intellectually emaciated’ displays both a contempt for and a lack of faith in the general public. This ‘lack of faith’ is based on the presumption that it is possible to have a totally administered world (Adorno),²⁶ within which people are ‘totally’ brainwashed just as popular culture is ‘totally’ commodified. Such a view is fatalistic and demobilising (Behrman rightly calls it ‘pessimistic’, although Adorno’s convoluted thinking also had a utopian dimension).

²⁴Simon Behrman: ‘From Revolution to Irrelevance’, as above.

²⁵See Leon Trotsky, note 3.

²⁶See, for example, Adorno and Horkheimer: *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, transl. Edmund Jephcott. (Stanford University Press, 2002.)

In reality, these totalities are never watertight, and it is by widening the cracks within them that emancipation, often unexpectedly, becomes possible. Similarly, works of art are never ‘totally’ encapsulated by the immediate pressures of commerce or circumstance. There is always a remainder, and it is this that guarantees the durability and vitality of individual art-works, however they may fare within the official guidelines of the commissars. The views of a Gordon Downie are closed to such possibilities; those of a Simon Behrman acknowledge them, but lean towards the populist and the anti-intellectual, a leaning that tends to be just as exclusionary.

In *Irish Marxist Review* Issue 5, the young poet, musician and socialist activist Connor Kelly gives us a survey of recent Irish poetry that seems to me to display, in an obviously different context, some of the worrisome rhetorical habits that I am here attempting to pinpoint.²⁷

Having surveyed a number of ‘established’ and ‘new’ poets, in particular performance poets, Kelly draws the following conclusions:

The new poets...seem to be able to relate with much more ease and readiness to the new social movements evolving around the world and to the lives of ordinary people. This part [sic] of their popular appeal. More and more people are seeing the establishment poets as sort of fusty academics with little to say.

Now, I’m not entirely out of sympathy with the latter sentiment, and I’m wholly in sympathy with Kelly’s suggestions as to ‘what needs to happen’ - basically, that

poets should ‘take matters into their own hands.’ However, in the remarks quoted above there is a kind of reification of ‘ordinary people’ that is almost insulting, as if their supposed ‘ordinariness’ somehow precluded their reading intellectually challenging work (in which case, it’s not quite clear how they can evaluate what ‘fusty academics’ have to say). Kelly compounds this by adding that ‘[p]eople should be able to relate to [poetry] in some way, and to experience it without having a degree in literature first.’ This both seeks to impoverish the experience of those who might have ‘a degree in literature’, and to preempt the possibility that ‘ordinary people’, under more equitable social circumstances, might acquire third level education.

We have seen a rigid Stalinist (Downie) espousing anti-Stalinist views and a Trotskyist (Behrman) expressing views worthy of Zhdanov. This polarisation could be summarised as pitting a complexity that excludes untutored listeners against a simpler music that strives to include them. It is an antinomy that has never been resolved by the left, but that is easily resolved under capitalism: the ‘free market’ opts for Zhdanov, as can be seen by scrutinising the ‘contemporary music’ shelves of the few remaining CD shops, packed as they are with music by Adams, Arvo Pärt, Philip Glass, and such masters of pastiche as Ludovico Einaudi and Karl Jenkins.

The term ‘elitist’ is properly applied to those who perpetuate a system that discriminates against disadvantaged sectors of the community, thus limiting their access to available resources. A progressive politics should aim to dissolve elitism not by censoring ‘difficult’ art-works nor by consigning ‘advanced’ artists literally or metaphorically to the gulag, but by creating the social and political space within which well-informed citizens have an equal

²⁷ <http://www.irishmarxistreview.net/index.php/imr/article/view/58> (accessed 7/05/13).

opportunity to experience and enjoy - or indeed reject - the widest possible variety of art works, even Jenkins and Einaudi.

Attempts to define music as 'left-wing' or 'right-wing' on the basis of its musical language alone (Gordon Downie refers to 'the right or extreme right of the aesthetic spectrum')²⁸ are usually tendentious and unhelpful, which is not to say that they should not be the subject of open debate (e.g., 'is it not inconsistent to link radical politics with reactionary aesthetics?'). What must be avoided at all costs is a cultural practice that excludes particular stylistic directions on the basis of ideological presuppositions.

In this essay I have attempted to show that the relationship between the arts (not just music, although as a musician this has

been my main emphasis) and radical left-wing politics cannot be defined on a prescriptive basis without reifying art-works and art-lovers alike. I have tried to show the pitfalls involved in an ill-considered use of terms like 'decadence', 'formalism', 'accessibility', and 'elitist', terms that were the staple of repressive discourse in Stalinism and Nazism alike. The fact that these dictatorships expended so much energy on prescribing acceptable art practice at the very least demonstrated the importance they ascribed to culture, both as regards its content and form. I believe that any vision of 'progressive social transformation' must ascribe equal importance to culture, but without negating pluralism and instigating exclusion.

²⁸Downey: SoundtracksSee note 15.