

Adorno's Aesthetic Theory Reduction

LEARN

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.

their own objectivity, their inner consistency, their level of form, their critical impulse, their relation to nonpsychical reality, and, finally, their idea of truth.

do modo apreciativo ao modo analítico

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.

justiça produção da gnose

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.

o novo deriva das forças individuais

In the new the knot is tied aesthetically between individual and society.

Modern art is equally determined socially by the conflict with the conditions of production and inner-aesthetically by the exclusion of exhausted and obsolete procedures.

o passado, o antigo e a tradição

Tradition is to be not abstractly negated but criticized without naïveté according to the current situation

ethos moderno, pós-romanticamente reconciliável

Whoever resists the overwhelming collective force in order to insist on the passage of art through the subject, need on no account at the same time think underneath the veil of subjectivism.

contra precarização institucional, relativismo camuflado e desprezo à episteme, como se enquadraria o trabalho do artista, supondo a configuração da polis coesa e garantidora das tensões pragmáticas?

total social consciousness having reached a level where it no longer conflicts with the most progressive consciousness

Art need not defend itself against the rebuke that it is degenerate; art meets this rebuke by refusing to affirm the miserable course of the world as the iron law of nature.

in the Renaissance, the emancipation of art from cultic heteronomy was part of the discovery of construction, then called “composition.”

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

Technological requirements drive out the contingency of the individual who produces the work. (...) art breaks out of the sphere of the portrayal of emotions and is transformed into the expression of what no significative language can achieve.

perhaps the most profound force of resistance stored in the cultural landscape is the expression of history that is compelling, aesthetically, because it is etched by the real suffering of the past.

painting knew to read nature as the cipher of the historical

chave analítica do poeta-crítico

analysis subjectively redescribes the course that the artwork objectively describes within itself: Adequate knowledge of the aesthetic is the spontaneous completion of the objective processes that, by virtue of the tensions of this completion, transpire within it.

Under patient contemplation artworks begin to move.

Artworks thus vie with the syntheses of significative thinking, their irreconcilable enemy

a justificação policial da arte em tempos de imagens fracas e baixa atenção

it does not remain a dull particular for which other particulars could be substituted (...) 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.

Artworks draw credit from a praxis that has yet to begin and no one knows whether anything backs their letters of credit

To experience art means to become conscious of its immanent process

To analyze artworks means no less than to become conscious of the history immanently sedimented in them

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

Society, the determinant of experience, constitutes artworks as their true subject

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

[spirit is] immanent mediation

[spirit is] the luminous source

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.

ver do espiritual da arte em Kandinsky

The further artworks distance themselves from the childish desire to please, the more what they are in themselves prevails over what they present to even the most ideal viewer, whose reflexes increasingly become a matter of indifference. In the sphere of natural beauty, Kant's theory of the sublime anticipates the spiritualization that art alone is able to achieve. For Kant, what is sublime in nature is nothing but the autonomy of the spirit in the face of the superior power of sensuous existence, and this autonomy is achieved only in the spiritualized artwork.

um lugar difícil

art's spiritualization, as the primacy of its procedures, distances art from naïve conceptuality and the commonsense idea of comprehensibility.

quando nasce a conversa (ver ciclo de vinhetas nos papeis)

symbols or metaphors in modern art make themselves progressively independent of their symbolic function and thereby contribute to the constitution of a realm that is antithetical to the empirical world and its meanings. Art absorbs symbols in such a fashion that they are no longer symbolic; advanced artists have themselves carried out the critique of the character of the symbol. The ciphers and characters of modern art are signs that have forgotten themselves and become absolute.

art is no more concept than it is pure intuition, and it is precisely thereby that art protests against their separation

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.

complicity of the artwork's thing-character with social reification and thus with its untruth: the fetishization of what is in itself a process as a relation between elements (...) 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.

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.

ver pos 3005 on the problem of meaning

organization of an artwork, of bringing its elements together into an eloquent relation.

The eradication of every trace of revelation from art would, however, degrade it to the undifferentiated repetition of the status quo

subject [is the] instrument of expression (...) apersonal, participating (...) ego [,] without ever becoming identical with it.

When untamed by taste or artistic understanding the need for expression converges with the bluntness of rational objectivity. (...) Artworks are smart or foolish according to their procedures, not according to the thoughts their author has about them.

ver pos 3252 on the aporia mimesis X construction

sealed tightly against superficial rationality.

Only the autonomous self is able to turn critically against itself and break through its illusory imprisonment.

[submission of society to the supremacy of production relations turned the] hubris [of the] subject [into] lament [of its] miscarriage, [and art merely the] cipher [of this] possibility

The inextricability of reification and mimesis defines the aporia of artistic expression

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.

aprendizado ou consciência das autocríticas das camadas históricas

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 enigmaticalness of artworks remains bound up with history. It was through history that they became an enig-ma; it is history that ever and again makes them such, and, conversely, it is history alone—which gave them their authority—that holds at a distance the embarrassing question of their *raison d'être*.

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.

mediations, those of the works' discipline as well as those of thought and philosophy

theory of art must not situate itself beyond art but must rather entrust itself to its laws of movement

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 (...) In artworks, objectivity and truth are inseparable

ver 3623 for organization and spirit / . ver 3654 for verdade filosófica x conteúdo de verdade

[artworks] achieve their truth content, what is spiritual in them, rather than merely signifying this content.

Aesthetic experience is not genuine experience unless it becomes philosophy. The condition for the possibility that philosophy and art converge is to be sought in the element of universality that art possesses through its specification as language sui generis

history alone frees the work from being merely something posited or manufactured

anti-mimetic impulse borrowed from the external unites the work as a whole (3806)

The unity that artworks thereby achieve makes them analogous to the logic of experience

Aesthetic success is essentially measured by whether the formed object is able to awaken the content [Inhalt] sedimented in the form.

the more they [disparate elements] are syntactically articulated in themselves, the more eloquent they [art objects] become in all their elements

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.

It is as labor, and not as communication, that the subject in art comes into its own.

By entrusting itself fully to its material, production results in something universal born out of the utmost individuation. The force with which the private I is externalized in the work is the I's collective essence; it constitutes the linguistic quality of works. The labor in the artwork becomes social by way of the individual

The aesthetic We is a social whole on the horizon of a certain indeterminateness

The aporia of art today is not to be cured through any willing subordination to authority. It remains an open question just how, without coercion, it would be possible, given an unmitigated nominalism, to achieve anything on the order of an

objectivity of form; this is impeded by instituted closure. The tendency toward this instituted closure was synchronous with the rise of political fascism, whose ideology similarly feigned that a state freed from the desperation and insecurity of its subjects during the period of late liberalism could be hoped for only on the basis of the abdication of the subject

Like art itself, knowledge of it is consummated dialectically. The more the observer adds to the process, the greater the energy with which he penetrates the artwork, the more he then becomes aware of objectivity from within

criticism 101

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

Without social reflection, however, the artwork is not to be understood in relation to that of which it constitutes one element, nor is it to be deciphered in terms of its own content.

immanent analyses [...] lead to universal determinations that emerge directly from the most extreme specification.

Explanation amounts to the reduction to what is already known, whose synthesis with what is to be explained inescapably involves a universal.

aesthetics must bring to consciousness [particular x universal relations in the work]

Spirit in artworks is posited by their structure, it is not something added from outside

see p. 253 for e.g. on beethoven

Artworks organize what is not organized. [...] The dynamic that each artwork encapsulates is what is eloquent in it.

critics' creed

monadological rigor of immanent critique and the categorical claim of aesthetic judgment

Art that is compelled toward a truth content that is the locus of unarbitrated contradictions is not capable of the positivity of negation that animated the traditional concept of the sublime as the presence of the infinite

history of modern art is not merely analogous to the history of philosophy: It is the same history

The raw—the subjective nucleus of evil—is a priori negated by art, from which the ideal of being fully formed is indispensable: This, and not the pronouncement of

moral theses or the striving after moral effects, is art's participation in the moral and makes it part of a more humanly worthy society

the administered [world] must renounce the possibility of maturity, including aesthetic maturity [hence art and art criticism being evermore necessary]

Art respects the masses by presenting itself to them as what they could be rather than by adapting itself to them in their degraded condition. Socially, the vulgar in art is the subjective identification with objectively reproduced humiliation

Because aesthetic vulgarity undialectically imitates the invariants of social degradation, it has no history

Fidelity to the noble in art should be maintained, just as the noble should reflect its own culpability, its complicity with privilege. Its refuge remains exclusively the unflinching power of resistance in the act of forming

Their truth content cannot be separated from the concept of humanity. Through every mediation, through all negativity, they are images of a transformed humanity and are unable to come to rest in themselves by any abstraction from this transformation

utopia x hubris

the process enacted internally by each and every artwork works back on society as the model of a possible praxis in which something on the order of a collective subject is constituted

ver epígrafe de Sto. Agostinho in Neve no remo

recipients forget themselves and disappear into the work [...] the possibility of truth, embodied in the aesthetic image, becomes tangible

the pressure of heteronomous life makes distraction compulsory, thus prohibiting the concentration of a strong ego that is requisite to the experience of the nonstereotypical

expression is the negativity of suffering, and construction is the effort to bear up under the suffering of alienation by exceeding it on the horizon of undiminished and thus no longer violent rationality

Art becomes social knowledge by grasping the essence, not by endlessly talking about it, illustrating it, or somehow imitating it

or why l. f. carvalho's dreamy series can be more socially sensitive than realistic soaps

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.

see Latour's take on values and modes

In art, more than in any other sphere, it is right to speak of value

critic as artist

see with the work's own eyes

Although artworks offer themselves to observation, they at the same time disorient the observer who is held at the distance of a mere spectator; to him is revealed the truth of the work as if it must also be his own

fulfill the work in its own terms [instead of projecting yourself into it]

submit to the discipline of the work rather than demand that the artwork give him something

the course of history, their [artwork's] critic

[critics work towards the] fruitful tenebrosity of works

[search for] the force of still-unrealized reality free of fear

see Rorty's romantic x pragmatic take

The rhythm of the periodic return of romantic and classicist currents in art [confronts its pretention of] being situated above and beyond time to its actual transience as a merely human work

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

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.

The recently adopted insistence on culturing uncultivation, the enthusiasm for the beauty of street battles, is a reprise of futurist and dadaist actions. The cheap aestheticism of short-winded politics is reciprocal with the faltering of aesthetic power. Recommending jazz and rock-and-roll instead of Beethoven does not demolish the affirmative lie of culture but rather furnishes barbarism and the profit interest of the culture industry with a subterfuge. The allegedly vital and uncorrupted nature of such products is synthetically processed by precisely those powers that are supposedly the target of the Great Refusal: These products are the truly corrupt.

Only by mediation, not by taking sides, are artworks capable of transcending the antagonistic situation through expression.

Even in a legendary better future, art could not disavow remembrance of accumulated horror; otherwise its form would be trivial.

Aesthetic comportment is the capacity to perceive more in things than they are; it is the gaze under which the given is transformed into an image.

Ultimately, aesthetic comportment is to be defined as the capacity to shudder, as if goose bumps were the first aesthetic image.

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.

Art and happiness both arouse the suspicion of infantilism, although the anxiety that such infantilism inspires is itself regression, the misconstrual of the *raison d'être* of all rationality; for the movement of the principle of self-preservation, to the extent that it is not fetishized, leads by its own force to the desideratum of happiness

The truth content of an artwork requires philosophy. It is only in this truth content that philosophy converges with art or extinguishes itself in it. The way toward this is defined by the reflected immanence of works, not by the external application of philosophemes. The truth content of works must be rigorously distinguished from all philosophy that is pumped into them by authors or theorists

[art criticism as the pedagogy of teleology](#)

general direction of society toward the apotheosis of means, production for the sake of production, total employment and all that is part of it, because the goals themselves—the rational organization of humanity—are blocked.

[see s.m.b.a.'s arte poética III](#)

Artworks are understood only when their experience is brought to the level of distinguishing between true and not true or, as a preliminary stage, between correct and incorrect. Critique is not externally added into aesthetic experience but, rather, is immanent to it

REFLECT

Art perceived strictly aesthetically is art aesthetically misperceived.

Art's promesse du bonheur means not only that hitherto praxis has blocked happiness but that happiness is beyond praxis.

In important artworks the sensuous illuminated by its art shines forth as spiritual just as the abstract detail, however indifferent to appearance it may be, gains sensuous luster from the spirit of the work.

Isms are scandalous because they do not fit into the schema of absolute individuation but remain as an island of a tradition that was shattered by the principle of individuation.

The traces to be found in the material and the technical procedures, from which every qualitatively new work takes its lead, are scars: They are the loci at which the preceding works misfired.

[enchantment in art's] semblance disenchants the disenchanted world

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.

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.

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.

It manifests foreignness at the same time that it seeks to make experiential what is thing-like and foreign

the definition of beauty as the sensual semblance of the idea

necessity is not a given but something unresolved

Art is the intuition of what is not intuitable; it is akin to the conceptual without the concept. It is by way of concepts, however, that art sets free its mimetic, nonconceptual layer.

Art militates against the concept as much as it does against domination, but for this

opposition it, like philosophy, requires concepts.

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

the answer is both hidden and demanded by the structure

Whether the promise is a deception—that is the enigma

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.

"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.

The concept of form marks out art's sharp antithesis to an empirical world in which art's right to exist is uncertain. Art has precisely the same chance of survival as does form, no better.

Stripping the material of any qualitative dimension, which superficially connotes its dehistoricization, is itself the material's historical propensity, the propensity of subjective reason. What defines its limits are that it leaves its historical determinations behind in the material.

art must testify to the unreconciled and at the same time envision its reconciliation

Not genetically, but in terms of its constitution, art is the most compelling argument against the epistemological division of sensuality and intellect

in order to become self-identical, in need of what is nonidentical, heterogeneous, and not already formed. The resistance to them of otherness, on which they are nevertheless dependent, compels them to articulate their own formal language, to leave not the smallest unformed particle as remnant. This reciprocity constitutes art's dynamic; it is an irresolvable antithesis that is never brought to rest in the state of being

As an element of an overarching context of the spirit of an epoch, entwined with history and society, artworks go beyond their monadic limit even though they lack windows

Artworks may be all the more truly experienced the more their historical substance is that of the one who experiences it.

social critique must be raised to the level of form, to the point that it wipes out all manifestly social content

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

Art is the rescue of nature—or of immediacy—through its negation, that is, total mediation

content [Gehalt] of works and of art as a whole—its ultimate end—is not formal but concrete. Yet this content [Gehalt] becomes concrete only by virtue of aesthetic form

The formal principle according to which artworks should be both tension and equilibrium registers the antagonistic content of aesthetic experience, that of an unreconciled reality that nevertheless wants reconciliation

The work is at once the quintessence of relations of tension and the attempt to dissolve them

The crisis of meaning in art, immanently provoked by the unstoppable dynamism of nominalism, is linked with extra-aesthetic experience, for the inner-aesthetic nexus that constitutes meaning reflects the meaningfulness of the world and its course as the tacit and therefore all the more powerful apriori of artworks

Artistic production that refuses to relinquish the impulse against the ossification of life and is thus truly naïve, becomes what according to the game rules of conventional society is the opposite of naïveté

The ideal perception of artworks would be that in which what is mediated becomes immediate; naïveté is the goal, not the origin

What is mediated in art, that through which the artwork becomes something other than its mere factuality, must be mediated a second time by reflection: through the medium of the concept

CORE

By its difference from empirical reality the artwork necessarily constitutes itself in relation to what it is not

artworks are a socially productive achievement

the plenipotentary of a better praxis than that which has to date predominated

through duration art protests against death (...) transient eternity (...) Art is the semblance of what is beyond death's reach.

necessidade inerente via irrealização totalizante da matéria. diferencial do espírito, a impregnação do que ainda não é, a resistência da arte pela hipótese de que a realização total materialista seria a abolição do materialismo
an objective need, the neediness of the world [to make possible] continuation

The truth content of artworks is fused with their critical content. (...) binds artworks to one another

the pathos of an objectivity that confronts the individual with what is more and other than he is in his historically imperative insufficiency

the artist works as social agent, indifferent to society's own consciousness (...) which he continually criticizes by following the rigors of his métier.

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.

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.

construction [is art's] authority limited

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.

mediated plenipotentary of immediacy

the anticipation of a being-in-itself that does not yet exist, of an unknown. [something that should exist] in itself [in the artobject]

the remembered shudder

The encipherment of the artwork (...) refuses the univocity of judgment through its form bring the exchangeable to critical self-consciousness grasp the universal (...) in the particular

History is the content of artworks

maturação da razão

[art is] an overarching process of spiritualization: that of the progress of consciousness

Semblance (...) heralds the ineffable. (...) It inheres in the grandeur of art to awaken this trust.

The truth content of artworks is the objective solution of the enigma posed by each and every one (...) **It can only be achieved by philosophical reflection. This alone is the justification of aesthetics.**

the need of artworks for interpretation, their need for the production of their truth content, is the stigma of their constitutive insufficiency.

his other is not concept and unity, but rather a multiplicity

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.

autonomous art is a work of contrived immortality, utopia and hubris in one

work's constitution as the expression of a social relation that bears in itself the law of its own reification: Only as things do artworks become the antithesis of the reified monstrosity.

artworks are not being but a process of becoming [...] They are in need of continuity and capable of it by virtue of their incompleteness

creed (+see p. 242 on mozart's negativity)

All artworks, even the affirmative, are a priori polemical. The idea of a conservative artwork is inherently absurd. By emphatically separating themselves from the empirical world, their other, they bear witness that that world itself should be other than it is; they are the unconscious schemata of that world's transformation.

(se p. 243 on nobility and decay)

duration becomes their intention

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

what is transcendent to them is imported into them as that by which they in the first place become an **immanent nexus**

authentic works are those that surrender themselves to the historical substance of their age without reservation and without the presumption of being superior to it. They are the self-unconscious historiography of their epoch

[artwork's] form springs from its truth content

Technique insures that the artwork is more than an agglomeration of what is factually available, and this more is art's content

Art keeps itself alive through its social force of resistance; unless it reifies itself, it becomes a commodity. Its contribution to society is not communication with it but rather something extremely mediated: It is resistance in which, by virtue of inner-aesthetic development, social development is reproduced without being imitated

Artworks are plenipotentiaries of things that are no longer distorted by exchange, profit, and the false needs of a degraded humanity

Artworks that do not insist fetishistically on their coherence, as if they were the absolute that they are unable to be, are worthless from the start

artworks correspond to the objective need for a transformation of consciousness that could become a transformation of reality

[artworks] are motivated by the longing and the will that the world be other than it is

The immanence of artworks, their apparently a priori distance from the empirical, would not exist without the prospect of a world transformed by self-conscious praxis

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

subjective origin x social labor opens theory to artistic experience _ reflections transforms traditional categories, making history penetrate theory

[artwork's] nature as products of social labor [...] thought liberates historical dialect

Art is directed toward truth [...] it is not itself immediate truth; to this extent truth is its content.

The immanent coherence of artworks and their meta-aesthetic truth converge

in their truth content

the Ariadnian thread by which they feel their way through their inner darkness.

interpretation of artworks penetrates to this subjectively experienced kernel of experience, which goes beyond the subject; interpretation thereby obeys the convergence of philosophy and art in truth content.

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.

Art, the afterimage of human repression of nature, simultaneously negates this repression through reflection and draws close to nature. The **subjectively instituted totality of artworks does not remain the totality imposed on the other, but rather, by its distance from this other, becomes the imaginative restitution of the other.**

The proscription of the element of willful domination in art is not aimed at domination but at the expiation of domination, in that the subject places the control of itself and its other in the service of the nonidentical.

art is a priori the critic of the uniform, even when it accommodates itself to what it criticizes and effectively moves within its presuppositions. Unconsciously every artwork must ask itself if and how it can exist as utopia

art allies itself with repressed and dominated nature in the progressively rationalized and integrated society

and aesthetics develops their reciprocal mediation in the work itself

All works are formed in themselves according to their own logic and consistency as much as they are elements in the context of spirit and society. The two aspects are not to be neatly separated, as is the scientific habit. True consciousness of the external world participates in the work's immanent coherence; the spiritual and social standpoint of an artwork can only be discerned on the basis of its internal crystallization.

the question posed by every artwork is how, under the domination of the universal, a particular is in any way possible

we like to call these objects sublime because they raise the soul's fortitude above its usual middle range and allow us to discover in ourselves an ability to resist that is of a quite different kind, and that gives us the courage to believe that we could be a match for nature's seeming omnipotence