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THE ECONOMY OF ART

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The subject of art is an infinitesimal subject. It articulates its infinite nearness to the infinite. So nearness instead of distance. The work which it brings forth can be called an *infinitesimal* because it expresses the distance separating it from the incommensurable. In the artwork, the untouchable is touched and it is obvious that this touching makes of it an incommensurable magnitude obstructing its complete grasping. And yet it must be possible to tailor a form to this incomplete presence which is the form of the formless. The work does not close itself over itself. It remains open. Its contour is a tearing open toward an exterior against which the form also delimits itself. Only the form attained in delimitation holds contact with the limit itself and with the formlessness toward which it is open without it being conceivable that it could articulate it *completely*. The work's appearance indicates what is no longer visible: invisibility which is a part of the work's evidence.

The feeling of insecurity, wonder and happiness which the encounter and engagement with an artwork can evoke has something to do with this experience of the invisible. Instead of deriving a longing for mysticism and obscurantism from the insistence on the work's invisibility, we should try to understand how little understanding is a part of understanding, how little we see when we see. The reverse of the visible, the invisible, is, in the Kantian sense of the word, a problematic concept, a concept which points to something which cannot be shown and, as undemonstrable, proves a certain efficiency which is the efficiency of the real or incommensurable in its impossible totalization. Obviously, a problematic something persists 'in' the work to which it owes its evidence by maintaining silence about it. Maintaining silence about the real in the artwork does not follow any strategy of making something puzzling or secret. It is the revelation of a structural inexplicability which enables the artwork's specific presence by allowing it to reach the edge of the universe of presence which is the domain of explicable realities.

The work keeps a minimum distance from this domain in order to give space to the incommensurability in the space of immanence of the one reality which, however, cannot be totalized, and in order ultimately to say of this reality that it is *real*, i.e. incompatible with the existing world.