Abstract

The text shows the complexity of the discussion about the meaning and direction of history, mainly the major difficulty of ascribing any meaning to historical development in the present world. It briefly reconstructs the pessimistic position of the Frankfurt School, which represents a response to the conventional optimism of liberalism and Marxism. This response is based on a critique of the results of technology and in view of environmental problems. It finally sketches the moderate skepticism of Karl Löwith as an acceptable compromise.

Keywords

Theodor W. Adorno, historical evolution, historical goals, development laws, Karl Löwith, Marxism.