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John Abromeit

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Max Horkheimer and the Foundations of the Frankfurt School

This book is the first comprehensive intellectual biography of Max Horkheimer during the early and middle phases of his life (1895–1941). Drawing on unexamined new sources, John Abromeit describes the critical details of Horkheimer's intellectual development. This study recovers and reconstructs the model of early Critical Theory that guided the work of the Institute for Social Research in the 1930s. Horkheimer is remembered primarily as the coauthor of *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, which he wrote with Theodor W. Adorno in the early 1940s. Yet few people realize that Horkheimer and Adorno did not begin working together seriously until the late 1930s, or that the model of Critical Theory developed by Horkheimer and Erich Fromm in the late 1920s and early 1930s differs in crucial ways from *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Abromeit highlights the ways in which Horkheimer's early Critical Theory remains relevant to contemporary theoretical discussions in a wide variety of fields.

John Abromeit is an assistant professor in the Department of History and Social Studies Education at State University of New York, Buffalo State. He is the coeditor of *Herbert Marcuse: Heideggerian Marxism* (2005) and *Herbert Marcuse: A Critical Reader* (2004), and his articles and book reviews have appeared in *Theory and Society*, *Theory, Culture and Society*, *Radical Philosophy*, and *Constellations*. Professor Abromeit previously held a Harper-Schmidt postdoctoral position in the social sciences in the University of Chicago Society of Fellows.

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