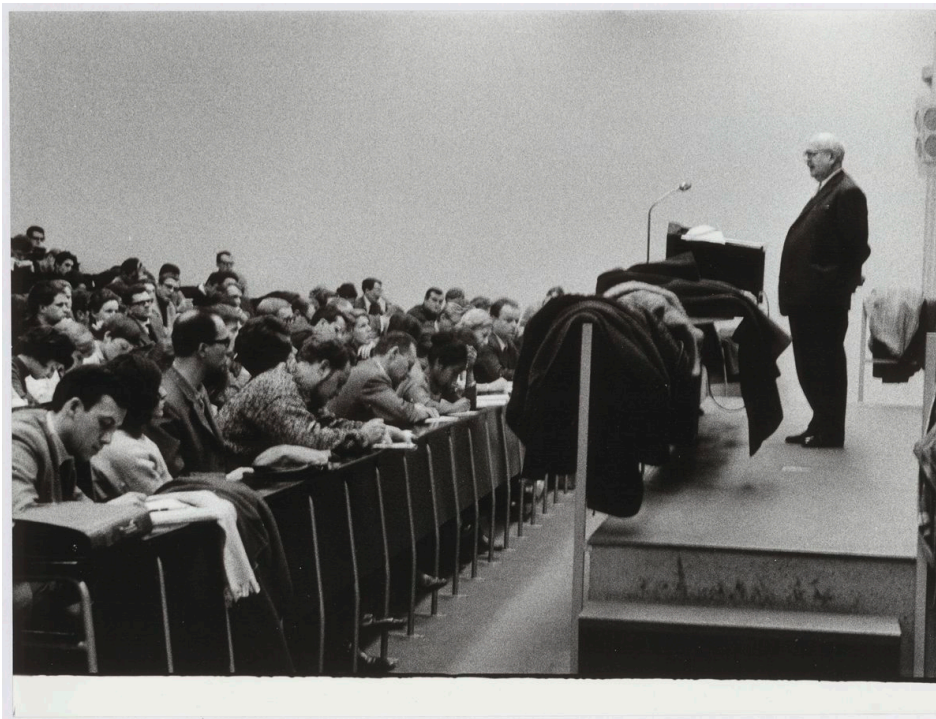


Theodor W. Adorno during a Lecture (1963)

Abstract

The social theorist Theodor W. Adorno (1903–1969) delivered his lecture “The Meaning of ‘Working through the Past’” [“Was bedeutet: ‘Aufarbeitung der Vergangenheit?’”] at a conference for educators in Wiesbaden on November 9, 1959. The event had been organized by the Coordination Council for Christian-Jewish Cooperation [Koordinierungsrat für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit]. At the time, West Germany was experiencing a wave of antisemitic attacks against synagogues and Jewish community institutions. In his lecture, Adorno reflected on the meaning of “coming to terms with the past” in postwar Germany and warned that Nazi crimes could only be “worked through” if the root causes that led to the rise of the Third Reich and the Holocaust were eliminated. Adorno was a key influence on the West German student movement, which also demanded a more pointed and honest confrontation with the German Nazi past. The photograph below shows Adorno during a lecture at Goethe University in Frankfurt am Main in 1963.

Source



Source: Lecture by Theodor W. Adorno at the Goethe University in Frankfurt. Date: February 1963.

Location: Frankfurt am Main. Photo: Abisag Tüllmann.

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