

Hegel: Three Studies, by T. Adorno

- a. People / Organizations: <https://joacamillopenna.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/theodor-w-adorno-hegel-three-studies-studies-bookz-a-org.pdf>
- b. Quotes:
 - "Adorno's *Hegel: Three Studies* takes the form of an extreme and provocative defense of the truth content in Hegel's philosophy." - S. Nicholson & J. Shapiro (pg. xx)
 - "The aim of *Hegel: Three Studies*, Adorno tells us in his preface, is to prepare 'a new conception of the dialectic'. The dialectic works through immanent criticism, and this is the approach Adorno takes in his defense of Hegel. It is through immanent criticism that Adorno attacks the truth claims of the various schools of thought-positivism, Gestalt psychology, phenomenology, existential ontology, dialectical materialism-that claim to have surpassed Hegel." - S. Nicholson & J. Shapiro (pg. xxi)
 - "**Adorno's defense of Hegel against the charge of being the ultimate bourgeois philosopher** and his simultaneous justification of the bourgeois sobriety in Hegel, a defense and a justification that, like Adorno's critique of the notion of clarity, **is also Adorno's self-defense through the medium of Hegel.**" S. Nicholson & J. Shapiro (pg. xxix-xxx)
 - "**Civil society is an antagonistic totality. It survives only in and through its antagonisms and is not able to resolve them.**" - Author (pg. 28)
 - "**Dialectical truth lays itself open to such misuse: it is fragile by nature.**" - Author (pg. 83)
- c. General Notes:
 - Introduction, by S. Nicholson & J. Shapiro (pg. ix)
 - "**The core of the critical theorists' approach is the immanent critique of ideology. Truth is attained by unfolding both the truth content and the contradictions of thought through linking it to the truth content and contradictions of its social context and commitments.** This leads to a historically relativized truth that is maximally universal precisely through awareness of its historical and social situation and limitations. The critique of ideology means taking theory at its word and at its deed. Hence the Frankfurt School produced an imposing series of critical hermeneutic studies of social theory and philosophy, most of which are important both as philosophical and sociological works in their own right and as valuable contributions to the understanding of other theorists. No other thinker was as important to this critical hermeneutics as Hegel." (pg. x-xi)
 - "Hegel's focus on the negative and the power of negation and contradiction inherent in thought and reality seemed a key to rescuing the negative from the overwhelming affirmative power of advanced industrial society." (pg. xi)
 - "**Adorno...sought to recuperate in Hegel the basis for a dialectic of resistance to that power of domination by concentrating on the nonidentical, that which is beyond the domination of reason.**" (pg. xii)
 - "In their interpretations of Hegel, **both Marcuse and Adorno attempt to provide a philosophical basis for "negative thinking": for thought that desires to free itself from the shackles of the "logos of domination"** and to serve as a basis for and interpretation of emancipation in the broadest historical sense - emancipation from class domination, from the "iron cage" of bureaucratic rationality, from the terror world of the concentration camp, from the "performance principle," and from one-dimensional thought, administered culture, and deformed experience." (pg. xii)
 - "Adorno's thought in general, and his interpretation of Hegel in particular, sets itself an ironic task: **that of developing a dialectical method, with its connections to a self-reflective subject, in a context defined as one in which the subject has been liquidated by its own attempt to liquidate everything outside of itself.** And his dialectical thought cannot merely attempt to resurrect the liquidated subject. For **a true, negative dialectic must strive to attain precisely that otherness that is denied by a subject-oriented dialectic.** That is why Adorno differentiates himself from Hegel most emphatically in relation to the concepts of identity and nonidentity." (pg. xiv)
 - "If dialectical thinking is to avoid this idealistic presumption (which can easily take on a materialistic form, as in "dialectical materialism"), then it must shape itself to the contours of the object - not as an irreducible given but as something with its own tensions and contradictions, which include those of the thought that tries to comprehend it. This approach holds equally for the understanding of Hegel's own thought, looking for its truth both in what it grasps and in what it conceals, in what it points to beyond itself as well as in what keeps it from grasping that to which it points, in what it says as well as in what it tries to say but cannot." (pg. xv)
 - "For an individual living in a contradictory, perverted society, dialectical experience is an essential vehicle for the preservation not only of the truth-the cognitive truth about that society - but of his or her own identity. That is why negative experience is an experience not only of negation but also of affirmation. It is true that **much of the modern experience of the perverted world takes the form of immediate negation, of nausea, shock, alienation, dissonance, and despair.** But while the expression of this negation is a part of the truth, it is only a partially developed form of it. For the real truth about reality includes awareness of the potentiality, the desire, and the justification for transcending the perverted world. It must go beyond the merely dialectical to what Hegel calls the speculative, in which the antagonisms of the dialectic are resolved. The individual in advanced capitalist society, who recognizes that nothing within that society escapes contamination by domination and the commodity principle, can maintain a true identity only through the negation of all the givens of the surrounding society and culture. Such an existence is governed by orientation to the truth. It relates, through dialectical thought, practice, and experience, to the essence of things. But through this relation, it discerns and experiences the good, the true, and the beautiful through their deformations - as the negation of the latter, and as real in this negation. It pursues freedom and happiness in a repressive and oppressive society without ideologically denying this repression and oppression. It pursues the life of a critical intellect without suffering the deformation and rigidification of experience that is the normal form of intellectual life in capitalist society." (pg. xvii)
 - "**The aim of dialectical thinking is to think not abstractly but concretely, by understanding ideas and realities in the contradictions of their specific contexts and processes rather than in "abstraction" from these contexts and processes - to put the ladder back into the thought.** And for the critical theorists the relevant contexts and processes are social, cultural, psychological, and intellectual-they are historical through and through." (pg. xix)
 - "**Truth emerges from a dialectical interplay of subject and object, of particular and whole, of mediated and unmediated.**" (pg. xxii)
 - Aspects of Hegel's Philosophy (pg. 1)
 - "In Kant, the idea that a world divided into subject and object, the world in which, as prisoners of our own constitution, we are involved only with phenomena, is not the ultimate world, already forms the secret source of energy. Hegel adds an un-Kantian element to that: the idea that in grasping, conceptually, the block, the limit that is set to subjectivity, in understanding subjectivity as "mere" subjectivity, we have already passed beyond that limit. Hegel, who in many respects is a Kant come into his own, is driven by the idea that knowledge, if there is such a thing, is by its very idea total knowledge, that every one-sided judgment intends, by its very form, the absolute, and does not rest until it has been sublated in it. Speculative idealism does not recklessly disregard the limits of the possibility of knowledge; rather, it searches for words to express the idea that a reference to truth as such is in fact inherent in all knowledge that is knowledge; that if it is to be knowledge at all and not a mere duplication of the subject, knowledge is more than merely subjective; it is objectivity like the objective reason in Plato, the legacy of which chemically permeates subjective transcendental philosophy in Hegel." (pg. 6)

- "Hegel's critique strikes at the empty center of the static analysis of knowledge into subject and object that the currently accepted logic of science takes for granted, the residual theory of truth according to which the objective is what is left after the so-called subjective factors have been eliminated, and the blow he strikes is so deadly because he does not set up an irrational unity of subject and object in opposition to that analysis but instead preserves the distinct moments of the subjective and the objective while grasping them as mediated by one another." (pg. 7)
- "For Hegel's idealism, reason becomes a critical reason in a sense that criticizes Kant once again, a negative reason that both preserves static elements and sets them in motion. The poles that Kant opposed to one another - form and content, nature and spirit, theory and praxis, freedom and necessity, the thing in itself and the phenomenon - are all permeated through and through by reflection in such a way that none of these determinations are left standing as ultimate. **In order to be thought, and to exist, each inherently requires the other that Kant opposed to it. Hence for Hegel mediation is never a middle element between extremes, as, since Kierkegaard, a deadly misunderstanding has depicted it as being; instead, mediation takes place in and through the extremes, in the extremes themselves. This is the radical aspect of Hegel, which is incompatible with any advocacy of moderation.** Hegel shows that the fundamental ontological contents that traditional philosophy hoped to distill are not ideas discretely set off from one another; rather, each of them requires its opposite, and the relationship of all of them to one another is one of process." (pg. 8-9)
 - "For all that, however, and although **the dialectic demonstrates the impossibility of reducing the world to a fixed subjective pole and methodically pursues the reciprocal negation and production of the subjective and objective moments,** Hegel's philosophy, a philosophy of spirit, held fast to idealism." (pg. 10)
 - ◆ "Hegelian dialectic finds its ultimate truth, that of its own impossibility, in its unresolved and vulnerable quality, even if, as the theodicy of self-consciousness, it has no awareness of this." (pg. 13)
- "Dialectic is the unswerving effort to conjoin reason's critical consciousness of itself and the critical experience of objects." (pg. 9-10)
- "Both Fichte and Hegel skipped over the fact that the expression "I," whether it is the pure transcendental "I" or the empirical, unmediated "I," must necessarily designate some consciousness or other." (pg. 16)
 - "An "I" that was no longer "I" in any sense at all, an "I," that is, without any relation to individuated consciousness and thereby to the spatiotemporal person, would be nonsense. It would not only be as free-floating and indeterminable as Hegel accused being, its counterconcept, of being; in addition, it could no longer be grasped as an "I," as something mediated by consciousness. Analysis of the absolute subject has to acknowledge the indissolubility of an empirical, nonidentical moment in it, a moment that doctrines of the absolute subject, idealist systems of identity, are not permitted to acknowledge as indissoluble. In this sense Hegel's philosophy is untrue when measured against its own concept." (pg. 17)
- "**The Kantian moment of spontaneity, which is virtually equated with constitutive identity in the synthetic unity of apperception** - Kant's concept of the "I think" was the formula for the lack of distinction between productive spontaneity and logical identity - **becomes total in Hegel, and in this totality it becomes a principle of being no less than a principle of thought.**" (pg. 17)
 - "There is no question that Hegel was a transcendental analytic philosopher like Kant" (pg. 18)
- "Hegel did not simply reconstruct them[e.g., facts] in thought; he grasped them and criticized them by producing them in thought: **their negativity always makes them into something other than what they merely are and claim to be.** The principle of reality's becoming, through which it is more than its positivity, that is, the central idealist motor of Hegel's thought, is at the same time anti-idealist." (pg. 31)
 - "In all its particular moments Hegel's philosophy is intended to be negative..." (pg. 31)
- "By virtue of its definition of being as an essentially negative, reflected, criticized moment of the dialectic, Hegel's theory of being becomes incompatible with the contemporary theologization of being." (pg. 32)
 - **For Hegel truth in itself is not "being"; it is precisely in being that abstraction, the approach of the subject that produces its concepts nonrationalistically, is hidden.** In Hegel's idea of truth, however, the subjective moment, the moment of relativity, is surpassed in that it becomes aware of itself. The idea is contained in what is true, although it is not identical with it; 'reason is, therefore, misunderstood when reflection is excluded from the True, and is not grasped as a positive moment of the absolute'. Perhaps nothing says more about the nature of dialectical thought than that self-consciousness of the subjective moment in truth, reflection on reflection, is to effect a reconciliation with the injustice that the operating subjectivity does to immanent truth in merely supposing and positing as true something that is never wholly true. If the idealist dialectic turns against idealism, it does so because its own principle, because the very overextension of its idealist claim, is at the same time anti-idealist. **The dialectic is a process in terms of the immanence of truth as much as in terms of the activity of consciousness: process, that is, is truth itself.**" (pg. 37)
 - "...truth itself is not a mere quality of judgment; rather, in truth something always prevails that, although it cannot be isolated, cannot be reduced to the subject, something that traditional idealist epistemologies believe they can neglect as a mere unknown. Truth divests itself of its subjectivity: because no subjective judgment can be true and yet each and every one must want to be true, truth transcends itself and becomes something in-itself." (pg. 29)
 - "...for Hegel time becomes a moment of truth itself" (pg. 40)
- "in his innermost core Hegel sensed that the nature and destiny of human beings can be realized only through what is estranged, only through the world's domination, as it were, of human beings. Human beings must appropriate even the powers that are hostile to them; they must insinuate themselves into them, so to speak. Hegel introduced the cunning of reason into the philosophy of history in order to provide a plausible demonstration of the way objective reason, the realization of freedom, succeeds by means of the blind, irrational passions of historical individuals. This concept reveals something about the experiential core of Hegel's thought. His thought as a whole is cunning; it hopes to achieve victory over the superior power of the world, about which it has no illusions, by turning this superior power against itself until it turns into something different" (pg. 42-43)
- The Experiential Content of Hegel's Philosophy (pg. 53)
 - "One does not need the speculative concept to understand this motif in the critique of science: **that what lies closest to the individual subject, what has immediate certainty for him, is not the ground of truth and not absolutely certain.** The personal consciousness of the individual, which was analyzed by traditional epistemology, can be seen to be illusion. Not only does the bearer of personal consciousness owe his existence and the reproduction of his life to society. In fact, everything through which he is specifically constituted as a cognitive subject, hence, that is, the logical universality that governs his thinking, is, as the school of Durkheim in particular has shown, always also social in nature. **The individual, who considers himself the legitimate basis of truth by virtue of what is supposed to be immediately given for him, obeys the web of delusion of a society that falsely but necessarily thinks of itself as individualistic. What the individual holds to be primary and irrefutably absolute is derived and secondary, down to every individual piece of sensory data.**" (pg. 63)
 - "**Hegel's philosophy is both a philosophy of reason and an antipositivist philosophy. It attacks mere epistemology by showing that the forms that epistemology considers to constitute knowledge depend as much on the content of knowledge as vice-versa.**" (pg. 65)
 - "In order to attain the cogency epistemology yearns for, **philosophy must break epistemology open.** Hence a philosophizing focused on content, one that tries to formulate experiences in their necessity and cogency, is brought about precisely by the self-reflection of a formal philosophizing

- that had rejected it and prohibited it as dogmatic." (pg. 66)
- "Hegel's response is that form and content are essentially mediated by one another." (pg. 66)
 - **"In order to be able to operate with the clean, clear concepts it brags about, science establishes such concepts and makes its judgments without regard for the fact that the life of the subject matter for which the concept is intended does not exhaust itself in conceptual specification.** What furnishes the canon for Hegelian idealism is the resistance to practical, merely verbal definitions shown by a spirit that has not yet been processed and dressed by science, the need to grasp - as the German word Begriff [concept, from greifen, grasp] implies - what the matter at hand actually is and what essential and by no means mutually harmonious moments it contains, rather than merely manipulating concepts as tokens. That idealism, which is reproached with being unreflectively arrogant, wants to fully disclose the matter at hand through its concept because in the last analysis the thing itself and its concept are one and the same. On the surface it would seem that Hegelian philosophy nowhere distances itself more from the pre-dialectical concept of experience than here: what happens to spirit is ascribed to spirit, rather than spirit simply arranging it, because after all it is nothing but spirit. But even this most anti-empirical point in Hegel's philosophy is not without an object. It registers the distinction between the matter at hand, the object of knowledge, and the scientific copy of it, with which a self-critical science cannot be satisfied. **But the concept cannot transcend its own arbitrary nature, which abstracts, classifies, and delimits. Hegel detested attempts to do so** such as, at that time, Schelling's and with good reason. They betrayed what he cared most about, his dream of the truth of the matter itself, for the sake of an intellectual intuition that does not go beyond the concept but rather falls short of it and, by usurping the objectivity of the concept, regresses to the subjectivity of mere opinion. There is nothing that philosophical thought is more touchy about than something very close to it that compromises it by hiding the difference that makes all the difference in an inconspicuous nuance. Hence **Hegel taught that the meanings of concepts are both to be pinned down, more scientifico, so that they can remain concepts, and also to be "set in motion," altered according to the dictates of the object, in order not to distort it. The dialectic is expected to elaborate this postulate, which would otherwise be merely paradoxical.** Contrary to what it has become, both in parody and in its dogmatic petrification, **dialectic does not mean readiness to replace the meaning of one concept with another one illicitly obtained.** Not that one is supposed to eliminate the law of contradiction, as seems to be expected of Hegelian logic. Rather, **contradiction itself** - the contradiction between the fixed concept and the concept in motion - **becomes the agent of philosophizing. When the concept is pinned down, that is, when its meaning is confronted with what is encompassed by it, its non-identity - the fact that the concept and the thing itself are not one and the same - becomes evident within the identity of concept and thing that is required by the logical form of definition. Hence the concept that remains true to its own meaning must change; if it is to follow its own conception, a philosophy that holds the concept to be something more than a mere instrument of the intellect must abandon definition, which might hinder it in doing so.** The movement of the concept is not a sophistical manipulation that would insert changing meanings into it from the outside but rather the ever-present consciousness of both the identity of and the inevitable difference between the concept and what it is supposed to express, a consciousness that animates all genuine knowledge. Because philosophy will not relinquish that identity, it must accept this difference." (pg. 69-71)
 - **"What motivates Hegel's concept of reification is the idea that science is concerned less with the life of things that with their compatibility with its own rules: what acts as though it were irreproachable, irreducible truth is itself a product of a preliminary processing, something secondary and derivative. Not the least of the tasks of philosophical consciousness is that of dissolving, through self-reflection, what has become congealed and frozen through science, returning it to what science has removed it from.** The very objectivity of science is merely subjective: Hegel's objection to the unreflective labor of the intellect is as rational as his corrective to it." (pg. 73)
 - "Using the language of epistemology and the language of speculative metaphysics extrapolated from it, Hegel expressed the idea that the reified and rationalized society of the bourgeois era, the society in which a nature-dominating reason had come to fruition, could become a society worthy of human beings - not by regressing to older, irrational stages prior to the division of labor but only by applying its rationality to itself, in other words, only through a healing awareness of the marks of unreason in its own reason, and the traces of the rational in the irrational as well. Since then the element of unreason has become evident in the consequences of modern rationality, which threaten universal catastrophe." (pg. 74)
 - "Hegel's philosophical consciousness suffered more from the estrangement between subject and object, between consciousness and reality, than had any previous philosophical consciousness. But his philosophy had the strength not to flee from this suffering back into the chimera of a world and a subject of pure immediacy. It did not let itself be distracted from its awareness that only through the realized truth of the whole would the unreason of a merely particular reason, that is, a reason that merely serves particular interests, disintegrate. This says more about his reflection of reflection than the irrationalist gestures into which Hegel sometimes let himself be misled in his desperate attempts to rescue the truth of a society that had already become untrue. Hegel's self-reflection of the subject in philosophical consciousness is actually society's dawning critical consciousness of itself." (pg. 74-75)
 - **"The motif of contradiction, and with it that of a reality that confronts the subject as harsh, alien, and coercive** - a motif in which Hegel anticipated Bergson, the metaphysician of flow - **is generally considered the over-arching principle of Hegel's philosophy. It is the basis of the dialectical method.** But it is precisely this principle that requires translation into the intellectual experience it expresses. It very easily congeals to become the trademark of a view, formulated solely in terms of the history of philosophy, that subsumes the stages of spirit under binding higher-level concepts. The dialectic is reduced to the kind of elective weltanschauung against which the critical philosophy of which Hegel was a part directed such a devastating critique. Hence one cannot evade the question of what justified Hegel in subjecting everything that confronted thought, as well as thought itself, to the principle of contradiction. It is especially at this point in Hegel, who wanted to surrender to the movement of the matter at hand and cure thought of its arbitrariness, that one suspects him of a moment of arbitrariness, of the old dogmatism - and in fact speculative philosophy since Salomon Maimon has in many respects fallen back upon pre-Kantian rationalism. The fact that Hegel expressed the most cutting objections to the claptrap scheme of a triplicity of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis as a mere methodological schema, and that he says in the preface to the *Phenomenology* that as long as it remains a schema, that is, is merely impressed upon objects from the outside, one acquires the "knack" quickly, is not sufficient to allay this suspicion. Nor is one likely to be satisfied with the statement that no isolated principle, whether it be that of mediation, of becoming, of contradiction, or of the dialectic itself, is, as a separate principle, absolute and the key to the truth; that truth consists solely in the relationship of moments that emerge from one another. All that could be mere assertion." (pg. 75-76)
 - "But Hegel did not simply proclaim that; he achieved it, through immanent criticism of logic and its forms. **He demonstrated that concept, judgment, and conclusion, unavoidable instruments for ascertaining through consciousness something that exists, always end up contradicting that existing thing; that all individual judgments, all individual concepts, all individual conclusions, are false by the criterion of an emphatic idea of truth.** In this way Kant, the mortal enemy of a merely "rhapsodistic" thought that absolutizes contingent individual definitions, came into his own in Hegel, his critic. Hegel attacks the Kantian doctrine of the limits of knowledge and yet respects it. From it he develops the theory of a difference between subject and object that manifests itself in every particular. This difference, which acts as its own corrective, moves out beyond itself to become more adequate knowledge. Accordingly, the justification of the primacy of negation in Hegel's philosophy is that the limits of knowledge to which its critical self-reflection leads are not something external to knowledge, not something to which it is merely condemned from the outside; rather, they are inherent in all moments of knowledge. **All knowledge, and not merely knowledge that ventures out into the infinite, aims, through the mere form of the copula, at the whole truth, and none achieves it.** Hence in Hegel the Kantian limits of knowledge become the principle of epistemological advance. 'A thing is what it is, only in and by reason of its limit.

- We cannot therefore regard the limit as only external to being which is then and there. It rather goes through and through the whole of such existence'. The universality of negation is not a metaphysical panacea that is supposed to open all doors but merely the consequence of the critique of knowledge, now matured to self-awareness, that demolished panaceas. In other words, **Hegel's philosophy is eminently critical philosophy**, and the examination to which it subjects its concepts, beginning with that of being, always accumulates within itself, like an electrical charge, the specific objections that can be made to it. Of all the distortions perpetrated on Hegel by a dim-witted intelligentsia, the most pitiful is the notion that the dialectic has to admit as valid either everything whatsoever or nothing whatsoever." (pg. 76-77)
- "Dialectical contradiction is experienced in the experience of society. Hegel's own construction, formulated in terms of the philosophy of identity, requires that contradiction be grasped as much from the side of the object as from the side of the subject; it is in the dialectical contradiction that there crystallizes a concept of experience that points beyond absolute idealism. It is the concept of antagonistic totality. Just as the principle of universal mediation, as opposed to the immediacy of the mere subject, goes back to the fact that in all categories of thought the objectivity of the social process is prior to the contingency of the individual subject, so the metaphysical conception of a reconciled whole as the quintessence of all contradictions is based on the model of a society that is divided and nevertheless united. Truly a model of society, for Hegel is not content with the general concept of an antagonistic reality, the notion of ur-polarities of being, for instance. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, taking as his critical point of departure what is closest to hand, unmediated human consciousness, he accomplishes the mediation of that consciousness in and through the historical movement of what exists, a movement that takes it beyond all mere metaphysics of being. Once set in motion, the concretization of philosophy cannot be stopped for the sake of philosophy's illusory dignity." (pg. 78)
 - "Deciphered, the logical-metaphysical theory of totality as the epitome of contradictions means that society is not merely riven and disturbed by contradictions and disproportionalities; rather, **society becomes a totality only by virtue of its contradictions.** The societalization of society, its consolidation into what - in vindication of Hegel - is truly more like a system than an organism, has **resulted from the principle of domination, the principle of division itself, and it perpetuates it.** Society has survived, reproduced, and extended itself, and has developed its forces, only through its division into the opposing interests of those who command and those who produce. Hegel maintained his awareness of this in the face of all sentimentality, all romanticism, all regressive return of thought and reality to past stages. Either the totality comes into its own by becoming reconciled, that is, it abolishes its contradictory quality by enduring its contradictions to the end, and ceases to be a totality; or what is old and false will continue on until the catastrophe occurs. **As something contradictory, society as a whole moves beyond itself.**" (pg. 79)
 - **"The central nerve of the dialectic as a method is determinate negation.** It is based on the experience of the impotence of a criticism that keeps to the general and polishes off the object being criticized by subsuming it from above under a concept as its representative. **Only the critical idea that unleashes the force stored up in its own object is fruitful; fruitful both for the object, by helping it to come into its own, and against it, reminding it that it is not yet itself.** Hegel felt the sterility of all so-called intellectual work that takes place within the general sphere without dirtying itself with the specific; but rather than lament it he gave it a critical and productive turn. The dialectic expresses the fact that philosophical knowledge is not at home in the place where tradition has settled it, a place where it flourishes all too easily, unsaturated, as it were, with the heaviness and the resistance of what exists. Philosophical knowledge begins only where it opens up things that traditional thought has considered opaque, impenetrable, and mere products of individuation." (pg. 80-81)
 - **"The Hegelian concept of the dialectic acquires its specific character,** and distinguishes itself from shallow versions in vitalist philosophy like that of Dilthey, through its movement in and through the extremes: **development as dis-continuity.** But it too arises from the experience of an antagonistic society; it does not originate in some mere conceptual schema. The history of an unreconciled epoch cannot be a history of harmonious development: it is only ideology, denying its antagonistic character, that makes it harmonious. Contradictions, which are its true and only ontology, are at the same time the formal law of a history that advances only through contradiction and with unspeakable suffering." (pg. 82)
 - **"Persistent involvement with Hegel teaches one - and this is probably true of every great philosophy - that one cannot select what one likes from his philosophy and reject what one finds irritating.** It is this grim necessity and not an ideal of completeness that makes Hegel's claim to system a serious and substantial one. The truth of that claim lies in the *skandalon*, not in its plausibility. **Hence rescuing Hegel - and only rescue, not revival, is appropriate for him - means facing up to his philosophy where it is most painful and wresting truth from it where its untruth is obvious.**" (pg. 83)
 - "The difference between subject and object cannot be eradicated in theory any more than it has been resolved in the experience of reality to the present." (pg. 85)
 - "Reason becomes incapable of comprehending reality not merely because of its own impotence but because reality is not reason." (pg. 86)
 - ◆ "The ray of light that reveals the whole to be untrue in all its moments in none other than utopia, the utopia of the whole truth, which is still to be realized." (pg. 88)
 - Skoteinos, or How to Read Hegel (pg. 89)
 - "In the realm of great philosophy Hegel is no doubt the only one with whom at times one literally does not know and cannot conclusively determine what is being talked about, and with whom there is no guarantee that such a judgment is even possible." (pg. 89)
 - "Hegel himself is by no means innocent of this inadequate way of proceeding. It follows the line of least resistance; it is always easier to find one's bearings in an idea as on a map than to examine the cogency of its elaboration. Thus Hegel himself sometimes falters and makes do with formal declarations, theses that say that something is so when the work has not yet been done." (pg. 93-94)
 - "At every moment one needs to keep two seemingly incompatible maxims in mind: painstaking immersion in detail, and free detachment. There is no lack of help available." (pg. 94)
 - **"Reified consciousness freezes objects into things in themselves so that they can be available to science and praxis as things for others.** Of course one cannot grossly neglect the demand for clarity; philosophy should not succumb to confusion and destroy the very possibility of its existence. What we should take from this is the urgent demand that the expression fit the matter expressed precisely, even where the matter at hand for its part does not conform to the customary notion of what can be indicated clearly. **Here too philosophy is faced with a paradox: to say clearly something that is unclear, that has no firm outline, that does not accommodate to reification; to say it in such a way, that is, that the moments that elude the eye's fixing gaze, or that are not accessible at all, are indicated with the utmost distinctness.** This, however, is not a merely formal demand but rather a part of the very substance philosophy is after. This demand is paradoxical because language and the process of reification are interlocked. The very form of the copula, the "is," pursues the aim of pinpointing its object, an aim to which philosophy ought to provide a corrective; in this sense all philosophical language is a language in opposition to language, marked with the stigma of its own impossibility." (pg. 100)
 - **"If philosophy can be defined at all, it is an effort to express things one cannot speak about, to help express the nonidentical despite the fact that expressing it identifies it at the same time."** (pg. 101-102)
 - "The dialectical method as a whole is an attempt to cope with this demand by freeing thought from the spell of the instant and developing it in far-reaching conceptual structures." (pg. 108)
 - "Nominalism is part of the bourgeois bedrock; it accompanies the consolidation of urbanism across all its phases, and in the most diverse nations the ambivalence of that process is sedimented in it. Nominalism helps to free consciousness from the pressure of the authority of the concept that had established itself as universality; it does so by disenchanting the concept and making it a mere abbreviation for the particularities it covers." (pg. 112)
 - **"Nominalism, which is anti-ideological, has been ideology from the very beginning."** (pg. 113)

d. Further Readings:

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