

Aesthetic Theory, by T. Adorno

- a. People / Organizations: https://edisciplinas.usp.br/pluginfile.php/4966868/mod_folder/content/0/ADORNO%20-%20AESTHETIC%20THEORY.pdf
- b. Quotes:
- "Truth exists exclusively as that which has become" - Author (pg. 3)
 - "Nothing is to be accepted unexamined just because it is available and was once held valuable; nor is anything to be dismissed because it belongs to the past; time alone provides no criterion" - Author (pg. 41)
 - "Art attempts to imitate an expression that would not be interpolated human intention. The latter is exclusively art's vehicle. **The more perfect the artwork, the more it forsakes intentions.** Mediate nature, the truth content of art, takes shape, immediately, as the opposite of nature. **If the language of nature is mute, art seeks to make this muteness eloquent; art thus exposes itself to failure through the insurmountable contradiction between the idea of making the mute eloquent, which demands a desperate effort, and the idea of what this effort would amount to, the idea of what cannot in any way be willed.**" - Author (pg. 78)
 - "**Only through their polar opposition**, not through the pseudomorphosis of art into nature, **are nature and art mediated in each other.** The more strictly artworks abstain from rank natural growth and the replication of nature, the more the successful ones approach nature" - Author (pg. 77)
 - "**Nature is beautiful in that it appears to say more than it is. To wrest this more from that more's contingency, to gain control of its semblance, to determine it as semblance as well as to negate it as unreal: This is the idea of art.**" - Author (pg. 78)
 - *****It should be noted Adorno draws heavily upon Kant's assertion "I call intelligible that in an object of sense which is not itself appearance."** (*Critique of Pure Reason*, pg. 535) <https://cpb-us-w2.wpmucdn.com/u.osu.edu/dist/5/25851/files/2017/09/kant-first-critique-cambridge-1m89prv.pdf>
 - "Aesthetics is...not applied philosophy but rather in itself philosophical." - Author (pg. 91)
 - "With the growing powerlessness of the autonomous subject, inwardness consequently became completely ideological, the mirage of an inner kingdom where the silent majority are indemnified for what is denied them socially; inwardness thus becomes increasingly shadowy and empty, indeed contentless in itself." - Author (pg. 116)
 - "Even inwardness participates in dialectics, though not a Kierkegaard thought" - Author (pg. 116)
 - "**Only the autonomous self is able to turn critically against itself and break through its illusory imprisonment**" - Author (pg. 117)
 - "**every work is a force field...**" - Author (pg. 206)
 - "commitment is a higher level of reflection than tendency..." - Author (pg. 246)
 - "commitment aims at the transformation of the preconditions of situations, not at merely making recommendation; to this extent it inclines toward the aesthetic category of essence" - Author (pg. 246)
 - "**Praxis is not the effect of works; rather, it is encapsuled in their truth content. This is why commitment is able to become an aesthetic force of production.**" - Author (pg. 247)
 - "**Art possesses its other immanently because, like the subject, immanence is socially mediated in itself**" - Author (pg. 260)
- c. General Notes:
- Translator's Introduction (pg. vi)
 - "...in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*...Adorno and Horkheimer show that fascism did not simply coax cornered reason into delirium but was itself a potential implicit in reason's own compulsion toward all-encompassing domination." (pg. xii)
 - "What they showed was that it missed its aim of human emancipation from natural necessity and the second nature of social constraint because the domination of nature unwittingly requires the sacrifice of subjectivity. The recognition that in *maxima potentia minima licentia* is millennia old. But *Dialectic of Enlightenment* took this thought in a strictly modern direction: if the self is progressively limited and deprived through the domination of its object, if humanity is subordinated to necessity by the struggle against it, then **the emancipation of the subject depends on its capacity to emancipate its object, and this requires all possible subjective spontaneity.**" (pg. xii-xiii)
 - "Adorno's thesis that subjectivity could only be transcended by way of subjectivity, and not by its limitation, is one way of formulating his seminal insight: that identity is the power of nonidentity" (pg. xiii)
 - "As Adorno wrote in the introduction to *Negative Dialectics*, he considered it the task of his thought "to use the strength of the subject to break through the fraud of constitutive subjectivity." The power of identity - manifest in Kant's transcendentalism as concepts that constitutively define the likeness of the world with the subject - would go beyond constitutive subjectivity if concepts could be developed in such a way as to present what is more than conceptual in them. **That concepts are more than their definitional content is implicit in the idea of a dialectic of enlightenment: for if enlightenment regresses to the natural necessity that it attempts to dominate, then concepts, which ostensibly serve to identify the world with its knower, are actually artifacts most deeply shaped by what enlightenment never mastered.** Identity must be more than identity in that it draws back into itself what it purports to overcome. The concealed content of enlightenment, the content of concepts, would be that nature that subjectivity sought to dominate in its own rise to power." (pg. xiii)
 - "This defines Adorno's approach in *Aesthetic Theory* to the possibility of breaching the externality of aesthetics to art: an aesthetics that wants to know art from within - to present what art itself understands - would consist of what a contemporary nominalist intelligence, always verging on irrationalism, dismisses as the oppressive, overstuffed furnishings of an age credulous of absolutes: natural beauty, art beauty, truth, semblance, and so on, the fundamental concepts of aesthetics." (pg. xiii)
 - "Adorno completed *Aesthetic Theory*, but he did not finish it: every section that he intended to write for the book was written; the main body of the text was for the most part complete and composed at the highest level that Adorno achieved in any of his work. Yet Adorno did not live to carry out the final, crucial revision of the text." (pg. xviii)
 - "Nothing is to be done about these layers of repetitiveness in the text. They burden the book at every point. But it is worth knowing that however overlong the book is, there is nothing to skim" (pg. xix)
 - "After Adorno's death, interest in his writings soon dissipated, and today, **when he is studied in Germany, he is regarded mainly as a historical curiosity and more likely to be diminished than admired.**" (pg. xx)
 - "For over a decade, the most thorough, widely read, and esteemed history of his work - **Rolf Wiggershaus's *The Frankfurt School* - dismisses him as a bitter, hyperemotional complainer, monotonously prejudiced in his views, irresponsibly protean in his thought, and unable to formulate testable hypotheses.** Wiggerhaus's book, in that it embodies a generation's rejection of Adorno echoed in dozens of similar works, points up the fact that Aesthetic Theory is currently as obliquely remote to Germany as it is to the United States" (pg. xx)
 - Aesthetic Theory (pg. 1)
 - "**It is self-evident that nothing concerning art is self-evident anymore, not its inner life, not its relation to the world, not even its right to exist**" (pg. 1)

- "All efforts to restore art by giving it a social function - of which art is itself uncertain and by which it expresses its own uncertainty - are doomed. Indeed, art's autonomy shows signs of blindness. Blindness was ever an aspect of art; in the age of art's emancipation, however, this blindness has begun to predominate in spite of, if not because of, art's lost naivete, which, as Hegel already perceived, art cannot undo. This binds art to a naivete of a second order: the uncertainty over what purpose it serves. It is uncertain whether art is still possible; whether, with its complete emancipation, it did not sever its own preconditions." (pg. 1)
- "Artworks detach themselves from the empirical world and bring forth another world, one opposed to the empirical world as if this other world too were an autonomous entity. Thus, however tragic they appear, **artworks tend a priori toward affirmation.**" (pg. 1)
 - "By virtue of its rejection of the empirical world - a rejection that inheres in art's concept and thus is no mere escape, but a law immanent to it - **art sanctions the primacy of reality.**" (pg. 2)
 - "Art must turn against itself, in opposition to its own concept, and thus become uncertain of itself right into its innermost fiber. Yet art is not to be dismissed simply by its abstract negation. By attacking what seemed to be its foundation throughout the whole of its tradition, art has been qualitatively transformed; it itself becomes qualitatively other. It can do this because through the ages by means of its form, art has turned against the status quo and what merely exists just as much as it has come to its aid by giving form to its elements. Art can no more be reduced to the general formula of consolation than to its opposite" (pg. 2)
- "The concept of art is located in a historically changing constellation of elements; it refuses definition" (pg. 2)
 - "The definition of art is at every point indicated by what art once was, but it is legitimated only by what art became with regard to what it wants to, and perhaps can, become." (pg. 2-3)
 - **"Because art is what it has become, its concept refers to what it does not contain.** The tension between what motivates art and art's past circumscribes the so-called questions of aesthetic constitution. Art can be understood only by its laws of movement, not according to any set of invariants. **It is defined by its relation to what it is not**" (pg. 3)
 - **"Art acquires its specificity by separating itself from what it developed out of; its law of movement is its law of form. It exists only in relation to its other;** it is the process that transpires with its other." (pg. 3)
 - "Art and artworks are perishable, not simply because by their heteronomy they are dependent, but because right into the smallest detail of their autonomy, which sanctions the socially determined splitting off of spirit by the division of labor, they are not only art but something foreign and opposed to it. Admixed with art's own concept is the ferment of its own abolition" (pg. 4)
- "There is no aesthetic refraction without something being refracted; no imagination without something imagined. This holds true particularly in the case of art's immanent purposiveness. **In its relation to empirical reality art sublimates the latter's governing principle of *sese conservare* as the ideal of the self-identity of its works;** as Schoenberg said, one paints a painting, not what it represents. **Inherently every artwork desires identity with itself, an identity that in empirical reality is violently forced on all objects as identity with the subject and thus travestied. Aesthetic identity seeks to aid the nonidentical, which in reality is repressed by reality's compulsion to identity.** Only by virtue of separation from empirical reality, which sanctions art to model the relation of the whole and the part according to the work's own need, does the artwork achieve a heightened order of existence. Artworks are after-images of empirical life insofar as they help the latter to what is denied them outside their own sphere and thereby free it from that to which they are condemned by reified external experience. Although the demarcation line between art and the empirical must not be effaced, and least of all by the glorification of the artist, artworks nevertheless have a life *sui generis*. This life is not just their external fate. Important artworks constantly divulge new layers; they age, grow cold, and die. It is a tautology to point out that as humanly manufactured artifacts they do not live as do people." (pg. 4)
 - **"Artworks are alive in that they speak in a fashion that is denied to natural objects and the subjects who make them. They speak by virtue of the communication of everything particular in them. Thus they come into contrast with the arbitrariness of what simply exists. Yet it is precisely as artifacts, as products of social labor, that they also communicate with the empirical experience that they reject and from which they draw their content [*Inhalt*]. Art negates the categorial determinations stamped on the empirical world and yet harbors what is empirically existing in its own substance"** (pg. 5)
 - "The communication of artworks with what is external to them, with the world from which they blissfully or unhappily seal themselves off, occurs through noncommunication; precisely thereby they prove themselves refracted." (pg. 5)
- **"Artworks participate in enlightenment because they do not lie:** They do not feign the literalness of what speaks out of them. They are real as answers to the puzzle externally posed to them. Their own tension is binding in relation to the tension external to them." (pg. 5)
 - **"The unsolved antagonisms of reality return in artworks as immanent problems of form. This, not the insertion of objective elements, defines the relation of art to society.** The complex of tensions in artworks crystallizes undisturbed in these problems of form and through emancipation from the external world's factual facade converges with the real essence" (pg. 6)
- "Art perceived strictly aesthetically is art aesthetically misperceived. Only when art's other is sensed as a primary layer in the experience of art does it become possible to sublimate this layer, to dissolve the thematic bonds, without the autonomy of the artwork becoming a matter of indifference. **Art is autonomous and it is not; without what is heterogeneous to it, its autonomy eludes it.**" (pg. 6)
 - **"Art is related to its other as is a magnet to a field of iron filings.** Not only art's elements, but their constellation as well, that which is specifically aesthetic and to which its spirit is usually chalked up, refer back to its other. The identity of the artwork with existing reality is also that of the work's gravitational force, which gathers around itself its membra disjecta, traces of the existing. The artwork is related to the world by the principle that contrasts it with the world, and that is the same principle by which spirit organized the world. The synthesis achieved by means of the artwork is not simply forced on its elements; rather, it recapitulates that in which these elements communicate with one another; thus **the synthesis is itself a product of otherness.**" (pg. 7)
 - **"This unites the aesthetic element of form with noncoercion. By its difference from empirical reality the artwork necessarily constitutes itself in relation to what it is not, and to what makes it an artwork in the first place"** (pg. 7-8)
- "In artworks, the criterion of success is twofold: whether they succeed in integrating thematic strata and details into their immanent law of form and in this integration at the same time maintain what resists it and the fissures that occur in the process of integration" (pg. 7)
- **"Art is the social antithesis of society,** not directly deducible from it. **The constitution of art's sphere corresponds to the constitution of an inward space of men as the space of their representation:** A priori the constitution of this space participates in sublimation. It is therefore plausible to conceive of developing the definition of art out of a theory of psychic life" (pg. 8)
 - "In the process of production, what is projected is only one element in the artist's relation to the artwork and hardly the definitive one; idiom and material have their own importance, as does, above all, the product itself; this rarely if ever occurs to the analysts. The psychoanalytic thesis, for instance, that music is a defense against the threat of paranoia, does indeed for the most part hold true clinically, yet it says nothing about the quality and content of a particular composition. The psychoanalytic theory of art is superior to idealist aesthetics in that it brings to light what is internal to art and not itself artistic. It helps free art from the spell of absolute spirit" (pg. 8-9)
 - "Where it deciphers the social character that speaks from a work and in which on many occasions the character of its author is manifest, psychoanalysis furnishes the concrete mediating links between the structure of artworks and the social structure. But psychoanalysis too casts a spell related to idealism, that of an absolutely subjective sign system denoting subjective instinctual impulses. It unlocks phenomena, but falls

- short of the phenomenon of art. Psychoanalysis treats artworks as nothing but facts, yet it neglects their own objectivity, their inner consistency, their level of form, their critical impulse, their relation to non-psychical reality, and, finally, their idea of truth" (pg. 9)
- "...on psychological grounds alone, art is more legitimate than psychology acknowledges. True, imagination is escape, but not exclusively so: What transcends the reality principle toward something superior is always also part of what is beneath it..." (pg. 9)
 - "If art has psychoanalytic roots, then they are the roots of fantasy in the fantasy of omnipotence. This fantasy includes the wish to bring about a better world. This frees the total dialectic, whereas the view of art as a merely subjective language of the unconscious does not even touch it." (pg. 9)
 - **"Kant's aesthetics is the antithesis of Freud's theory of art as wish fulfillment."** (pg. 9)
 - "What is revolutionary in the *Critique of Judgment* is that without leaving the circle of the older effect-aesthetics Kant at the same time restricted it through immanent criticism; this is in keeping with the whole of his subjectivism, which plays a significant part in his objective effort to save objectivity through the analysis of subjective elements. Disinterestedness sets itself at a distance from the immediate effect that liking seeks to conserve, and this initiates the fragmentation of the supremacy of liking. For, once shorn of what Kant calls interest, satisfaction becomes so indeterminate that it no longer serves to define beauty. The doctrine of disinterested satisfaction is impoverished vis-a-vis the aesthetic; it reduces the phenomenon either to formal beauty, which when isolated is highly dubious, or to the so-called sublime natural object. The sublimation of the work to absolute form neglects the spirit of the work in the interest of which sublimation was undertaken in the first place" (pg. 10)
 - "Kant was the first to achieve the insight, never since forgotten, that aesthetic comportment is free from immediate desire; he snatched art away from that avaricious philistinism that always wants to touch it and taste it. Nevertheless, the Kantian motif is not altogether alien to psychoanalytic art theory: Even for Freud artworks are not immediate wish fulfillments but transform unsatisfied libido into a socially productive achievement, whereby the social value of art is simply assumed, with uncritical respect for art's public reputation" (pg. 10)
 - "Although Kant emphasizes the difference between art and the power of desire - and thereby between art and empirical reality - much more energetically than does Freud, he does not simply idealize art: **The separation of the aesthetic sphere from the empirical constitutes art!**" (pg. 10)
 - "Both are in principle subjectively oriented by the power of desire, whether it is interpreted negatively or positively. For both, the artwork exists only in relation to its observer or maker. By a mechanism to which his moral philosophy is subordinate, even Kant is compelled to consider the existing individual, the ontic element, more than is compatible with the idea of the transcendental subject. There is no liking without a living person who would enjoy it." (pg. 11)
 - **"For Kant, aesthetics becomes paradoxically a castrated hedonism, desire without desire."** (pg. 11)
 - **"There is no art that does not contain in itself as an element, negated, what it repulses"** (pg. 11)
 - "Contrary to the Kantian and Freudian interpretation of art, artworks imply in themselves a relation between interest and its renunciation" (pg. 12)
 - "disinterestedness immanently reproduces - and transforms - interest." (pg. 13)
 - **"Art is not only the plenipotentiary of a better praxis than that which has to date predominated, but is equally the critique of praxis as the rule of brutal self-preservation at the heart of the status quo and in its service.** It gives the lie to production for production's sake and opts for a form of praxis beyond the spell of labor" (pg. 12)
 - "Reified consciousness provides an ersatz for the sensual immediacy of which it deprives people in a sphere that is not its abode. While the artwork's sensual appeal seemingly brings it close to the consumer, it is alienated from him by being a commodity that he possesses and the loss of which he must constantly fear. The false relation to art is akin to anxiety over possession." (pg. 13)
 - "For a society in which art no longer has a place and which is pathological in all its reactions to it, art fragments on one hand into a reified, hardened cultural possession and on the other into a source of pleasure that the customer pockets and that for the most part has little to do with the object itself." (pg. 15)
 - "It is striking, incidentally, that an aesthetic that constantly insists on subjective feeling as the basis of all beauty never seriously analyzed this feeling." (pg. 14)
 - **"The happiness gained from artworks is that of having suddenly escaped**, not a morsel of that from which art escaped; it is accidental and less essential to art than the happiness in its knowledge; the concept of aesthetic pleasure as constitutive of art is to be superseded." (pg. 15)
 - "If in keeping with Hegel's insight all feeling related to an aesthetic object has an accidental aspect, usually that of psychological projection, then what the work demands from its beholder is knowledge, and indeed, knowledge that does justice to it: The work wants its truth and untruth to be grasped. Aesthetic hedonism is to be confronted with the passage from Kant's doctrine of the sublime, which he timidly excluded from art: Happiness in artworks would be the feeling they instill of standing firm. This holds true for the aesthetic sphere as a whole more than for any particular work" (pg. 15)
 - "Art responds to the loss of its self-evidence not simply by concrete transformations of its procedures and comportments but by trying to pull itself free from its own concept as from a shackle: the fact that it is art" (pg. 16)
 - **"Those who have been duped by the culture industry and are eager for its commodities were never familiar with art:** They are therefore able to perceive art's inadequacy to the present life process of society - though not society's own untruth - more unobstructedly than do those who still remember what an artwork once was. They push for the deaestheticization of art. Its unmistakable symptom is the passion to touch everything, to allow no work to be what it is, to dress it up, to narrow its distance from its viewer. The humiliating difference between art and the life people lead, and in which they do not want to be bothered because they could not bear it otherwise, must be made to disappear" (pg. 16-17)
 - "To this extent the contemporary attitude to art is regressive. What is consumed is the abstract being-for-other of the cultural commodities, though without their actually being for others; by serving the customers, they themselves are betrayed." (pg. 17)
 - ◆ "The consumer arbitrarily projects his impulses - mimetic remnants - on whatever is presented to him" (pg. 17)
 - ◇ "What the reified artworks are no longer able to say is replaced by the beholder with the standardized echo of himself, to which he hearkens. This mechanism is set in motion and exploited by the culture industry. It contrives to make that appear near and familiar to its audience that has been estranged from them and brought close again only by having been heteronomously manipulated. Even the social argumentation against the culture-industry, however, has its ideological component" (pg. 17)
 - "The idea of freedom, akin to aesthetic autonomy, was shaped by domination, which it universalized. This holds true as well for artworks. The more they freed themselves from external goals, the more completely they determined themselves as their own masters. Because, however, artworks always turn one side toward society, the domination they internalized also radiated externally." (pg. 17-18)
 - "Suffering remains foreign to knowledge; though knowledge can subordinate it conceptually and provide means for its amelioration, knowledge can scarcely express it through its own means of experience without itself becoming irrational." (pg. 19)
 - "Fantastic art in romanticism, as well as its traces in mannerism and the baroque, presents something nonexistent as existing. The fictions are

- modifications of empirical reality. The effect they produce is the presentation of the nonempirical as if it were empirical. This effect is facilitated because the fictions originate in the empirical." (pg. 19)
- **"Fetishization expresses the paradox of all art that is no longer self-evident to itself:** the paradox that something made exists for its own sake; precisely this paradox is the vital nerve of new art. By exigency, the new must be something willed; as what is other, however, it could not be what was willed. Velleity binds the new to the ever-same, and this establishes the inner communication of the modern and myth. The new wants nonidentity, yet intention reduces it to identity; modern art constantly works at the Mtinchhausean trick of carrying out the identification of the nonidentical." (pg. 22-23)
 - "The truth of the new, as the truth of what is not already used up, is situated in the intentionless. This sets truth in opposition to reflection, which is the motor of the new and raises reflection to a second order, to second reflection." (pg. 26)
 - "As reflection increases in scope and power, content itself becomes ever more opaque" (pg. 27)
 - "Artworks were always meant to endure; it is related to their concept, that of objectivation. Through duration art protests against death; the paradoxically transient eternity of artworks is the allegory of an eternity bare of semblance. **Art is the semblance of what is beyond death's reach.**" (pg. 27)
 - "As soon as artworks make a fetish of their hope of duration, they begin to suffer from their sickness unto death: The veneer of inalienability that they draw over themselves at the same time suffocates them. **Many artworks of the highest caliber effectively seek to lose themselves in time so as not to become its prey,** entering thus into insoluble antinomy with the necessity for objectivation." (pg. 28)
 - "If art were to free itself from the once perceived illusion of duration, were to internalize its own transience in sympathy with the ephemeral life, it would approximate an idea of truth conceived not as something abstractly enduring but in consciousness of its temporal essence. If all art is the secularization of transcendence, it participates in the dialectic of enlightenment." (pg. 28-29)
 - **"New art is as abstract as social relations have in truth become.** In like manner, the concepts of the realistic and the symbolic are put out of service. Because the spell of external reality over its subjects and their reactions has become absolute, the artwork can only oppose this spell by assimilating itself to it." (pg. 31)
 - "Just as **art cannot be, and never was, a language of pure feeling, nor a language of the affirmation of the soul,** neither is it for art to pursue the results of ordinary knowledge, as for instance in the form of social documentaries that are to function as down payments on empirical research yet to be done" (pg. 32)
 - "The new is the longing for the new, not the new itself: That is what everything new suffers from. What takes itself to be utopia remains the negation of what exists and is obedient to it. At the center of contemporary antinomies is that art must be and wants to be utopia, and the more utopia is blocked by the real functional order, the more this is true..." (pg. 32)
 - ◆ "Art is no more able than theory to concretize utopia, not even negatively" (pg. 32)
 - "In empirical reality the negation of the negative is hardly ever affirmation, yet in the aesthetic sphere this dialectical maxim bears some truth..." (p. 35)
 - **"What can,** without stirring up the musty odors of idealism, **justly be called serious in art is the pathos of an objectivity that confronts the individual with what is more and other than he is** in his historically imperative insufficiency. The risk taken by artworks participates in their seriousness; it is the image of death in their own sphere. This seriousness is relativized, however, in that aesthetic autonomy remains external to suffering, of which the work is an image and from which the work draws its seriousness. The artwork is not only the echo of suffering, it diminishes it; form, the organon of its seriousness, is at the same time the organon of the neutralization of suffering. Art thereby falls into an unsolvable aporia" (pg. 38-39)
 - "Tradition is to be not abstractly negated but criticized without naivete according to the current situation: Thus the present constitutes the past. **Nothing is to be accepted unexamined just because it is available and was once held valuable; nor is anything to be dismissed because it belongs to the past; time alone provides no criterion**" (pg. 41)
 - "Although art in its innermost essence is a comportment, it cannot be isolated from expression, and there is no expression without a subject." (pg. 42)
 - "In spite of the most subtle modifications, bourgeois idealist philosophy has been unable epistemologically to break through solipsism. For normal bourgeois consciousness the epistemology modeled on it was of no consequence. For this consciousness art appears necessary and directly "intersubjective." This relation of epistemology and art should be reversed. The former has the ability through critical self-reflection to destroy the spell of solipsism, whereas the subjective point of reference in art remains that which solipsism has merely feigned in reality. Art is the historicophilosophical truth of a solipsism that is untrue in-itself. In art there is no possible willful overcoming of the situation that philosophy has unjustly hypostatized. Aesthetic semblance is what solipsism extra-aesthetically confuses with truth. By participating in this confusion, Lukacs's attack on radical modern art totally misses the point" (pg. 42-43)
 - "Art is not to be reduced to the unquestionable polarity of the mimetic and the constructive, as if this were an invariant formula, for otherwise works of high quality would be obliged to strike a balance between the two principles. But what was fruitful in modern art was what gravitated toward one of the extremes, not what sought to mediate between them; those works that strove after both, in search of synthesis, were rewarded with a dubious consensus. **The dialectic of these elements is similar to dialectical logic, in that each pole realizes itself only in the other, and not in some middle ground.**" (pg. 44)
 - "To say that art is not identical with the concept of beauty, but requires for its realization the concept of the ugly as its negation, is a platitude." (pg. 45)
 - "Whatever it may be, the ugly must constitute, or be able to constitute, an element of art" (pg. 46)
 - "In modern art the weight of this element increased to such a degree that a new quality emerged. According to traditional aesthetics, the ugly is that element that opposes the work's ruling law of form; it is integrated by that formal law and thereby confines it, along with the power of subjective freedom in the artwork vis-a-vis the subject matter. This subject matter would indeed become beautiful in a higher sense through its function in the pictorial composition, for instance, or by its participation in the production of a dynamic equilibrium; for, according to a Hegelian topos, beauty is the result not of a simple equilibrium per se, but rather of the tension that results. Harmony that, as a mere result, denies the tensions that have entered into it, becomes something disturbing, false, and effectively dissonant." (pg. 46)
 - **"The definition of aesthetics as the theory of the beautiful is so unfruitful because the formal character of the concept of beauty is inadequate to the full content [Inhalt] of the aesthetic.** If aesthetics were nothing but a systematic catalogue of whatever is called beautiful, it would give no idea of the life that transpires in the concept of beauty. In terms of the intention of aesthetic reflection, the concept of beauty is but one element. The idea of beauty draws attention to something essential to art without, however, articulating it directly. If artifacts were not in various ways judged to be beautiful the interest in them would be incomprehensible and blind, and no one - neither artist nor beholder- would have reason to make that exodus from the sphere of practical aims, those of self-preservation and pleasure, that art requires by virtue of its constitution. Hegel arrests the aesthetic dialectic by his static definition of the beautiful as the sensual appearance of the idea. The beautiful is no more to be defined than its concept can be dispensed with, a strict antinomy. If it dispensed with categories, aesthetics would be no more than a hermetic historicorelativistic description of what beauty has signified in various societies and styles; any distillation of common characteristics would be no better than a parody and would be confounded by any new example" (pg. 50-51)

- "Art is a refuge for mimetic comportment. **In art the subject exposes itself, at various levels of autonomy, to its other, separated from it and yet not altogether separated.** Art's disavowal of magical practices - its antecedents - implies participation in rationality. That art, something mimetic, is possible in the midst of rationality, and that it employs its means, is a response to the faulty irrationality of the rational world as an over-administered world. **For the aim of all rationality - the quintessence of the means for dominating nature - would have to be something other than means, hence something not rational. Capitalist society hides and disavows precisely this irrationality, and in contrast to this, art represents truth in a double sense: It maintains the image of its aim, which has been obscured by rationality, and it convicts the status quo of its irrationality and absurdity.** The relinquishment of the delusion of the unmediated intervention of spirit, which intermittently and insatiably recurs in the history of humanity, establishes a prohibition against recollection's employing art to tum unmediatedly toward nature. Only separation can countermand separation. This at once strengthens and exculpates the rational element in art because it resists real domination, even though, as ideology, this element is ever and again bound up with domination. To speak of "the magic of art" is trite because art is allergic to any relapses into magic. **Art is a stage in the process of what Max Weber called the disenchantment of the world, and it is entwined with rationalization;** this is the source of all of art's means and methods of production; technique that disparages its ideology inheres in this ideology as much as it threatens it because art's magical heritage stubbornly persisted throughout art's transformations. Yet art mobilizes technique in an opposite direction than does domination." (pg. 53-54)
 - **"Art is rationality that criticizes rationality without withdrawing from it;** art is not something prerational or irrational, which would peremptorily condemn it as untruth in the face of the entanglement of all human activity in the social totality. Rational and irrational theories of art are therefore equally faulty" (pg. 55)
 - **"Rationality in the artwork is the unity-founding, organizing element,** not unrelated to the rationality that governs externally, but it does not reflect its categorizing order." (pg. 55)
 - ◆ **this I take serious argument with.*
 - **"Artworks do not repress; through expression they help to make present to consciousness the diffuse and elusive without, as psychoanalysis insists, 'rationalization'"** (pg. 55)
 - "There is no denying that even in **the principle of construction,** in the dissolution of materials and their subordination to **an imposed unity,** once again something smooth, harmonistic, a quality of pure logicity, is conjured up that seeks to establish itself as ideology. It is the fatality of all contemporary art that it is contaminated by the untruth of the ruling totality. Still, construction is currently the only possible form that the rational element in the artwork can take..." (pg. 57)
 - **"Construction is the synthesis of the diverse at the expense of the qualitative elements that it masters, and at the expense of the subject, which intends to extinguish itself as it carries out this synthesis.** The affinity of construction with cognitive processes, or perhaps rather with their interpretation by the theory of knowledge, is no less evident than is their difference, which is that art does not make judgments and when it does, it shatters its own concept. What distinguishes **construction from composition** in the encompassing sense of pictorial composition, is the ruthless subordination not only of everything that originated from outside the artwork, but also of all partial elements immanent to the work. To this extent **construction is the extension of subjective domination,** which conceals itself all the more profoundly the further it is driven. **Construction tears the elements of reality out of their primary context and transforms them to the point where they are once again capable of forming a unity,** one that is no less imposed on them internally than was the heteronomous unity to which they were subjected externally. By means of construction, art desperately wants to escape from its nominalistic situation, to extricate itself by its own power from a sense of accidentalness and attain what is overarchingly binding or, if one will, universal. To this end art requires a reduction of its elements, which it threatens to enervate and degenerate into a victory over what is not present." (pg. 57)
 - "This is the utopia of construction; its fallibility, on the other hand, is that it necessarily has a penchant to destroy what it integrates and to arrest the process in which it exclusively has its life. **The loss of tension in constructive art today is not only the product of subjective weakness but a consequence of the idea of construction itself, specifically with regard to its semblance.** Pursuing its virtually irreversible course, which tolerates nothing external to itself, **construction wants to make itself into something real sui generis, even though it borrows the very purity of its principles from external technical functional forms.** Functionless, however, construction remains trapped in art" (pg. 58)
 - **"Art that is simply a thing is an oxymoron"** (pg. 58)
 - **"Art is motivated by a conflict:** Its enchantment, a vestige of its magical phase, is constantly repudiated as unmediated sensual immediacy by the progressive disenchantment of the world, yet without its ever being possible finally to obliterate this magical element. **Only in it is art's mimetic character preserved,** and its truth is the critique that, by its sheer existence, it levels at a rationality that has become absolute. Emancipated from its claim to reality, the enchantment is itself part of enlightenment: Its semblance disenchant the disenchanted world. This is the dialectical ether in which art today takes place. The renunciation of any claim to truth by the preserved magical element marks out the terrain of aesthetic semblance and aesthetic truth. **Art inherits a comportment of spirit once directed toward essence,** and with it the chance of perceiving mediately that which is essential yet otherwise tabooed by the progress of rational knowledge" (pg. 58)
 - **"By their very existence artworks postulate the existence of what does not exist and thereby come into conflict with the latter's actual nonexistence"** (pg. 59)
 - "the deaestheticization of art is immanent to art - whether it be art that unflinchingly pursues its autonomous order or art that sells itself off cheap - in accordance with the technological tendency of art, which is not to be halted by any appeal to a purportedly pure and unmediated inwardness." (pg. 59)
 - "When fully developed, **technique establishes the primacy in art of making,** in contradistinction to a receptivity of production, however that is conceived. Technique is able to become the opponent of art insofar as art represents -at changing levels -the repressed unmakeable." (pg. 60)
 - **"Technologization, the extended arm of the nature-dominating subject, purges artworks of their immediate language.** Technological requirements drive out the contingency of the individual who produces the work" (pg. 60)
 - "Incidental beauty, measured in terms of opaque traditional categories such as formal harmony or even imposing grandeur, impinges on the real functionality in which functional works like bridges or industrial plants seek their law of form. **It is apologetic to claim that functional works, by virtue of their fidelity to this law of form, are always beautiful;** the aim is evidently to give consolation for what these works lack and assuage *Sachlichkeit's* bad conscience" (pg. 61)
 - **"The progress of civilization, however, easily deceives human beings as to how vulnerable they remain even now"** (pg. 65)
 - "Art is not nature, a belief that idealism hoped to inculcate, but art does want to keep nature's promise. It is capable of this only by breaking that promise; by taking it back into itself. This much is true in Hegel's theorem that **art is inspired by negativity,** specifically by the deficiency of natural beauty, in the sense that so long as nature is defined only through its antithesis to society, it is not yet what it appears to be. What nature strives for in vain, artworks fulfill: They open their eyes. Once it no longer serves as an object of action, appearing nature itself imparts expression, whether that of melancholy, peace, or something else." (pg. 65-66)
 - **"Natural beauty is ideology where it serves to disguise mediatedness as immediacy"** (pg. 68)
 - **"Pure immediacy does not suffice for aesthetic experience"** (pg. 69)
 - "All beauty reveals itself to persistent analysis, which in turn enriches the element of involuntariness; indeed, analysis would be in vain if

- the involuntary did not reside hidden within it." (pg. 69)
- **"What is beautiful in nature is what appears to be more than what is literally there.** Without receptivity there would be no such objective expression, but it is not reducible to the subject; **natural beauty points to the primacy of the object in subjective experience.** Natural beauty is perceived both as authoritatively binding and as something incomprehensible that questioningly awaits its solution. Above all else it is this double character of natural beauty that has been conferred on art" (pg. 70-71)
 - **"Natural beauty is suspended history, a moment of becoming at a standstill"** (pg. 71)
 - **"Art does not imitate nature, not even individual instances of natural beauty, but natural beauty as such.** This denominates not only the aporia of natural beauty but the aporia of aesthetics as a whole. Its object is determined negatively, as indeterminable. **It is for this reason that art requires philosophy, which interprets it in order to say what it is unable to say, whereas art is only able to say it by not saying it.**" (pg. 72)
 - **"To this extent art is concept, though not like a concept in discursive logic."** (pg. 73)
 - **"Natural beauty is the trace of the nonidentical in things under the spell of universal identity. As long as this spell prevails, the nonidentical has no positive existence. Therefore natural beauty remains as dispersed and uncertain as what it promises, that which surpasses all human immanence."** (pg. 73)
 - **"In its uncertainty, natural beauty inherits the ambiguity of myth,** while at the same time its echo - consolation - distances itself from myth in appearing nature. Contrary to that philosopher of identity, Hegel, **natural beauty is close to the truth but veils itself at the moment of greatest proximity. This, too, art learned from natural beauty.**" (pg. 73-74)
 - "What in artworks is structured, gapless, resting in itself, is an afterimage of the silence that is the single medium through which nature speaks. Vis-a-vis a ruling principle, vis-a-vis a merely diffuse juxtaposition, **the beauty of nature is an other;** what is reconciled would resemble it." (pg. 74)
 - "What is true in this is that natural beauty, the unexpected promise of something that is highest, cannot remain locked in itself but is rescued only through that consciousness that is set in opposition to it." (pg. 75)
 - **"Hegel's philosophy fails vis-a-vis beauty:** Because he equates reason and the real through the quintessence of their mediations, he hypostatizes the subjective preformation of the existing as the absolute; thus for him the nonidentical only figures as a restraint on subjectivity rather than that he determines the experience of the nonidentical as the telos and emancipation of the aesthetic subject. Progressive dialectical aesthetics becomes necessary to critique even Hegel's aesthetics." (pg. 76-77)
 - **"The transition from natural beauty to art beauty is dialectical as a transition in the form of domination. Art beauty is what is objectively mastered in an image and which by virtue of its objectivity transcends domination. Artworks wrest themselves from domination** by transforming the aesthetic attitude, shaped by the experience of natural beauty, into a type of productive labor modeled on material labor. **As a human language that is both organizing as well as reconciled, art wants once again to attain what has become opaque to humans in the language of nature. Artworks have this much in common with idealist philosophy: They locate reconciliation in identity with the subject;** in this respect idealist philosophy - as is explicit in Schelling - actually has art as its model, rather than the reverse. **Artworks extend the realm of human domination to the extreme,** not literally, though, but rather by the strength of the establishment of a sphere existing for itself, which just through its posited immanence divides itself from real domination and thus negates the heteronomy of domination. **Only through their polar opposition,** not through the pseudomorphosis of art into nature, **are nature and art mediated in each other.** The more strictly artworks abstain from rank natural growth and the replication of nature, the more the successful ones approach nature. Aesthetic objectivity, the reflection of the being-in-itself of nature, realizes the subjective teleological element of unity; exclusively thereby do artworks become comparable to nature. In contrast, all particular similarity of art to nature is accidental, inert, and for the most part foreign to art. The feeling of an artwork's necessity is synonymous with this objectivity." (pg. 77)
 - "The being-in-itself to which artworks are devoted is not the imitation of something real but rather the anticipation of a being-in-itself that does not yet exist, of an unknown that - by way of the subject - is self-determining. Artworks say that something exists in itself, without predicating anything about it. In fact, the spiritualization that art has undergone during the past two hundred years and through which it has come to maturity has not alienated art from nature, as is the opinion of reified consciousness; rather, in terms of its own form, art has converged with natural beauty. A theory of art that, in conformity with subjective reason, simplistically identifies the tendency of art to subjectivization with the development of scientific reason, omits for the benefit of plausibility the content [Gehalt] and direction of artistic development. With human means art wants to realize the language of what is not human." (pg. 77-78)
 - "The total subjective elaboration of art as a nonconceptual language is the only figure, at the contemporary stage of rationality, in which something like the language of divine creation is reflected, qualified by the paradox that what is reflected is blocked. Art attempts to imitate an expression that would not be interpolated human intention. The latter is exclusively art's vehicle. The more perfect the artwork, the more it forsakes intentions. Mediate nature, the truth content of art, takes shape, immediately, as the opposite of nature. **If the language of nature is mute, art seeks to make this muteness eloquent; art thus exposes itself to failure through the insurmountable contradiction between the idea of making the mute eloquent, which demands a desperate effort, and the idea of what this effort would amount to, the idea of what cannot in any way be willed.**" (pg. 78)
 - **"Nature is beautiful in that it appears to say more than it is. To wrest this more from that more's contingency, to gain control of its semblance, to determine it as semblance as well as to negate it as unreal: This is the idea of art.** This artifactual more does not in itself guarantee the metaphysical substance of art. That substance could be totally null, and still the artworks could posit a more as what appears. **Artworks become artworks in the production of this more; they produce their own transcendence, rather than being its arena, and thereby they once again become separated from transcendence. The actual arena of transcendence in artworks is the nexus of their elements. By straining toward, as well as adapting to, this nexus, they go beyond the appearance that they are, though this transcendence may be unreal. Only in the achievement of this transcendence, not foremost and indeed probably never through meanings, are artworks spiritual. Their transcendence is their eloquence, their script, but it is a script without meaning or, more precisely, a script with broken or veiled meaning.** Although this transcendence is subjectively mediated, it is manifested objectively, yet all the more desultorily. **Art fails its concept when it does not achieve this transcendence; it loses the quality of being art. Equally, however, art betrays transcendence when it seeks to produce it as an effect.** This implies an essential criterion of new art. Compositions fail as background music or as the mere presentation of material, just as those paintings fail in which the geometrical patterns to which they are reducible remain factually what they are; this is the reason for the relevance of divergences from mathematical forms in all those works that employ them. The striven-for shudder comes to nothing: It does not occur. One of the paradoxes of artworks is that what they posit they are actually not permitted to posit; this is the measure of their substantiality. The more cannot be adequately described by the psychological definition of a gestalt, according to which a whole is more than its parts. **For the more is not simply the nexus of the elements, but an other, mediated through this nexus and yet divided from it. The artistic elements suggest through their nexus what escapes it"** (pg. 78-79)
 - "A language remote from all meaning is not a speaking language and this is its affinity to muteness. Perhaps all expression, which is most akin to transcendence, is as close to falling mute as in great new music nothing is so full of expression as what flickers out - that tone that disengages itself starkly from the dense musical texture - where art by virtue of its own movement converges with its natural element." (pg. 79)
 - **"Artworks become appearances,** in the pregnant sense of the term - that is, as the appearance of an other - when the accent falls on the unreality of their own reality. **Artworks have the immanent character of being an act,** even if they are carved in stone, and this endows them with the quality of

being something momentary and sudden. This is registered by the feeling of being overwhelmed when faced with an important work. This immanent character of being an act establishes the similarity of all artworks, like that of natural beauty, to music, a similarity once evoked by the term muse. Under patient contemplation artworks begin to move. To this extent they are truly afterimages of the primordial shudder in the age of reification; the terror of that age is recapitulated vis-a-vis reified objects" (pg. 79)

- **"All enlightenment is accompanied by the anxiety that what set enlightenment in motion in the first place and what enlightenment ever threatens to consume may disappear: truth.** Thrown back on itself, enlightenment distances itself from that guileless objectivity that it would like to achieve; that is why, under the compulsion of its own ideal of truth, it is conjoined with the pressure to hold on to what it has condemned in the name of truth. Art is this mnemosyne. **The instant of appearance in artworks is indeed the paradoxical unity or the balance between the vanishing and the preserved. Artworks are static as much as they are dynamic;** art genres that fall below approved culture, such as circus tableaux and revues and probably mechanisms such as the water fountains of the seventeenth century, confess to what authentic artworks conceal in themselves as their secret apriori. Artworks remain enlightened because they would like to make commensurable to human beings the remembered shudder, which was incommensurable in the magical primordial world." (pg. 80)
 - "The act of alienation in this objectivation, which each artwork carries out, is corrective. Artworks are neutralized and thus qualitatively transformed epiphanies" (pg. 80)
- "The artwork as appearance is most closely resembled by the apparition, the heavenly vision. Artworks stand tacitly in accord with it as it rises above human beings and is carried beyond their intentions and the world of things. Artworks from which the apparition has been driven out without a trace are nothing more than husks, worse than what merely exists, because they are not even useful. Artworks are nowhere more reminiscent of mana than in their extreme opposition to it, in the subjectively posited construction of ineluctability. That instant - which is what artworks are - crystallized, at least in traditional works, at the point where out of their particular elements they became a totality. The pregnant moment of their objectivation is the moment that concentrates them as appearance, which is by no means just the expressive elements that are dispersed over the artworks. **Artworks surpass the world of things by what is thing-like in them, their artificial objectivation. They become eloquent by the force of the kindling of thing and appearance.** They are things whose power it is to appear. Their immanent process is externalized as their own act, not as what humans have done to them and not merely for humans." (pg. 80-81)
 - "By its mere existence, every artwork, as alien artwork to what is alienated, conjures up the circus and yet is lost as soon as it emulates it. Art becomes an image not directly by becoming an apparition but only through the countertendency to it." (pg. 81)
 - **"In each genuine artwork something appears that does not exist.** It is not dreamt up out of disparate elements of the existing. Out of these elements artworks arrange constellations that become ciphers, without, however, like fantasies, setting up the enciphered before the eyes as something immediately existing. The encipherment of the artwork, one facet of its apparition, is thus distinct from natural beauty in that while it too refuses the univocity of judgment, nevertheless in its own form, in the way in which it turns toward the hidden, the artwork achieves a greater determinacy. **Artworks thus vie with the syntheses of significant thinking, their irreconcilable enemy.**" (pg. 82)
- **"The appearance of the nonexistent as if it existed motivates the question as to the truth of art. By its form alone art promises what is not; it registers objectively, however refractedly, the claim that because the nonexistent appears it must indeed be possible.** The unstillable longing in the face of beauty, for which Plato found words fresh with its first experience, is the longing for the fulfillment of what was promised. Idealist aesthetics fails by its inability to do justice to art's promesse du bonheur. It reduces the artwork to what it in theoretical terms symbolizes and thus trespasses against the spirit in that artwork. What spirit promises, not the sensual pleasure of the observer, is the locus of the sensual element in art. Romanticism wanted to equate what appears in the apparition with the artistic. In doing so, it grasped something essential about art, yet narrowed it to a particular, to the praise of a specific and putatively inwardly infinite comportment of art; in this, **romanticism imagined that through reflection and thematic content it could grasp art's ether,** whereas it is irresistible precisely because it refuses to let itself be nailed down either as an entity or as a universal concept. Its ether is bound up with particularization; it epitomizes the unsubsumable and as such challenges the prevailing principle of reality: that of exchangeability. What appears is not interchangeable because it does not remain a dull particular for which other particulars could be substituted, nor is it an empty universal that equates everything specific that it comprehends by abstracting the common characteristics. If in empirical reality everything has become fungible, art holds up to the world of everything-for-something-else images of what it itself would be if it were emancipated from the schemata of imposed identification. Yet art plays over into ideology in that, as the image of what is beyond exchange, it suggests that not everything in the world is exchangeable. On behalf of what cannot be exchanged, art must through its form bring the exchangeable to critical self-consciousness. **The telos of artworks is a language whose words cannot be located on the spectrum; a language whose words are not imprisoned by a prestabilized universality.** An important suspense novel by Leo Perutz concerns the color "drommet red"; subartistic genres such as science fiction credulously and therefore powerlessly make a fetish of such themes. Although the nonexistent emerges suddenly in artworks, they do not lay hold of it bodily as with the pass of a magic wand. The nonexistent is mediated to them through fragments of the existing, which they assemble into an apparition. It is not for art to decide by its existence if the nonexistent that appears indeed exists as something appearing or remains semblance. As figures of the existing, unable to summon into existence the nonexistent, artworks draw their authority from the reflection they compel on how they could be the overwhelming image of the nonexistent if it did not exist in itself. Precisely **Plato's ontology, more congenial to positivism than dialectic** is, took offense at art's semblance character, as if the promise made by art awakened doubt in the positive omnipresence of being and idea, for which Plato hoped to find surety in the concept. If the Platonic ideas were existence-in-itself, art would not be needed; the **ontologists of antiquity mistrusted art and sought pragmatic control over it** because in their innermost being they knew that the hypostatized universal concept is not what beauty promises. Plato's critique of art is indeed not compelling, because art negates the literal reality of its thematic content, which Plato had indicted as a lie. The exaltation of the concept as idea is allied with the philistine blindness for the central element of art, its form. In spite of all this, however, the blemish of mendacity obviously cannot be rubbed off art; nothing guarantees that it will keep its objective promise. Therefore **every theory of art must at the same time be the critique of art.** Even radical art is a lie insofar as it fails to create the possible to which it gives rise as semblance. Artworks draw credit from a praxis that has yet to begin and no one knows whether anything backs their letters of credit." (pg. 82-83)
 - "For artworks it is incumbent to grasp the universal - which dictates the nexus of the existing and is hidden by the existing - in the particular; it is not for art, through particularization, to disguise the ruling universality of the administered world. Totality is the grotesque heir of mana. The image character of artworks passed over into totality, which appears more truly in the individual than in the syntheses of singularities. By its relation to what in the constitution of reality is not directly accessible to discursive conceptualization and none the less objective, art in the age of enlightenment holds true to enlightenment while provoking it. **What appears in art is no longer the ideal, no longer harmony; the locus of its power of resolution is now exclusively in the contradictory and dissonant.** Enlightenment was always also the consciousness of the vanishing of what it wanted to seize without any residue of mystery; by penetrating the vanishing - the shudder - enlightenment not only is its critique but salvages it according to the measure of what provokes the shudder in reality itself. This paradox is appropriated by artworks. If it holds true that the subjective rationality of means and ends - which is particular and thus in its innermost irrational - requires spurious irrational enclaves and treats art as such, art is nevertheless the truth of society insofar as in its most authentic products the irrationality of the rational world order is expressed. In art, denunciation and anticipation are

- syncopated. If apparition illuminates and touches, the image is the paradoxical effort to transfix this most evanescent instant. **In art something momentary transcends; objectivation makes the artwork into an instant.** Pertinent here is Benjamin's formulation of a dialectic at a standstill, which he developed in the context of his conception of a dialectical image. **If, as images, artworks are the persistence of the transient, they are concentrated in appearance as something momentary. To experience art means to become conscious of its immanent process as an instant at a standstill...**" (pg. 84)
- "Artworks not only produce images as something that endures. They become artworks just as much through the destruction of their own imagerie; for this reason art is profoundly akin to explosion." (pg. 84)
 - "Not only are artworks allegories, they are the catastrophic fulfillment of allegories. The shocks inflicted by the most recent artworks are the explosion of their appearance." (pg. 84)
 - **"...art today is scarcely conceivable except as a form of reaction that anticipates the apocalypse.** Closely observed, even tranquil works discharge not so much the pent-up emotions of their makers as the works own inwardly antagonistic forces. The result of these forces is bound up with the impossibility of bringing these forces to any equilibrium; their antinomies, like those of knowledge, are unsolvable in the unreconciled world. **The instant in which these forces become image, the instant in which what is interior becomes exterior, the outer husk is exploded; their apparition, which makes them an image, always at the same time destroys them as image.**" (pg. 85)
 - "As a result of its determination as appearance, art bears its own negation embedded in itself as its own telos; the sudden unfolding of appearance disclaims aesthetic semblance. Appearance, however, and its explosion in the artwork are essentially historical. The artwork in itself is not, as historicism would have it - as if its history accords simply with its position in real history - Being absolved from Becoming. Rather, as something that exists, **the artwork has its own development. What appears in the artwork is its own inner time; the explosion of appearance blasts open the continuity of this inner temporality.** The artwork is mediated to real history by its monadological nucleus. History is the content of artworks. To analyze artworks means no less than to become conscious of the history immanently sedimented in them." (pg. 85)
 - "The image character of works, at least in traditional art, is probably a function of the "pregnant moment." This could be illustrated by Beethoven's symphonies and above all in many of his sonata movements. **Movement at a standstill is eternalized in the instant, and what has been made eternal is annihilated by its reduction to the instant.** This marks the sharp difference of the image character of art from how Klages and Jung conceived it: If, after the separation of knowledge into image and sign, thought simply equates the image with truth, the untruth of the schism is in no way corrected but made all the worse, for the image is no less affected by the schism than is the concept. **Aesthetic images are no more translatable into concepts than they are "real"; there is no *imago* without the imaginary; their reality is their historical content, and the images themselves, including the historical images, are not to be hypostatized.** — Aesthetic images are not fixed, archaic invariants: Artworks become images in that the processes that have congealed in them as objectivity become eloquent." (pg. 85)
 - **"The latent processes in artworks, which break through in the instant, are their inner historicity, sedimented external history.** The binding character of their objectivation as well as the experiences from which they live are collective. The language of artworks is, like every language, constituted by a collective undercurrent..." (pg. 85-86)
 - "Subjective experience contributes images that are not images of some-thing, and precisely they are essentially collective; thus and in no other way is art mediated to experience. By virtue of this experiential content, and not primarily as a result of fixation or forming as they are usually conceived, artworks diverge from empirical reality: empiria through empirical deformation. This is the affinity of artworks to the dream, however far removed they are from dreams by their law of form. This means nothing less than that **the subjective element of artworks is mediated by their being-in-themselves.** The latent collectivity of this subjectivity frees the monadological artwork from the accidentalness of its individuation. Society, the determinant of experience, constitutes artworks as their true subject; this is the needed response to the current reproach of subjectivism raised to art by both left and right. At every aesthetic level the antagonism between the unreality of the image and the reality of the appearing historical content is renewed. The aesthetic images, however, emancipate themselves from mythical images by subordinating themselves to their own unreality; that is what the law of form means. This is the artworks' metexis in enlightenment. The view of art as politically engaged or didactic regresses back of this stage of enlightenment. Unconcerned with the reality of aesthetic images, this view shuffles away the antithesis of art to reality and integrates art into the reality it opposes. **Only those artworks are enlightened that, vigilantly distant from the empirical, evince true consciousness.**" (pg. 86)
 - **"That through which artworks, by becoming appearance, are more than they are: This is their spirit. The determination of artworks by spirit is akin to their determination as phenomenon, as something that appears, and not as blind appearance. What appears in artworks and is neither to be separated from their appearance nor to be held simply identical with it - the nonfactual in their facticity - is their spirit. It makes artworks, things among things, something other than thing.** Indeed, artworks are only able to become other than thing by becoming a thing, though not through their localization in space and time but only by an immanent process of reification that makes them self-same, self-identical. Otherwise one could not speak of their spirit, that is, of what is utterly unthinglike. **Spirit is not simply spiritus, the breath that animates the work as a phenomenon; spirit is as much the force or the interior of works, the force of their objectivation; spirit participates in this force no less than in the phenomenality that is contrary to it. The spirit of artworks is their immanent mediation, which transforms their sensual moments and their objective arrangement; this is mediation in the strict sense that each and every element in the artwork becomes manifestly its own other.**" (pg. 86-87)
 - **"The spirit in artworks transcends equally their status as a thing and the sensual phenomenon, and indeed only exists insofar as these are among its elements. Put negatively: In artworks nothing is literal, least of all their words; spirit is their ether, what speaks through them, or, more precisely, what makes artworks become script.** Although nothing counts in artworks that does not originate in the configuration of their sensual elements - all other spirit in the artworks, particularly injected philosophical thematics and putatively expressed spirit, all discursive ingredients, are material like colors and tones - the sensual in artworks is artistic only if in itself mediated by spirit. Even the sensually most dazzling French works achieve their rank by the involuntary transformation of their sensual elements into bearers of a spirit whose experiential content is melancholic resignation to mortal, sensual existence; never do these works relish their suaveness to the full, for that suaveness is always curtailed by the sense of form. **The spirit of artworks is objective, regardless of any philosophy of objective or subjective spirit; this spirit is their own content and it passes judgment over them: It is the spirit of the thing itself that appears through the appearance. Its objectivity has its measure in the power with which it infiltrates the appearance.** Just how little the spirit of the work equals the spirit of the artist, which is at most one element of the former, is evident in the fact that spirit is evoked through the artifact, its problems, and its material. Not even the appearance of the artwork as a whole is its spirit, and least of all is it the appearance of the idea purportedly embodied or symbolized by the work; spirit cannot be fixated in immediate identity with its appearance. But neither does spirit constitute a level above or below appearance; such a supposition would be no less of a reification. The locus of spirit is the configuration of what appears. Spirit forms appearance just as appearance forms spirit; it is the luminous source through which the phenomenon radiates and becomes a phenomenon in the most pregnant sense of the word. The sensual exists in art only spiritualized and refracted." (pg. 87)
 - **to say "spirit of artworks is objective" means that such is not reliant upon the subject. This I would argue against.*
 - "In its aesthetic manifestation, spirit is condemned to its locus in the phenomenon just as spirits were once thought to have been condemned to their haunts; if spirit does not appear, the artworks are as negligible as that spirit. Spirit is indifferent to the distinction drawn by the history of

- ideas between sensual and idealistic art. Insofar as there is sensual art, it is not simply sensual but embodies the spirit of sensuality; Wedekind's concept of carnal spirit registered this. **Spirit, art's vital element, is bound up with art's truth content, though without coinciding with it. The spirit of works can be untruth. For truth content postulates something real as its substance, and no spirit is immediately real.** With an ever increasing ruthlessness, spirit determines and pulls everything merely sensual and factual in artworks into its own sphere. Artworks thereby become more secular, more opposed to mythology, to the illusion of spirit - even its own spirit - as real. Thus artworks radically mediated by spirit are compelled to consume themselves. Through the determinate negation of the reality of spirit, however, these artworks continue to refer to spirit: They do not feign spirit, rather the force they mobilize against it is spirit's omnipresence. Spirit today is not imaginable in any other form; art offers its prototype. As tension between the elements of the artwork, and not as an existence *sui generis*, **art's spirit is a process and thus it is the work itself. To know an artwork means to apprehend this process. The spirit of artworks is not a concept, yet through spirit artworks become commensurable to the concept.** By reading the spirit of artworks out of their configurations and confronting the elements with each other and with the spirit that appears in them, critique passes over into the truth of the spirit, which is located beyond the aesthetic configuration. This is why critique is necessary to the works. In the spirit of the works critique recognizes their truth content or distinguishes truth content from spirit. Only in this act, and not through any philosophy of art that would dictate to art what its spirit must be, do art and philosophy converge." (pg. 88)
- "...the tendency of artworks to wrest themselves free of the internal unity of their own construction, to introduce within themselves caesuras that no longer permit the totality of the appearance. Because the spirit of the works is not identical with them, **spirit breaks up the objective form through which it is constituted; this rupture is the instant of apparition.**" (pg. 88)
 - **"Unitary with the phenomenon, spirit is at the same time its other. The spirit of artworks is bound up with their form, but spirit is such only insofar as it points beyond that form."** (pg. 89)
 - "This becomes evident in the realization that technological analysis does not grasp the spirit of a work even when this analysis is more than a crude reduction to elements and also emphasizes the artwork's context and its coherence as well as its real or putative initial constituents; it requires further reflection to grasp that spirit. Only as spirit is art the antithesis of empirical reality as the determinate negation of the existing order of the world. Art is to be construed dialectically insofar as spirit inheres in it, without however art's possessing spirit as an absolute or spirit's serving to guarantee an absolute to art." (pg. 89)
 - ◆ "Certainly spirit in artworks is not an intentional particular but an element like every particular constitutive of an artwork; true, **spirit is that particular that makes an artifact art**, though there is no spirit without its antithesis." (pg. 89)
 - "If there is something like a common characteristic of great late works, it is to be sought in the breaking through of form by spirit." (pg. 90)
 - **"Not everything that exists is spirit, yet art is an entity that through its configurations becomes something spiritual."** (pg. 91)
 - "In no artwork is the element of spirit something that exists; rather, it is something in a process of development and formation. Thus, as Hegel was the first to perceive, **the spirit of artworks is integrated into an overarching process of spiritualization: that of the progress of consciousness.** Precisely through its progressive spiritualization, through its division from nature, art wants to revoke this division from which it suffers and which inspires it." (pg. 92)
 - ◆ "Spiritualization, as the continuous expansion of the mimetic taboo on art, the indigenous domain of mimesis, works toward art's dissolution. But being also a mimetic force, spiritualization at the same time works toward the identity of the artwork with itself, thereby excluding the heterogeneous and strengthening its image character. **Art is not infiltrated by spirit; rather, spirit follows artworks where they want to go**, setting free their immanent language. Still, spiritualization cannot free itself of a shadow that demands its critique; the more substantial spiritualization became in art, the more energetically - in Benjamin's theory no less than in Beckett's literary praxis - did it renounce spirit, the idea. However, in that spiritualization is inextricable from the requirement that everything must become form, spiritualization becomes complicitous in the tendency that liquidates the tension between art and its other. Only radically spiritualized art is still possible, all other art is childish; inexorably, however, **the childish seems to contaminate the whole existence of art.** — The sensuously pleasing has come under a double attack. On the one hand, through the artwork's spiritualization the external must pass by way of spirit and has increasingly become the appearance of the inward. On the other hand, the absorption of resistant material and themes opposes the culinary consumption of art even if, given the general ideological tendency to integrate everything that resists integration, consumption undertakes to swallow everything up whole, however repulsive it might seem." (pg. 92)
 - ◇ "...spiritualization is legitimate as the critique of culture through art, which is part of culture and finds no satisfaction in its failure." (pg. 93)
 - ◆ **"spiritualization takes place not through ideas announced by art but by the force with which it penetrates layers that are intentionless and hostile to the conceptual.** This is not the least of the reasons why the proscribed and forbidden tempt artistic sensibilities. Spiritualization in new art prohibits it from tarnishing itself any further with the topical preferences of philistine culture: the true, the beautiful, and the good. Into its innermost core what is usually called art's social critique or engagement, all that is critical or negative in art, has been fused with spirit, with art's law of form. That these elements are at present stubbornly played off against each other is a symptom of the regression of consciousness." (pg. 93)
 - "The doctrine of intuition is false because it phenomenologically attributes to art what it does not fulfill. The criterion of artworks is not the purity of intuition but rather the profundity with which they carry out the tension with the intellectual elements that inhere in them. Nevertheless, the taboo on the nonintuitive elements of artworks is not without justification. What is conceptual in artworks involves judgment, and to judge is contrary to the artwork. Although judgments may occur in it, the work itself does not make judgments, perhaps because ever since Attic tragedy the work has been a hearing. If the discursive element takes primacy, the relation of the artwork to what is external to it becomes all too unmediated and the work accommodates itself even at those points where, as in Brecht, it takes pride in standing in opposition to reality: The work actually becomes positivistic. The artwork must absorb into its immanent nexus its discursive components in a movement that is contrary to the externally directed, apophantic movement that releases the discursive." (pg. 98-99)
 - "For insofar as artworks are works they are things in themselves, objectified by virtue of their particular law of form" (pg. 100)
 - **"The artwork is at once process and instant. Its objectivation, a condition of aesthetic autonomy, is also rigidification. The more the social labor sedimented in the artwork is objectified and fully formed, the more the work echoes hollowly and becomes alien to itself."** (pg. 100)
 - "The emancipation from the concept of harmony has revealed itself to be a revolt against semblance: Construction inheres tautologically in expression, which is its polar opposite." (pg. 100)
 - "The immanent nothingness of its elementary determinations draws integral art down into the amorphous, whose gravitational pull increases the more thoroughly art is organized. It is exclusively the amorphous that makes the integration of the artwork possible. Through the completion of the work, by setting unformed nature at a distance, the natural element returns as what has yet to be formed, as the nonarticulated. When artworks are viewed under the closest scrutiny, the most objectivated paintings metamorphose into a swarming mass and texts splinter into words. As soon as one imagines having a firm grasp on the details of an artwork, it dissolves into the indeterminate and undifferentiated, so

- mediated is it. This is the manifestation of aesthetic semblance in the structure of artworks. Under micrological study, the particular - the artwork's vital element - is volatilized; its concretion vanishes. The process, which in each work takes objective shape, is opposed to its fixation as something to point to, and dissolves back from whence it came. Artworks themselves destroy the claim to objectivation that they raise. This is a measure of the profundity with which illusion suffuses artworks, even the non-representational ones. The truth of artworks depends on whether they succeed at absorbing into their immanent necessity what is not identical with the concept, what is according to that concept accidental. The purposefulness of artworks requires the purposeless, with the result that their own consistency is predicated on the illusory; semblance is indeed their logic. To exist, their purposefulness must be suspended through its other." (pg. 101)
- "The dialectic of modern art is largely that it wants to shake off its illusoriness like an animal trying to shake off its antlers." (pg. 102)
 - "The allergy to aura, from which no art today is able to escape, is inseparable from the eruption of inhumanity. This renewed reification, the regression of artworks to the barbaric literalness of what is aesthetically the case, and phantasmagorical guilt are inextricably intertwined. As soon as the artwork fears for its purity so fanatically that it loses faith in its possibility and begins to display outwardly what cannot become art - canvas and mere tones - it becomes its own enemy, the direct and false continuation of purposeful rationality. This tendency culminates in the *happening*. There is no separating what is legitimate in the rebellion against semblance as illusion from what is illusory - the hope that aesthetic semblance could rescue itself from the morass in which it is sunk by pulling itself up by the scruff of its own neck. Clearly the immanent semblance character of artworks cannot be freed from some degree of external imitation of reality, however latent, and therefore cannot be freed from illusion either. For everything that artworks contain with regard to form and materials, spirit and subject matter, has emigrated from reality into the artworks and in them has divested itself of its reality: Thus the artwork also becomes its afterimage. Even the purest aesthetic determination, appearance, is mediated to reality as its determinate negation. The difference of artworks from the empirical world, their semblance character, is constituted out of the empirical world and in opposition to it. If for the sake of their own concept artworks wanted absolutely to destroy this reference back to the empirical world, they would wipe out their own premise. Art is indeed infinitely difficult in that it must transcend its concept in order to fulfill it; yet in this process where it comes to resemble reality it assimilates itself to that reification against which it protests: Today engagement inescapably becomes aesthetic concession. The ineffability of illusion prevents the solution of the antinomy of aesthetic semblance by means of a concept of absolute appearance." (pg. 103)
 - "Therefore, in spite of the summary verdicts passed on it everywhere by those who are politically interested, radical modern art is progressive, and this is true not merely of the techniques it has developed but of its truth content. What makes existing artworks more than existence is not simply another existing thing, but their language. Authentic artworks are eloquent even when they refuse any form of semblance, from the phantasmagorical illusion to the faintest auratic breath. The effort to purge them of whatever contingent subjectivity may want to say through them involuntarily confers an ever more defined shape on their own language. In artworks the term expression refers to precisely this language. There is good reason that where this term has been technically employed longest and most emphatically, as the directive *espressivo* in musical scores, it demands nothing specifically expressed, no particular emotional content. Otherwise *espressivo* could be replaced by terms for whatever specific thing is to be expressed" (pg. 104-105)
 - "No artwork is an undiminished unity; each must simulate it, and thus collides with itself. Confronted with an antagonistic reality, the aesthetic unity that is established in opposition to it immanently becomes a semblance. The integration of artworks culminates in the semblance that their life is precisely that of their elements. However, the elements import the heterogeneous into artworks and their semblance becomes apocryphal. In fact, every penetrating analysis of an artwork turns up fictions in its claim to aesthetic unity, whether on the grounds that its parts do not spontaneously cohere and that unity is simply imposed on them, or that the elements are prefabricated to fit this unity and are not truly elements. The plurality in artworks is not what it was empirically but rather what it becomes as soon as it enters their domain; this condemns aesthetic reconciliation as aesthetically specious. The artwork is semblance not only as the antithesis to existence but also in its own terms. It is beleaguered with inconsistencies. By virtue of their nexus of meaning, the organ of their semblance, artworks set themselves up as things that exist in themselves. By integrating them, meaning itself - that which creates unity - is asserted as being present in the work, even though it is not actual. Meaning, which effects semblance, predominates in the semblance character. Yet the semblance of meaning does not exhaustively define meaning. For the meaning of an artwork is at the same time the essence that conceals itself in the factual; meaning summons into appearance what appearance otherwise obstructs. This is the purpose of the organization of an artwork, of bringing its elements together into an eloquent relation. Yet it is difficult through critical examination to distinguish this aim from the affirmative semblance of the actuality of meaning in a fashion that would be definitive enough to satisfy the philosophical construction of concepts. Even while art indicts the concealed essence, which it summons into appearance, as monstrous, this negation at the same time posits as its own measure an essence that is not present, that of possibility; meaning inheres even in the disavowal of meaning. Because meaning, whenever it is manifest in an artwork, remains bound up with semblance, all art is endowed with sadness..." (pg. 105)
 - "Melancholy is the shadow of what in all form is heterogeneous, which form strives to banish: mere existence. In happy artworks, melancholy anticipates the negation of meaning in those that are undetermined, the reverse image of longing. What radiates wordlessly from artworks is that it is, thrown into relief by it - the unlocatable grammatical subject - is not; it cannot be referred demonstratively to anything in the world that previously exists. In the utopia of its form, art bends under the burdensome weight of the empirical world from which, as art, it steps away. Otherwise, art's consummateness is hollow. The semblance of artworks is bound up with the progress of their integration, which they had to demand of themselves and through which their content seems immediately present" (pg. 105-106)
 - "A coherence of meaning — unity — is contrived by art because it does not exist and because as artificial meaning it negates the being-in-itself for the sake of which the organization of meaning was undertaken, ultimately negating art itself. Every artifact works against itself." (pg. 106)
 - "The semblance character of artworks is immanently mediated by their own objectivity. Once a text, a painting, a musical composition is fixed, the work is factually existent and merely feigns the becoming — the content — that it encompasses..." (pg. 107)
 - "...no artwork has content other than through semblance, through the form of that semblance. Central to aesthetics therefore is the redemption of semblance; and the emphatic right of art, the legitimation of its truth, depends on this redemption. Aesthetic semblance seeks to salvage what the active spirit - which produced the artifactual bearers of semblance - eliminated from what it reduced to its material, to what is for-an-other. In the process, however, what is to be salvaged itself becomes something dominated, if not actually produced, by it; redemption through semblance is itself illusory, and the artwork accepts this powerlessness in the form of its own illusoriness. Semblance is not the *characteristica formalis* of artworks but rather *materialis*, the trace of the damage artworks want to revoke. Only to the extent that its content is unmetaphorically true does art, the artifactual, discard the semblance produced by its artifactuality." (pg. 107)
 - "The semblance of artworks originates, however, in their spiritual essence. Spirit as something separated from its other, making itself independent in opposition to it and intangible in this being-for-itself, is necessarily illusory; all spirit, [*Greek word] from the corporeal, has in itself the aspect of raising what does not exist, what is abstract, to existence; this is the truth element of nominalism. Art carries out the test of the illusoriness of spirit as that of an essence *sui generis* by taking at its word spirit's claim to be an entity and placing it as such before the eyes. It is this, much more than the imitation of the sensual world by aesthetic sensuousness, that art has learned to renounce and that compels art to semblance. Spirit, however, is not only semblance but also truth; it is not only the imposture of something existing in-itself, but equally

- the negation of all false being-in-itself.** Spirit's element of nonexistence and its negativity enter artworks, which do not sensualize spirit directly or make it a fixed thing but rather become spirit exclusively through the relation of their sensuous elements to each other. Therefore the semblance character of art is at the same time its methexis in truth." (pg. 108)
- "Artworks are semblance in that they externalize their interior, spirit, and they are only known insofar as, contrary to the prohibition laid down by the chapter on amphiboles, their interior is known." (pg. 109)
 - "The rebellion against semblance, art's dissatisfaction with itself, has been an intermittent element of its claim to truth from time immemorial. Art, whatever its material, has always desired dissonance, a desire suppressed by the affirmative power of society with which aesthetic semblance has been bound up. Dissonance is effectively expression; the consonant and harmonious want to soften and eliminate it. **Expression and semblance are fundamentally antithetical.** If expression is scarcely to be conceived except as the expression of suffering - joy has proven inimical to expression, perhaps because it has yet to exist, and bliss would be beyond expression - expression is the element immanent to art through which, as one of its constituents, art defends itself against the immanence that it develops by its law of form. Artistic expression comports itself mimetically, just as the expression of living creatures is that of pain. The lineaments of expression inscribed in artworks, if they are not to be mute, are demarcation lines against semblance. Yet, in that artworks as such remain semblance, the conflict between semblance-form in the broadest sense - and expression remains unresolved and fluctuates historically. Mimetic comportment - an attitude toward reality distinct from the fixated antithesis of subject and object - is seized in art-the organ of mimesis since the mimetic taboo - by semblance and, as the complement to the autonomy of form, becomes its bearer. **The unfolding of art is that of a quid pro quo: Expression, through which nonaesthetic experience reaches most deeply into the work, becomes the archetype of everything fictive in art, as if at the juncture where art is most permeable to real experience culture most rigorously stood guard that the border not be violated. The expressive values of artworks cease to be immediately those of something alive.** Refracted and transformed, they become the expression of the work itself: The term *musica ficta* is the earliest evidence of this. **That quid pro quo not only neutralizes mimesis, it also derives from it.** If mimetic comportment does not imitate something but rather makes itself like itself, this is precisely what artworks take it upon themselves to fulfill. **In their expression, artworks do not imitate the impulses of individuals, nor in any way those of their authors;** in cases where this is their essential determination, they fall as copies precisely to the mercy of that reification that the mimetic impulse opposes. At the same time artistic expression enforces on itself history's judgment that mimesis is an archaic comportment, that as an immediate practice mimesis is not knowledge, that what makes itself like itself does not become truly alike, that mimetic intervention failed. Thus mimesis is banished to art that comports itself mimetically, just as art absorbs the critique of mimesis into itself by carrying out the objectivation of this impulse." (pg. 110-111)
 - "Expression approaches the transsubjective; it is the form of knowledge that - having preceded the polarity of subject and object - does not recognize this polarity as definitive. Art is secular, however, in that it attempts to achieve such knowledge within the bounds of the polarity of subject and object, as an act of autonomous spirit. **Aesthetic expression is the objectification of the non-objective**, and in fact in such a fashion that through its objectification it becomes a second-order nonobjectivity: **it becomes what speaks out of the artifact not as an imitation of the subject.** Yet precisely the objectivation of expression, which coincides with art, requires the subject who makes it and — in bourgeois terms — makes use of his own mimetic impulses. **Art is expressive when what is objective, subjectively mediated, speaks**, whether this be sadness, energy, or longing. Expression is the suffering countenance of artworks. They turn this countenance only toward those who return its gaze, even when they are composed in happy tones or glorify the vie opportune of rococo. If expression were merely the doubling of the subjectively felt, it would be null and void; the artist who condemns a work as being an impression rather than an invention knows this perfectly well. Rather than such feelings, the model of expression is that of extra artistic things and situations." (pg. 111-112)
 - "The expression of artworks is the nonsubjective in the subject; not so much that subject's expression as its copy..." (pg. 113)
 - ◆ *meaning, it's the remainder of what's there to be picked up which the artist did not lay down. Cf. pg. 121 - "Artworks that unfold to contemplation and thought without any remainder are not artworks."
 - "Expression is a phenomenon of interference, a function of technical procedures no less than it is mimetic. Mimesis is itself summoned up by the density of the technical procedure, whose immanent rationality indeed seems to work in opposition to expression. The compulsion exerted by integral works is equivalent to their eloquence, to what speaks in them, and no merely suggestive effect; suggestion is, furthermore, itself related to mimetic processes. **This leads to a subjective paradox of art: to produce what is blind, expression, by way of reflection, that is, through form; not to rationalize the blind but to produce it aesthetically, 'To make things of which we do not know what they are'**" (pg. 114)
 - "The sense of form is the reflection, at once blind and binding, of the work in itself on which that reflection must depend; it is an objectivity closed to itself that devolves upon the subjective mimetic capacity, which for its part gains its force through its antithesis, rational construction. The blindness of the sense of form corresponds to the necessity in the object. **The irrationality of the expressive element is for art the aim of all aesthetic rationality. Its task is to divest itself, in opposition to all imposed order, both of hopeless natural necessity and chaotic contingency. Aesthetic necessity becomes aware of its fictive element through the experience of contingency.** But art does not seek to do justice to contingency by its intentional, fictive incorporation in order thus to depotentiate its subjective mediations. Rather, art does justice to the contingent by probing in the darkness of the trajectory of its own necessity. The more truly art follows this trajectory, the less self-transparent art is. It makes itself dark. Its immanent process has the quality of following a divining rod. To follow where the hand is drawn: This is mimesis as the fulfillment of objectivity..." (pg. 114-115)
 - "Aesthetic rationality must plunge blindfolded into the making of the work rather than directing it externally as an act of reflection over the artwork. **Artworks are smart or foolish according to their procedures, not according to the thoughts their author has about them.**" (pg. 114)
 - "Expression is a priori imitation. Latently implicit in expression is the trust that by being spoken or screamed all will be made better: This is a rudiment of magic, faith in what Freud polemically called the "omnipotence of thought." Yet expression is not altogether circumscribed by the magic spell. That it is spoken, that distance is thus won from the trapped immediacy of suffering, transforms suffering just as screaming diminishes unbearable pain." (pg. 117)
 - "There is no general test for deciding if an artist who wipes out expression altogether has become the mouthpiece of reified consciousness or of the speechless, expressionless expression that denounces it. **Authentic art knows the expression of the expressionless, a kind of weeping without tears.**" (pg. 117)
 - "Art corrects conceptual knowledge because, in complete isolation, it carries out what conceptual knowledge in vain awaits from the nonpictorial subject-object relation: that through a subjective act what is objective would be unveiled. Art does not postpone this act *ad infinitum* but demands it of its own finitude at the price of its illusoriness. Through spiritualization, the radical domination of nature - its own - art corrects the domination of nature as the domination of an other." (pg. 113)
 - "**The task of aesthetics is not to comprehend artworks as hermeneutical objects; in the contemporary situation, it is their incomprehensibility that needs to be comprehended.** What is so resistlessly absorbed as a cliché by the watchword - the *absurd* - could only be recuperated by a theory that thinks its truth. It cannot simply be divided off from the spiritualization of artworks as counterpoint to that spiritualization; this counterpoint is, in Hegel's words, the ether of artworks; it is spirit itself in its omnipresence and not the intention of the enigma. For in that it negates the spirit that dominates nature, the spirit of artworks does not appear as spirit. It ignites on what is opposed to it, on materiality. In no way is spirit most present in the most spiritual artworks. Art is redemptive in the act by which the spirit in it throws itself away. Art holds true to the shudder, but not by

- regression to it. Rather, art is its legacy. The spirit of artworks produces the shudder by externalizing it in objects. Thus art participates in the actual movement of history in accord with the law of enlightenment: By virtue of the self-reflection of genius, what once seemed to be reality emigrates into imagination, where it survives by becoming conscious of its own unreality. The historical trajectory of art as spiritualization is that of the critique of myth as well as that toward its redemption: The imagination confirms the possibilities of what it recollects. This double movement of spirit in art describes its protohistory, which is inscribed in its concept, rather than its empirical history. The uncheckable movement of spirit toward what has eluded it becomes in art the voice that speaks for what was lost in the most distantly archaic." (pg. 118)
- **"Mimesis in art is the prespiritual; it is contrary to spirit and yet also that on which spirit ignites. In artworks, spirit has become their principle of construction, although it fulfills its telos only when it emerges from what is to be constructed, from the mimetic impulses, by shaping itself to them rather than allowing itself to be imposed on them by sovereign rule. Form objectivates the particular impulses only when it follows them where they want to go of their own accord. This alone is the methexis of artworks in reconciliation.** The rationality of artworks becomes spirit only when it is immersed in its polar opposite. The divergence of the constructive and the mimetic, which no artwork can resolve and which is virtually the original sin of aesthetic spirit, has its correlative in that element of the ridiculous and clownish that even the most significant works bear and that, unconcealed, is inextricable from their significance. The inadequacy of classicism of any persuasion originates in its repression of this element; a repression that art must mistrust. The progressive spiritualization of art in the name of maturity only accentuates the ridiculous all the more glaringly; the more the artwork's own organization assimilates itself to a logical order by virtue of its inner exactitude, the more obviously the difference between the artwork's logicity and the logicity that governs empirically becomes the parody of the latter; the more reasonable the work becomes in terms of its formal constitution, the more ridiculous it becomes according to the standard of empirical reason. Its ridiculousness is, however, also part of a condemnation of empirical rationality; it accuses the rationality of social praxis of having become an end in itself and as such the irrational and mad reversal of means into ends. The ridiculous in art, which philistines recognize better than do those who are naively at home in art, and the folly of a rationality made absolute indict one other reciprocally; incidentally, when viewed from the perspective of the praxis of self-preservation, happiness - sex - is equally ridiculous, as can be spitefully pointed out by anyone who is not driven by it. **Ridiculousness is the residue of the mimetic in art, the price of its self-enclosure.**" (pg. 118-119)
 - **"Through form, artworks gain their resemblance to language, seeming at every point to say just this and only this, and at the same time whatever it is slips away."** (pg. 120)
 - **"All artworks - and art altogether - are enigmas; since antiquity this has been an irritation to the theory of art. That artworks say something and in the same breath conceal it expresses this enigmaticalness from the perspective of language.** This characteristic cavorts clownishly; if one is within the artwork, if one participates in its immanent completion, this enigmaticalness makes itself invisible; if one steps outside the work, breaking the contract with its immanent context, this enigmaticalness returns like a spirit." (pg. 120)
 - "Understanding art's enigmaticalness is not equivalent to understanding specific artworks, which requires an objective experiential reenactment from within in the same sense in which the interpretation of a musical work means its faithful performance. **Understanding is itself a problematic category in the face of art's enigmaticalness. Whoever seeks to understand artworks exclusively through the immanence of consciousness within them by this very measure fails to understand them and as such understanding grows,** so does the feeling of its insufficiency caught blindly in the spell of art, to which art's own truth content is opposed. If one who exits from this immanent context or was never in it registers the enigmaticalness with animosity, the enigmaticalness disappears deceptively into the artistic experience. **The better an artwork is understood, the more it is unpuzzled on one level and the more obscure its constitutive enigmaticalness becomes.** It only emerges demonstratively in the profoundest experience of art. **If a work opens itself completely, it reveals itself as a question and demands reflection; then the work vanishes into the distance, only to return to those who thought they understood it, overwhelming them for a second time with the question "What is it?"** Art's enigmaticalness can, however, be recognized as constitutive where it is absent: **Artworks that unfold to contemplation and thought without any remainder are not artworks.** Enigma here is not a glib synonym for "problem," a concept that is only aesthetically significant in the strict sense of a task posed by the immanent composition of works. In no less strict terms, **artworks are enigmas.** They contain the potential for the solution; the solution is not objectively given. **Every artwork is a picture puzzle, a puzzle to be solved,** but this puzzle is constituted in such a fashion that it remains a vexation, the preestablished routing of its observer." (pg. 121)
 - **"Understanding, however, does not extinguish the enigmaticalness of art."** (pg. 122)
 - ◆ **"Understanding in the highest sense - a solution of the enigma that at the same time maintains the enigma - depends on a spiritualization of art and artistic experience whose primary medium is the imagination. The spiritualization of art approaches its enigmaticalness not directly through conceptual elucidation, but rather by concretizing its enigmaticalness.** The solution of the enigma amounts to giving the reason for its insolubility, which is the gaze artworks direct at the viewer. The demand of artworks that they be understood, that their content be grasped, is bound to their specific experience; but it can only be fulfilled by way of the theory that reflects this experience. **What the enigmaticalness of artworks refers to can only be thought mediatedly.** The objection to the phenomenology of art, as to any phenomenology that imagines it can lay its hands directly on the essence, is not that it is antiempirical but, on the contrary, that it brings thinking experience to a halt." (pg. 122)
 - **"Art in the most emphatic sense lacks the concept** even when it employs concepts and adapts its facade to comprehension. **No concept that enters an artwork remains what it is; each and every concept is so transformed that its scope can be affected and its meaning refashioned.**" (pg. 122)
 - **"Artworks are, as synthesis, analogous to judgment; in artworks, however, synthesis does not result in judgment; of no artwork is it possible to determine its judgment or what its so-called message is.** It is therefore questionable whether artworks can possibly be *engagé*, even when they emphasize their *engagement*. **What works amount to, that in which they are unified, cannot be formulated as a judgment, not even as one that they state in words and sentences.**" (pg. 123)
 - **"Art judges exclusively by abstaining from judgment; this is the defense of naturalism.** Form, which shapes verse into the echo of a mythical epigram, negates its fatefulness. Echo reconciles. These processes, transpiring in the interior of artworks, make them truly infinite in themselves. It is not that artworks differ from significative language by the absence of meanings; rather, these meanings through their absorption become a matter of accident. The movements by which this absorption of meaning occurs are concretely prescribed by every aesthetically formed object." (pg. 124)
 - **"Artworks share with enigmas the duality of being determinate and indeterminate.** They are question marks, not univocal even through synthesis. Nevertheless their figure is so precise that it determines the point where the work breaks off. **As in enigmas, the answer is both hidden and demanded by the structure.** This is the function of the work's immanent logic, of the lawfulness that transpires in it, and that is the theodicy of the concept of purpose in art. **The aim of artworks is the determination of the indeterminate. Works are purposeful in themselves, without having any positive purpose beyond their own arrangement; their purposefulness, however, is legitimated as the figure of the answer to the enigma. Through organization artworks become more than they are"** (pg. 124)
 - **"Artworks are language only as writing.** If no artwork is ever a judgment, each artwork contains elements derived from judgment and bears an aspect of being correct and incorrect, true and false. Yet **the silent and determinate answer of artworks does not reveal itself to interpretation with a single stroke,** as a new immediacy, but only by way of all mediations, those of the works' discipline as well as those of thought and

philosophy" (pg. 124-125)

- **"The enigmaticalness outlives the interpretation that arrives at the answer.** If the enigmaticalness of artworks is not localized in what is experienced in them, in aesthetic understanding - if the enigmaticalness only bursts open in the distance - the experience that immerses itself in the artworks and is rewarded with corroboration itself becomes enigmatic: the enigma that what is multivocally entwined can be univocally and compellingly understood as such." (pg. 125)
 - ◇ **"The musician who understands the score follows its most minute impulses, and yet in a certain sense he does not know what he plays;** the situation is no different for the actor, and precisely in this is the mimetic capacity made manifest most drastically in the praxis of artistic performance as the imitation of the dynamic curves of what is performed; it is the quintessence of understanding this side of the enigma" (pg. 125)
- **"If enigmaticalness disappears completely from the experience, if experience supposes that it has become completely immanent to the object, the enigma's gaze suddenly appears again; thus is preserved the artworks' seriousness,** which stares out of archaic images and is masked in traditional art by their familiar language until strengthened to the point of total alienation" (pg. 125)
 - "If the process immanent to artworks constitutes the enigma, that is, what surpasses the meaning of all its particular elements, this process at the same time attenuates the enigma as soon as the artwork is no longer perceived as fixed and thereupon vainly interpreted but instead once again produced in its objective constitution. In performances that do not do this, that do not interpret, **the in-itself of the artworks,** which such asceticism claims to serve, becomes the booty of its muteness; every noninterpretive performance is meaningless." (pg. 125)
- "This comportment is that each artwork is the recapitulation of itself. Artworks are self-likeness freed from the compulsion of identity." (pg. 125)
- **"Artworks speak like elves in fairy tales: 'If you want the absolute, you shall have it, but you will not recognize it when you see it.'** The truth of discursive knowledge is unshrouded, and thus discursive knowledge does not have it; the knowledge that is art, has truth, but as something incommensurable with art. Through the freedom of the subject in them, artworks are less subjective than is discursive knowledge." (pg. 126)
 - "Precisely because they are blocked, **artworks are images of being-in-itself.** Ultimately, what lives on in art's enigmaticalness, through which art most abruptly opposes the unquestionable existence of objects of action, is the latter's own enigma. Art becomes an enigma because it appears to have solved what is enigmatical in existence, while the enigma in the merely existing is forgotten as a result of its own overwhelming ossification." (pg. 126)
 - **"The more densely people have spun a categorial web around what is other than subjective spirit, the more fundamentally have they disaccustomed themselves to the wonder of that other and deceived themselves with a growing familiarity with what is foreign.** Art hopes to correct this, though feebly and with a quickly exhausted gesture. **A priori, art causes people to wonder,** just as Plato once demanded that philosophy do, which, however, decided for the opposite" (pg. 126)
- **"The enigma of artworks is their fracturedness.** If transcendence were present in them, they would be mysteries, not enigmas; they are enigmas because, through their fracturedness, they deny what they would actually like to be" (pg. 126)
 - **"that what they mean is not their essence is evident in the fact that their meaning appears as if it were blocked."** (pg. 126)
- "By their failure with regard to their own element of rationality, artworks threaten to relapse into myth, from which they have been precariously wrested. **Art is mediated in spirit - the element of rationality - in that it produces its enigmas mimetically, just as spirit devises enigmas, but without being capable of providing the solution; it is in art's enigmaticalness, not in its meanings, that spirit is manifest"** (pg. 127)
 - **"Art's enigmatic image is the configuration of mimesis and rationality.** This enigmaticalness emerged out of a historical process. Art is what remains after the loss of what was supposed to exercise a magical, and later a cultic, function" (pg. 127)
 - ◆ **"Art's why-and-wherefore - its archaic rationality, to put it paradoxically - was forfeited and transformed into an element of its being-in-itself. Art thus became an enigma;** if it no longer exists for the purpose that it infused with meaning, then what is it? Its enigmaticalness goads it to articulate itself immanently in such a fashion that it achieves meaning by forming its emphatic absence of meaning. To this extent, the enigmaticalness of artworks is not all there is to them; rather, every authentic work also suggests the solution to its unsolvable enigma" (pg. 127)
- **"Ultimately, artworks are enigmatic in terms not of their composition but of their truth content"** (pg. 126)
 - **"Art itself, which is the mimetic struggle against this taboo, seeks to impart the answer and yet, being nonjudging, does not impart it;** thus art becomes as enigmatic as the terror born of the primordial world, which, though it metamorphoses, does not disappear; all art remains the seismogram of that terror. **The key to art's enigma is missing,** just as it has been lost for the writings of many peoples who have perished. The most extreme form in which the question posed by the enigmaticalness of art can be formulated is whether or not there is meaning. For **no artwork is without its own coherence, however much this coherence may be transformed into its own opposite.** Through the objectivity of the work, this coherence posits the claim to the objectivity of meaning in-itself. This claim is not only nonnegotiable, it is contravened by experience. **Enigmaticalness peers out of every artwork with a different face but as if the answer that it requires - like that of the sphinx - were always the same, although only by way of the diversity, not the unity that the enigma,** though perhaps deceptively, promises. Whether the promise is a deception -that is the enigma" (pg. 127)
 - ◆ **"The truth content of artworks is the objective solution of the enigma posed by each and every one. By demanding its solution, the enigma points to its truth content. It can only be achieved by philosophical reflection.** This alone is the justification of aesthetics. **Although no artwork can be reduced to rationalistic determinations,** as is the case with what art judges, **each artwork through the neediness implicit in its enigmaticalness nevertheless turns toward interpretive reason."** (pg. 127-128)
 - ▶ **"Artworks, especially those of the highest dignity, await their interpretation. The claim that there is nothing to interpret in them, that they simply exist,** would erase the demarcation line between art and nonart." (pg. 128)
 - ◇ **"Grasping truth content postulates critique. Nothing is grasped whose truth or untruth is not grasped, and this is the concern of critique"** (pg. 128)
 - "The theory of art must not situate itself beyond art but must rather entrust itself to its laws of movement while recognizing that **artworks hermetically seal themselves off against the consciousness of these laws of movement. Artworks are enigmatic in that they are the physiognomy of an objective spirit that is never transparent to itself in the moment in which it appears.** The absurd, the category most refractory to interpretation, inheres in that spirit that is requisite to the interpretation of artworks. At the same time, the need of artworks for interpretation, their need for the production of their truth content, is the stigma of their constitutive insufficiency. Artworks do not achieve what is objectively sought in them. **The zone of indeterminacy between the unreachable and what has been realized constitutes their enigma. They have truth content and they do not have it."** (pg. 128)
- **"Artworks have no truth without determinate negation; developing this is the task of aesthetics today. The truth content of artworks cannot be immediately identified.** Just as it is known only mediately, it is mediated in itself. **What transcends the factual in the artwork, its spiritual content, cannot be pinned down to what is individually, sensually given but is, rather, constituted by way of this empirical givenness.** This defines the mediatedness of the truth content. The spiritual content does not hover above the work's facture; rather, artworks transcend their factuality through their facture, through the consistency of their elaboration. The breath that surrounds them, that which is most akin to

- their truth content and is at once factual and not factual, is fundamentally distinct from mood in whatever way artworks once expressed mood; on the contrary, in the interest of the work's breath, mood is consumed by the forming process. **In artworks, objectivity and truth are inseparable. Through the breath of objectivity and truth within themselves** - composers are familiar with the idea of a composition's "breath" - artworks approach nature, but not by imitation, whose sphere encompasses mood." (pg. 129)
- "However, it is no guarantee of their truth that artworks transcend themselves through their realization. Many works of the highest quality are true as the expression of a consciousness that is false in itself" (pg. 129)
 - "The complete presentation of false consciousness is what names it and is itself truth content. It is for this reason that works unfold not only through interpretation and critique but also through their rescue, which aims at the truth of false consciousness in the aesthetic appearance. **Great artworks are unable to lie. Even when their content is semblance, insofar as this content is necessary semblance the content has truth, to which the artworks testify; only failed works are untrue.**" (pg. 130)
 - "That by virtue of their organization artworks are more - not only as what is organized but also as the principle of organization - for as what is organized they obtain the semblance of being nonartificial - **determines them as spiritual.** This determination, when recognized, becomes content. It is expressed by the artwork not only through its organization but equally through its disruption, which organization implies" (pg. 130)
 - "Philosophy and art converge in their truth content: The progressive self-unfolding truth of the artwork is none other than the truth of the philosophical concept. With good reason, idealism historically- in Schelling-derived its own concept of truth from art." (pg. 130)
 - "The truth content of artworks is not what they mean but rather what decides whether the work in itself is true or false, and only this truth of the work in-itself is commensurable to philosophical interpretation and coincides - with regard to the idea, in any case - with the idea of philosophical truth" (pg. 130-131)
 - "Aesthetic experience is not genuine experience unless it becomes philosophy." (pg. 131)
 - "The appearing, whereby the artwork far surpasses the mere subject, is the eruption of the subject's collective essence" (pg. 131)
 - "By virtue of this content's subjectively mimetic expressive element, artworks gain their objectivity; they are neither pure impulse nor its form, but rather the congealed process that transpires between them, and this process is social." (pg. 131)
 - "Today the metaphysics of art revolves around the question of how something spiritual that is made, in philosophical terms something "merely posited," can be true. The issue is not the immediately existing artwork but its content [*Gehalt*]. **The question of the truth of something made is indeed none other than the question of semblance and the rescue of semblance as the semblance of the true. Truth content cannot be something made. Every act of making in art is a singular effort to say what the artifact itself is not and what it does not know: precisely this is art's spirit.** This is the locus of the idea of art as the idea of the restoration of nature that has been repressed and drawn into the dynamic of history. Nature, to whose imago art is devoted, does not yet in any way exist; **what is true in art is something nonexistent.** What does not exist becomes incumbent on art in that other for which identity-positing reason, which reduced it to material, uses the word nature. **This other is not concept and unity, but rather a multiplicity. Thus truth content presents itself in art as a multiplicity, not as the concept that abstractly subordinates artworks.** The bond of the truth content of art to its works and the multiplicity of what surpasses identification accord. Of all the paradoxes of art, no doubt the innermost one is that only through making, through the production of particular works specifically and completely formed in themselves, and never through any immediate vision, does art achieve what is not made, the truth. **Artworks stand in the most extreme tension to their truth content. Although this truth content, conceptless, appears nowhere else than in what is made, it negates the made.** Each art work, as a structure, perishes in its truth content; through it the artwork sinks into irrelevance, something that is granted exclusively to the greatest artworks. The historical perspective that envisions the end of art is every work's idea. There is no artwork that does not promise that its truth content, to the extent that it appears in the artwork as something existing, realizes itself and leaves the artwork behind simply as a husk, as Mignon's prodigious verse prophesies. The seal of authentic artworks is that what they appear to be appears as if it could not be prevaricated, even though discursive judgment is unable to define it. If however it is indeed the truth, then along with the semblance truth abolishes the artwork. **The definition of art is not fully encompassed by aesthetic semblance: Art has truth as the semblance of the illusionless.** The experience of artworks has as its vanishing point the recognition that its truth content is not null; every artwork, and most of all works of absolute negativity, mutely say: *non confundar*. **Artworks would be powerless if they were no more than longing, though there is no valid artwork without longing. That by which they transcend longing, however, is the neediness inscribed as a figure in the historically existing.** By retracing this figure, they are not only more than what simply exists but participate in objective truth to the extent that what is in need summons its fulfillment and change. **Not for-itself, with regard to consciousness, but in-itself, what is wants the other; the artwork is the language of this wanting, and the artwork's content [*Gehalt*] is as substantial as this wanting.**" (pg. 131-132)
 - "The truth content of artworks, as the negation of their existence, is mediated by them though they do not in any way communicate it. **That by which truth content is more than what is posited by artworks is their methexis** in history and the determinate critique that they exercise through their form. History in artworks is not something made, and history alone frees the work from being merely something posited or manufactured: Truth content is not external to history but rather its crystallization in the works. Their unposited truth content is their name." (pg. 133)
 - "In artworks the name is, however, strictly negative. **Artworks say what is more than the existing, and they do this exclusively by making a constellation of how it is,** "Comment c'est." The metaphysics of art requires its complete separation from the religion in which art originated. **Artworks are not the absolute,** nor is the absolute immediately present in them. For their methexis in the absolute they are punished with a blindness that in the same instant obscures their language, which is a language of truth: **Artworks have the absolute and they do not have it.** In their movement toward truth artworks are in need of that concept that for the sake of their truth they keep at a distance. It is not up to art to decide whether its negativity is its limit or truth. **Artworks are a priori negative by the law of their objectivation: They kill what they objectify by tearing it away from the immediacy of its life. Their own life preys on death.** This defines the qualitative threshold to modern art." (pg. 133)
 - "Whereas art opposes society, it is nevertheless unable to take up a position beyond it; it achieves opposition only through identification with that against which it remonstrates." (pg. 133)
 - "Reconciliation is the comportment of artworks by which they become conscious of the nonidentical. **Spirit does not identify the nonidentical: It identifies with it. By pursuing its own identity with itself, art assimilates itself with the nonidentical: This is the contemporary stage of development of art's mimetic essence.** Today, reconciliation as the comportment of the artwork is evinced precisely there where art countermands the idea of reconciliation in works whose form dictates intransigence. Yet even such irreconcilable reconciliation through form is predicated on the unreality of art. This unreality threatens art permanently with ideology. **Art, however, does not sink to the level of ideology, nor is ideology the verdict that would ban each and every artwork from truth.** On the basis of their truth, of the reconciliation that empirical reality spurns, art is complicitous with ideology in that it feigns the factual existence of reconciliation. By their own apriori, or, if one will, according to their idea, artworks become entangled in the nexus of guilt. Whereas each artwork that succeeds transcends this nexus, each must atone for this transcendence, and therefore its language seeks to withdraw into silence: An artwork is, as Beckett wrote, a desecration of silence." (pg. 134)
 - "Art desires what has not yet been, though everything that art is has already been. It cannot escape the shadow of the past." (pg. 134)
 - "no existing, appearing artwork holds any positive control over the nonexistent" (pg. 135)
 - ◆ "This distinguishes artworks from religious symbols, which in their appearance lay claim to the transcendence of the immediately present. The nonexistent in artworks is a constellation of the existing." (pg. 135)

- "Although artworks are neither conceptual nor judgmental, they are logical." (pg. 136)
 - "The obligation of artworks to become self-alike, the tension into which this obligation brings them with the substratum of their immanent contract, and ultimately the traditional desideratum of homeostasis require the principle of logical consistency: This is the rational aspect of artworks. **Without its immanent necessity no work would gain objectivation; this necessity is art's antimimetic impulse, one borrowed externally, which unites the work as an interior.**" (pg. 136)
 - "the logic of artworks demonstrates that it cannot be taken literally, in that it grants every particular event and resolution an incomparably greater degree of latitude than logic otherwise does..." (pg. 136-137)
- "**All aesthetic categories must be defined in terms of their relation to the world and in terms of art's repudiation of that world**" (pg. 138)
- "Art is not synthesis, as convention holds; rather, it shreds synthesis by the same force that affects synthesis. What is transcendent in art has the same tendency as the second reflection of nature-dominating spirit." (pg. 139)
 - "Aesthetic success is essentially measured by whether the formed object is able to awaken the content [Inhalt] sedimented in the form. In general, then, the hermeneutics of artworks is the translation of their formal elements into content [Inhalt]. This content [Inhalt] does not, however, fall directly to art, as if this content only needed to be gleaned from reality. Rather, it is constituted by way of a countermovement. Content [Inhalt] makes its mark in those works that distance themselves from it. Artistic progress, to the degree that it can be cogently spoken of, is the epitome of this movement. Art gains its content [Inhalt] through the latter's determinate negation. The more energetic the negation, the more artworks organize themselves according to an immanent purposiveness, and precisely thereby do they mold themselves progressively to what they negate." (pg. 139-140)
- "**Art's purposiveness, free of any practical purpose, is its similarity to language; its being "without a purpose" is its nonconceptuality, that which distinguishes art from significative language.** Artworks move toward the idea of a language of things only by way of their own language, through the organization of their disparate elements; the more they are syntactically articulated in themselves, the more eloquent they become in all their elements." (pg. 140)
 - "**By force of their dialectic, artworks escape myth, the blind and abstractly dominating nexus of nature**" (pg. 140)
- "**Incontestably the quintessence of all elements of logicity, or, more broadly, coherence in artworks, is form**" (pg. 140)
 - "**form is not only to be conceived in opposition to content but through it if aesthetics is not to fall prey to an abstractness** that habitually makes it the ally of reactionary art. Indeed, the concept of form has been the blind spot of aesthetics right up to Valery, because everything about art is so inextricably tied up with it that the concept defies isolation" (pg. 140)
 - "**As little as art is to be defined by any other element, it is simply identical with form.** Every other element can be negated in the concept of form, even aesthetic unity, the idea of form that first made the wholeness and autonomy of the artwork possible. In highly developed modern works, form tends to dissociate unity, either in the interest of expression or to criticize art's affirmative character" (pg. 140-141)
 - "For the most part, theory equates form with symmetry or repetition." (pg. 141)
- "Because **form is the central concept of aesthetics** and is always presupposed by it in the givenness of art, **aesthetics must gather all its forces to think the concept through. If aesthetics is not to be trapped in tautologies it must gain access to what is not simply immanent in the concept of form**, yet the concept of form refuses to grant a voice to anything aesthetic that claims independence from it. **An aesthetics of form is possible only if it breaks through aesthetics as the aesthetics of the totality of what stands under the spell of form.**" (pg. 141)
 - **cf. E. Levinas, Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*
 - "To hit upon the idea that form has been overestimated in art, one must fail to recognize that **form is essential to art, that it mediates content [Inhalt]**. **Form is the artifacts' coherence**, however self-antagonistic and refracted, through which each and every successful work separates itself from the merely existing" (pg. 142)
 - **this carries in its understanding a connection with Heidegger's 'structure' in his book Identity and Difference*
 - "...the content [Inhalt] does not amount to objects external to form; rather, the content is mimetic impulses that are drawn into the world of images that is form." (pg. 142)
- "**In artworks, form is aesthetic essentially insofar as it is an objective determination. Its locus is precisely there where the work frees itself from being simply a product of subjectivity.** Form is thus not to be sought in the arrangement of pre-given elements, as the theory of pictorial composition held it to be prior to being debunked by impressionism..." (pg. 142)
 - "**...aesthetic form is the objective organization within each artwork of what appears as bindingly eloquent. It is the nonviolent synthesis of the diffuse that nevertheless preserves it as what it is in its divergences and contradictions, and for this reason form is actually an unfolding of truth.** A posited unity, it constantly suspends itself as such; essential to it is that it interrupts itself through its other just as the essence of its coherence is that it does not cohere. In its relation to its other - whose foreignness it mollifies and yet maintains - **form is what is antibarbaric in art**; through form art participates in the civilization that it criticizes by its very existence. **Form is the law of the transfiguration of the existing, counter to which it represents freedom**" (pg. 143)
 - "Form is the seal of social labor, fundamentally different from the empirical process of making" (pg. 143-144)
 - "Form converges with critique. It is that through which artworks prove self-critical..." (pg. 144)
- "If form is that in artworks by which they become artworks, it is equivalent with their mediatedness, their objective reflectedness into themselves. **Form is mediation in that it is the relation of parts to each other and to the whole and as the elaboration of details.** With regard to form, then, the much praised naivete of artworks turns out to be hostile to art. What may appear intuitive and naive in artworks, their constitution as something that presents itself as self-coherent, gapless, and therefore unmediated, derives from their mediatedness in themselves. **It is only through this mediatedness that they become significative and their elements become signs. Everything in artworks that resembles language originates in form and is thus transformed into the antithesis of form, the mimetic impulse. Form seeks to bring the particular to speech through the whole.**" (pg. 144)
 - "Aesthetic **categories of form such as particularity, development and resolution of conflict, even the anticipation of reconciliation through homeostasis**, are transparent with regard to their content even, and most of all, where they have separated themselves from the empirical objects. Precisely by distance from it art adopts its stance toward the empirical world in which conflicts appear immediate and as absolute cleavages; their mediation, implicitly contained in the empirical, becomes the for-itself of consciousness only by the act of stepping back from it, which is what art does. **This stepping back is, as such, an act of knowledge.**" (pg. 145)
- "Everything appearing in the artwork is virtually content [Inhalt] as much as it is form, whereas **form remains that by which the appearing determines itself and content remains what is self-determining**" (pg. 145)
 - "**...the relation of the parts to the whole [is] an essential aspect of form...**" (pg. 147)
 - "Material, by contrast, is what artists work with: It is the sum of all that is available to them, including words, colors, sounds, associations of every sort and every technique ever developed. To this extent, **forms too can become material; it is everything that artists encounter about which they must make a decision**" (pg. 148)
- "Intentions have their locus in the dialectic between the mimetic pole of artworks and their methexis in enlightenment; intentions have their locus not only in being the subjectively moving and organizing force that is thereupon extinguished in the work but also in the objectivity of the work itself." (pg. 151)

- "If material in the artwork is truly resistant to the artwork's otherwise pure identity, **the inner process of identity in artworks is essentially that between the material and intention. Without intention, without the immanent form of the principle of identity, form would not exist any more than it would without the mimetic impulse.** The surplus of intentions reveals that the objectivity of artworks cannot be reduced simply to mimesis. The objective bearer of intentions, which synthesizes the individual intentions of artworks into a whole, is their meaning. It remains relevant in spite of everything problematic inherent to it and in spite of all the evidence that this is not all there is to artworks." (pg. 151)
- "For traditional aesthetics, and to a large extent for traditional art as well, the determination of the totality of the artwork is its determination as a nexus of meaning. The reciprocal relation of whole and parts is supposed to shape the work as something meaningful to such an extent that the quintessence of this meaning coincides with the metaphysical content. **Because the nexus of meaning is constituted by the relation of elements** - and not in atomistic fashion in something given that is sensual - **what can justly be called the spirit of artworks should be comprehensible in that nexus.** That the spirit of an artwork is the configuration of its elements is more than a seductive idea; it attains its truth in the face of all crude reification or materialization of the spirit and content of artworks. **Directly or indirectly everything that appears in the work contributes to such meaning,** though not all that appears is necessarily of equal importance." (pg. 152)
 - "it becomes ever harder for artworks to cohere as a nexus of meaning. Ultimately they respond to this by rejecting the very concept of meaning." (pg. 152)
 - "This has consequences that reach deep into aesthetic form" (pg. 152-153)
 - "When artworks have nothing external to themselves to which they can cling without ideology, what they have lost cannot be restored by any subjective act. It was wiped out by their tendency toward subjectivization, which was no cultural-historical accident but conforms rather with the true state of things." (pg. 153)
- "meaning is only legitimate in the artworks insofar as it is objectively more than the work's own meaning" (pg. 153)
 - "Affirmation and authenticity are amalgamated to no small degree. Yet this is no argument against any individual work; at most it is an argument against the language of art as such. There is no art that is entirely devoid of affirmation, since by its very existence every work rises above the plight and degradation of daily existence. The more binding art is to itself, the richer, denser, and more unified its works, the more it tends toward affirmation - of whatever stamp - by suggesting that its own qualities are those of a world existing in itself beyond art. **This apriority of the affirmative is art's ideological dark side.** It projects the reflection of possibility onto the existing even as the latter's determinate negation. This element of affirmation withdraws from the immediacy of artworks and what they say and becomes the fact that they continue to speak at all. That the world spirit never made good on its promise has the effect of lending the affirmative works of the past a touching quality rather than ensuring that they remain truly ideological; today, indeed, what appears evil in consummate works is their own consummateness as a monument to force rather than a transfiguration that is too transparent to spur any opposition. According to cliché, great works are compelling. In being so, they cultivate coercion to the same extent that they neutralize it; their guilt is their guiltlessness. Modern art, with its vulnerability, blemishes, and fallibility, is the critique of traditional works, which in so many ways are stronger and more successful: It is the critique of success." (pg. 160)
- "Contemporary aesthetics is dominated by the controversy over whether it is subjective or objective. These terms, however, are equivocal." (pg. 163)
- "Formalization, an act of subjective reason, forces art back into precisely that merely subjective sphere - ultimately that of contingency - from which Kant wanted to wrest it and which art itself resists. As contrary poles, subjective and objective aesthetics are equally exposed to the critique of a dialectical aesthetics: the former because it is either abstractly transcendental or arbitrary in its dependence on individual taste; the latter because it overlooks the objective mediatedness of art by the subject. **In the artwork the subject is neither the observer nor the creator nor absolute spirit, but rather spirit bound up with, preformed and mediated by the object.**" (pg. 166)
- "For the artwork and thus for its theory, **subject and object are its own proper elements and they are dialectical in such a fashion that whatever the work is composed of - material, expression, and form - is always both.** The materials are shaped by the hand from which the artwork received them; expression, objectivated in the work and objective in itself, enters as a subjective impulse; form, if it is not to have a mechanical relationship to what is formed, must be produced subjectively according to the demands of the object. What confronts artists with the kind of objective impenetrability with which their material so often confronts them, an impenetrability analogous to the construction of the given in epistemology, is at the same time sedimented subject; it is expression, that which appears most subjective, but which is also objective in that it is what the artwork exhausts itself on and what it incorporates; finally, it is a subjective comportment in which objectivity leaves its imprint. But the reciprocity of subject and object in the work, which cannot be that of identity, maintains a precarious balance." (pg. 166)
- "The artwork becomes objective as something made through and through, that is, by virtue of the subjective mediation of all of its elements" (pg. 168)
 - "Subjectivity, however, though a necessary condition of the artwork, is not the aesthetic quality as such but **becomes it only through objectivation; to this extent subjectivity in the artwork is self-alienated and concealed.**" (pg. 169)
- "Art transcends the nonexistent only by way of the existing; otherwise it becomes the helpless projection of what in any case already exists." (pg. 173)
 - "Even subjectively, **the mediate and the immediate are in turn mediated in each other aesthetically and in knowledge.** Not genetically, but in terms of its constitution, art is the most compelling argument against the epistemological division of sensuality and intellect. Reflection is fully capable of the act of fantasy in the form of the determinate consciousness of what an artwork at a certain point needs. The idea that consciousness kills, for which art supposedly provides unimpeachable testimony, is a foolish cliché in this context as anywhere else." (pg. 174)
- "The objectivity of artworks is no more a residual determination than is any truth." (pg. 174)
- "Through contemplative immersion the immanent processual quality of the work is set free. **By speaking, it becomes something that moves in itself. Whatever in the artifact may be called the unity of its meaning is not static but processual, the enactment of antagonisms that each work necessarily has in itself.** Analysis is therefore adequate to the work only if it grasps the relation of its elements to each other processually rather than reducing them analytically to purported fundamental elements. That artworks are not being but a process of becoming can be grasped technologically. Their continuity is demanded teleologically by the particular elements. They are in need of continuity and capable of it by virtue of their incompleteness and, often, by their insignificance. **It is as a result of their own constitution that they go over into their other, find continuance in it, want to be extinguished in it, and in their demise determine what follows them.** This immanent dynamic is, in a sense, a higher-order element of what artworks are. If anywhere, then it is here that aesthetic experience resembles sexual experience, indeed its culmination. The way the beloved image is transformed in this experience, the way rigidification is unified with what is most intensely alive, effectively makes the experience the incarnate prototype of aesthetic experience. Yet it is not only the individual works that are immanently dynamic; so too is their relation to each other." (pg. 176)
 - "Artworks synthesize ununifiable, nonidentical elements that grind away at each other; they truly seek the identity of the identical and the **nonidentical processually** because even their unity is only an element and not the magical formula of the whole." (pg. 176)
 - "What crackles in artworks is the sound of the friction of the antagonistic elements that the artwork seeks to unify; it is script not least because, as in linguistic signs, its processual element is enciphered in its objectivation. The processual character of artworks is nothing

- other than their temporal nucleus." (pg. 177)
- **"The artwork is a process essentially in the relation of its whole and parts. Without being reducible to one side or the other, it is the relation itself that is a process of becoming.** Whatever may in the artwork be called totality is not a structure that integrates the sum of its parts. Even objectified the work remains a developing process by virtue of the propensities active in it. Conversely, the parts are not something given, as which analysis almost inevitably mistakes them: Rather, they are centers of energy that strain toward the whole on the basis of a necessity that they equally perform. **The vortex of this dialectic ultimately consumes the concept of meaning.**" (pg. 178)
 - "artworks are something made that has become more than something simply made" (pg. 179)
 - "the artwork is both the result of the process and the process itself at a standstill" (pg. 179)
 - ◆ "...artworks go beyond their monadic limit even though they lack windows" (pg. 180)
 - ◇ "the monadological constitution of artworks in themselves points beyond itself" (pg. 180)
 - "spirit in artworks is posited by their structure, it is not something added from outside" (pg. 181)
 - "One of the paradoxes of artworks is that, though they are dynamic in themselves, they are fixated, whereas it is only by being fixated that they are objectivated. Thus it is that the more insistently they are observed the more paradoxical they become: **Each artwork is a system of irreconcilables.** Their process itself could not be presented without fixation; improvisations are usually no more than juxtapositions, so to speak, marching in place. The written word and musical notation, if glimpsed for once strictly externally, are a disconcerting paradox of something existent that is in its own terms a process of becoming. The mimetic impulses that motivate the artwork, that integrate themselves in it and once again disintegrate it, are fragile, speechless expression. They only become language through their objectivation as art. Art, the rescue of nature, revolts against nature's transitoriness. **Artworks become like language in the development of the bindingness of their elements, a wordless syntax even in linguistic works.** What these works say is not what their words say. In art's intentionless language the mimetic impulses are bequeathed to the whole, which synthesizes them." (pg. 184)
 - **"By its opposition to the empirical world each artwork programatically, as it were, establishes its unity. What has passed by way of spirit determines itself in its oneness against the accidental and chaotic that are embedded in nature. Unity is more than merely formal: By its force artworks wrest themselves free from fatal disintegration.** The unity of artworks is their caesura from myth. In themselves, and in accord with their immanent determination, they achieve a unity that is impressed upon the empirical objects of rational knowledge: Unity emerges from their own elements, from the multiplicity; thus they do not extirpate myth but mollify it." (pg. 186)
 - "The degree to which unity and multiplicity are internal to each other in artworks can be grasped in terms of the question of their intensity." (pg. 187)
 - "However, if finished works only become what they are because their being is a process of becoming, they are in turn dependent on forms in which their process crystallizes: interpretation, commentary, and critique." (pg. 194)
 - "As the antithesis to existing society, truth is not exhausted according to society's laws. Rather, truth has its own laws, which are contrary to those of society; and in real history it is not only repression that grows but also the potential for freedom, which is unanimous with the truth content of art." (pg. 195)
 - **"The dialectic of the universal and the particular does not, as does the murky concept of the symbol, eliminate their difference. The principium individuationis in art, its immanent nominalism, is not a given but a directive.** This directive not only encourages particularization and thus the radical elaboration of individual works. Bringing together the universals by which artworks are oriented, it at the same time obscures the boundary against unformed, raw *empiria* and thus threatens the structuration of works no less than it sets it in motion. Prototypical of this is the rise of the novel in the bourgeois age, the rise of the nominalistic and thus paradoxical form par excellence; every loss of authenticity suffered by modern art derives from this dialectic. The relation of the universal and the particular is not so simple as the nominalistic tendency suggests, nor as trivial as the doctrine of traditional aesthetics, which states that the universal must be particularized. The simple disjunction of nominalism and universalism does not hold." (pg. 201)
 - "In art, **universals are strongest where art most closely approaches language: that is, when something speaks, that, by speaking, goes beyond the here and now.** Art succeeds at such transcendence, however, only by virtue of its tendency toward radical particularization; that is, only in that it says nothing but what it says by virtue of its own elaboration, through its immanent process. The element that in art resembles language is its mimetic element; it only becomes universally eloquent in the specific impulse, by its opposition to the universal. The paradox that art says it and at the same time does not say it, is because the mimetic element by which it says it, the opaque and particular, at the same time resists speaking." (pg. 205)
 - "As Hegel and Marx knew, in art the concept of progress is more refracted than in the history of the technical forces of production. To its very core, art is enmeshed in the historical movement of growing antagonisms. In art there is as much and as little progress as in society." (pg. 208)
 - "Progress [is] the negation of what exists through new beginnings..." (pg. 209)
 - "no aesthetic progress with forgetting; hence, all progress involves regression" (pg. 210)
 - **"Art develops by way of the social whole; that is to say, it is mediated by society's ruling structure.** Art's history is not a string of individual causalities; no univocal necessities lead from one phenomenon to the next. Its history may be called necessary only with regard to the total social tendency, not in reference to its individual manifestations. Its pat construction from above is as false as faith in the incommensurable genius of individual works that transports them out of the realm of necessity. A noncontradictory theory of the history of art is not to be conceived: The essence of its history is contradictory in itself." (pg. 210)
 - **"Art keeps itself alive through its social force of resistance..."** (pg. 226)
 - "Because the social content of art is not located externally to its *principium individuationis* but rather inheres in individuation, which is itself a social reality, art's social character is concealed and can only be grasped by its interpretation." (pg. 232)
 - "In art, **ideology and truth cannot be neatly distinguished from each other. Art cannot have one without the other**, and this reciprocity in turn is an enticement toward the ideological misuse of art as much as it is an enticement toward summarily finishing it off." (pg. 234)
 - **"the experience of art as that of its truth or untruth is more than subjective experience: it is the irruption of objectivity into subjective consciousness"** (pg. 244-245)
 - "That side of artworks that faces outward is falsified as their essence without any regard to the process of their formation or, ultimately, their truth content. No artwork, however, can be socially true that is not also true in-itself; conversely, social false consciousness is equally incapable of becoming aesthetically authentic. Social and immanent aspects of artworks do not coincide, but neither do they diverge so completely as the fetishism of culture and praxis would like to believe. That whereby the truth content of artworks points beyond their aesthetic complexion, which it does only by virtue of that aesthetic complexion, assures it its social significance. This duality is not a stipulation that rules abstractly over the sphere of art. It is art's vital element and lodged within each and every work. **Art becomes something social through its in-itself, and it becomes in-itself by means of the social force of production effective in it.** The dialectic of the social and of the in-itself of the artwork is the dialectic of its own constitution to the extent that it tolerates nothing interior that does not externalize itself, nothing external that is not the bearer of the inward, the truth content." (pg. 248)
 - **"Art can only be reconciled with its existence by exposing its own semblance, its internal emptiness.** Its most binding criterion today is that in terms of its own complexion, unreconciled with all realistic deception, it no longer tolerates anything harmless. In all art that is still possible,

- social critique must be raised to the level of form, to the point that it wipes out all manifestly social content" (pg. 250)
- **"The double character of art - something that severs itself from empirical reality and thereby from society's functional context and yet is at the same time part of empirical reality and society's functional context** - is directly apparent in the aesthetic phenomena, which are both aesthetic and *faits sociaux*." (pg. 252)
 - "art's two characters are not completely indifferent to each other" (pg. 253)
 - **"Certainly, art, as a form of knowledge, implies knowledge of reality, and there is no reality that is not social.** Thus truth content and social content are mediated, although art's truth content transcends the knowledge of reality as what exists. **Art becomes social knowledge by grasping the essence, not by endlessly talking about it, illustrating it, or somehow imitating it.** Through its own figuration, **art brings the essence into appearance in opposition to its own semblance.** The epistemological critique of idealism, which secures for the object an element of primacy, cannot simply be transposed to art. Object in art and object in empirical reality are entirely distinct. **In art the object is the work produced by art, as much containing elements of empirical reality as displacing, dissolving, and reconstructing them according to the work's own law.** Only through such transformation, and not through an ever falsifying photography, does art give empirical reality its due, the epiphany of its shrouded essence and the merited shudder in the face of it as in the face of a monstrosity. The primacy of the object is affirmed aesthetically only in the character of art as the unconscious writing of history, as anamnesis of the vanquished, of the repressed, and perhaps of what is possible. The primacy of the object, as the potential freedom from domination of what is, manifests itself in art as its freedom from objects. If art must grasp its content [Gehalt] in its other, this other is not to be imputed to it but falls to it solely in its own immanent nexus. **Art negates the negativity in the primacy of the object, negates what is heteronomous and unreconciled in it, which art allows to emerge even through the semblance of the reconciliation of its works.**" (pg. 258-259)
 - **"Because individuation, along with the suffering that it involves, is a social law, society can only be experienced individually"** (pg. 259)
 - **"Art possesses its other immanently because, like the subject, immanence is socially mediated in itself.** It must make its latent social content eloquent: It must go within in order to go beyond itself. It carries out the critique of solipsism through the force of externalization in its own technique as the technique of objectivation. By virtue of its form, art transcends the impoverished, entrapped subject..." (pg. 260)
 - Paralipomena (pg. 262)
 - "Aesthetics presents philosophy with the bill for the fact that the academic system degraded it to being a mere specialization. **It demands of philosophy precisely what philosophy has neglected to do: that it extract phenomena from their existence and bring them to self-reflection;** this would be the reflection of what is petrified in the sciences, not a specialized science located beyond them. **Aesthetics thereby yields to what its object, like any object, immediately seeks. Every art-work, if it is to be fully experienced, requires thought and therefore stands in need of philosophy, which is nothing but the thought that refuses all restrictions.** Understanding [Verstehen] and criticism are one; the capacity of understanding, that of comprehending what is understood as something spiritual, is none other than that of distinguishing in the object what is true and false, however much this distinction must deviate from the procedure of ordinary logic. **Emphatically, art is knowledge, though not the knowledge of objects. Only he understands an artwork who grasps it as a complex nexus of truth, which inevitably involves its relation to untruth, its own as well as that external to it;** any other judgment of artworks would remain arbitrary. Artworks thus demand an adequate relation to themselves. They postulate what was once the aim of the philosophy of art, which, in its present form, it no longer accomplishes, neither vis-à-vis contemporary consciousness nor vis-à-vis current artworks." (pg. 262)
 - **"Experience culminates in aesthetics: It makes coherent and conscious what transpires in artworks obscurely and unelucidated, and what insufficiently transpires in the particular artwork.** In this regard, even a non-idealistic aesthetics is concerned with 'ideas.'" (pg. 264)
 - **"Aesthetic objectivity is not unmediated; he who thinks he holds it in the palm of his hand is led astray by it.** If it were unmediated it would coincide with the sensuous phenomena of art and would suppress its spiritual element, which is, however, fallible both for itself and for others. **Aesthetics effectively means the study of the conditions and mediations of the objectivity of art.**" (pg. 266)
 - **"The spell that the subject casts over nature imprisons the subject as well: Freedom awakens in the consciousness of its affinity with nature"** (pg. 276)
 - **"When art reflects the social coercion in which it is harnessed and by doing so opens up a perspective on reconciliation, it is spiritualization;** this spiritualization, however, presupposes the division of manual and intellectual labor. **Only through spiritualization, and not through stubborn rank natural growth, do artworks break through the net of the domination of nature and mold themselves to nature; only from within does one issue forth.** Otherwise art becomes infantile. Even in spirit something of the mimetic impulse survives, that secularized mana, what moves and touches us." (pg. 276)
 - "Artworks are things that tend to slough off their reity. However, in artworks the aesthetic is not superimposed on the thing in such a fashion that, given a solid foundation, their spirit could emerge. **Essential to artworks is that their thingly structure, by virtue of its constitution, makes them into what is not a thing; their reity is the medium of their own transcendence. The two are mediated in each other: The spirit of artworks is constituted in their reity, and their reity, the existence of works, originates in their spirit.** As regards form, artworks are things insofar as the objectivation that they give themselves resembles what is in-itself, what rests within itself and determines itself; and this has its model in the empirical world of things, indeed by virtue of their unity through the synthesizing spirit; they become spiritualized only through their reification, just as their spiritual element and their reity are melded together; their spirit, by which they transcend themselves, is at the same time their lethality. This they have implicitly always borne in themselves, and ineluctable reflection has exposed it." (pg. 276)
 - "Aesthetics is powerless that seeks to dissolve the constitutive contradiction rather than conceiving of art by way of it. **The reality and unreality of artworks are not layers superimposed on each other; rather, they interpenetrate everything in art to an equal degree.** An artwork is real only to the extent that, as an artwork, it is unreal, self-sufficient, and differentiated from the empirical world, of which it nevertheless remains a part. But its unreality - its determination as spirit - only exists to the extent that it has become real; nothing in an artwork counts that is not there in an individuated form. In aesthetic semblance the artwork takes up a stance toward reality, which it negates by becoming a reality *sui generis*. **Art protests against reality by its own objectivation.**" (pg. 279)
 - **"Art is directed toward truth, it is not itself immediate truth; to this extent truth is its content. By its relation to truth, art is knowledge; art itself knows truth in that truth emerges through it.** As knowledge, however, art is neither discursive nor is its truth the reflection of an object." (pg. 282)
 - **"An artwork is always itself and simultaneously the other of itself.** Such otherness can lead astray, because the constitutive meta-aesthetic element volatilizes the instant one pulls it away from the aesthetic and imagines that one holds it isolated in one's hands." (pg. 283)
 - **"Increasingly, works acquire a second-order existence that obscures what is human in them. Subjectivity disappears into artworks as the instrument of their objectivation.** The subjective imagination, of which artworks as ever stand in need, becomes recognizable as the turning back of the objective onto the subject and of the necessity of guarding the line of demarcation around the artwork. **Imagination is the capacity to do this. It shapes what reposes in itself rather than arbitrarily concocting forms, details, fables, or whatever.** Indeed, the truth of artworks cannot be otherwise conceived than in that what is transsubjective becomes readable in the subjectively imagined in-itself. **The mediation of the transsubjective is the artwork.**" (pg. 283)
 - **"The spirit of artworks is not their meaning and not their intention, but rather their truth content, or, in other words, the truth that is revealed through them"** (pg. 284)

- **"What is beyond the semblance of what appears is the aesthetic truth content:** that aspect of semblance that is not semblance. The truth content is no more the factual reality of an artwork, no more one fact among others in an artwork, than it is independent from its appearance." (pg. 284)
 - "Nothing transcends without that which it transcends. **The truth content is mediated by way of, not outside of, the configuration, but it is not immanent to the configuration and its elements.** This is probably what crystallized as the idea of all aesthetic mediation. **The pathway of mediation is construable in the structure of artworks, that is, in their technique. Knowledge of this leads to the objectivity of the work itself, which is so to speak vouched for by the coherence of the work's configuration.** This objectivity, however, can ultimately be nothing other than the truth content. It is the task of aesthetics to trace the topography of these elements. In the authentic artwork, what is dominated - which finds expression by way of the dominating principle - is the counterpoint to the domination of what is natural or material. This dialectical relationship results in the truth content of artworks." (pg. 285)
- **"The spirit of artworks is their objectivated mimetic comportment: It is opposed to mimesis and at the same time the form that mimesis takes in art."** (pg. 295)
- "...art reaches toward reality, only to recoil at the actual touch of it" (pg. 286)
- "Art is a polarization: Its spark connects a self-alienated subjectivity turned in on itself with what is not organized by rationality; it connects the block that separates the subject with what philosophy once called the in-itself. Art is incommensurable with the realm between these poles, that of *constituta*." (pg. 288)
- **"Art is the rescue of nature - or of immediacy - through its negation, that is, total mediation.** It makes itself like what is free of domination by the limitless domination over its material..." (pg. 288)
- "Tradition could be salvaged only by its separation from **the spell of inwardness.** Great artworks of the past were never identical with inwardness; most exploded it through externalization. Strictly speaking, **every artwork is a critique of inwardness in that it externalizes appearance and thus is contrary to the ideology of inwardness, which tradition equates with the hoarded-up treasure of subjective recollection.**" (pg. 300)
- "art cannot be understood all at once, but only in terms of its elements, in a mediated fashion." (pg. 301)
- **"Art cannot be radically separated from the instant of being touched, of enchantment, that instant of elevation, without being confounded in the indifferent.** This instant, however much it is also a function of the whole, is nevertheless essentially particular: The whole never offers itself to aesthetic experience in that immediacy without which aesthetic experience cannot be constituted." (pg. 303)
- **"Art is the appearance of the social dialectic of the universal and the individual mediated by the subjective spirit.** It goes beyond this dialectic insofar as it does not simply carry out this dialectic but reflects it through form. Figuratively, its particularization makes good on the perpetuated injustice of society to the individuals. What hinders it in this restitution is that it is unable to perform anything that it cannot extract as a concrete possibility from the society in which it has its locus. **Contemporary society is altogether remote from any structural transformation that would give individuals their due and thus dissipate the spell of individuation.**" (pg. 305)
- "Praxis would be the ensemble of means for minimizing material necessity, and as such it would be identical with pleasure, happiness, and that autonomy in which these means are sublimated. This however is impeded by practicality, which denies pleasure in the spirit of a society in which the ideal of full employment is substituted for that of the abolition of labor. **The rationalism of a mentality that refuses to allow itself to look beyond the means-ends relation and confront it with its own ends is irrational. Praxis itself is fetishized.** This contradicts its own concept, necessarily that of a for-other, which the concept loses the moment it is established as an absolute. This other is art's - and theory's - moving force. The irrationality of which practicality accuses art is the corrective of its own irrationality." (pg. 319)
- "The relation of art and society has its locus in art itself and its development, not in immediate partisanship, in what today is called *commitment*" (pg. 319)
- **"It is only through the progress of reflection that the principle of identity proves to be illusory** even in the artwork, because **its other is constitutive of its autonomy;** to this extent artworks too are alien to positive negation." (pg. 323)
- "Artworks present the contradictions as a whole, the antagonistic situation as a totality. **Only by mediation, not by taking sides, are artworks capable of transcending the antagonistic situation through expression.** The objective contradictions fissure the subject; they are not posited by the subject or the manufacture of his consciousness. This is the true primacy of the object in the inner composition of artworks. The subject can be fruitfully extinguished in the aesthetic object only because the subject itself is mediated through the object and is simultaneously the suffering subject of expression. The antagonisms are articulated technically; that is, they are articulated in the immanent composition of the work, and it is this process of composition that makes interpretation permeable to the tensions external to it. The tensions are not copied but rather form the work; this alone constitutes the aesthetic concept of form." (pg. 323-324)
- Theories on the Origin of Art (pg. 325)
 - **"Comprehension occurs only when the concept transcends what it wants to grasp.** Art puts this to the test; **thinking that proscribes such comprehension becomes outright stupidity and misses the object because it subjugates it.** Art legitimates itself within the confines of the spell in that rationality becomes powerless when aesthetic comportment is repressed or, under the pressure of socialization, no longer even constituted. As was already pointed out in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, **strict positivism crosses over into the feeble-mindedness of the artistically insensible, the successfully castrated. The narrow-minded wisdom that sorts out feeling from knowing and rubs its hands together when it finds the two balanced is - as trivialities sometimes are - the caricature of a situation that over the centuries of the division of labor has inscribed this division in subjectivity.** Yet feeling and understanding are not absolutely different in the human disposition and remain dependent even in their dividedness. The forms of reaction that are subsumed under the concept of feeling become futile enclaves of sentimentality as soon as they seal themselves off from their relation to thought and turn a blind eye toward truth; thought, however, approaches tautology when it shrinks from the sublimation of the mimetic comportment. The fatal separation of the two came about historically and is revocable. Ratio without mimesis is self-negating. Ends, the *raison d'être* of reason, are qualitative, and mimetic power is effectively the power of qualitative distinction. The self-negation of reason clearly has its historical necessity: **The world, which is objectively losing its openness, no longer has need of a spirit that is defined by its openness;** indeed, it can scarcely put up with the traces of that spirit. With regard to its subjective side, the contemporary loss of experience may largely coincide with the bitter repression of mimesis that takes the place of its metamorphosis. What in various sectors of German ideology is still called an artistic sensibility is just this repression of mimesis raised to a principle, as which it is transformed into artistic insensibility. **Aesthetic comportment,** however, is neither immediately mimesis nor its repression but rather **the process that mimesis sets in motion and in which, modified, mimesis is preserved.** This process transpires equally in the relation of the individual to art as in the historical macrocosm; **it congeals in the immanent movement of each and every artwork, in its tensions and in their possible resolution.** Ultimately, **aesthetic comportment is to be defined as the capacity to shudder,** as if goose bumps were the first aesthetic image. What later came to be called subjectivity, freeing itself from the blind anxiety of the shudder, is at the same time the shudder's own development; life in the subject is nothing but what shudders, the reaction to the total spell that transcends the spell. **Consciousness without shudder is reified consciousness. That shudder in which subjectivity stirs without yet being subjectivity is the act of being touched by the other. Aesthetic comportment assimilates itself to that other rather than subordinating it.** Such a constitutive relation of the subject to objectivity in aesthetic comportment joins eros and knowledge." (pg. 330-331)
- Draft Introduction (pg. 332)

- "see text

d. Further Readings:

- Philosophy of the Arts, by G. Graham <https://ia.eferrit.com/ea/f4b5c438d6cb2068.pdf>
- The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics https://monoskop.org/images/0/03/Lopes_Dominic_Gaut_Berys_The_Routledge_Companiom_2001.pdf
- Schelling's Aesthetic Turn in the System of Transcendental Idealism, by M. Aurelio https://www.kritike.org/journal/issue_11/aurelio_june2012.pdf