

48th Lecture at the Gramsci Monument, The Bronx, NYC: 17th August 2013

THE SUBJECT OF ART

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1. Evidently belonging to art and philosophy is the ongoing invention of art and philosophy: Art and philosophy exist in the moment when they generate a concept of art and philosophy.
2. Typical of the critical-affirmative character of art and philosophy is the analysis and deconstruction of their concept.
3. Likewise characteristic of them is the affirmation and invention of a new self-understanding.
4. Criticism is evaluation of what was and is.
5. Affirmation supports what could be and does not (yet) exist.
6. There is no art and no philosophy which does not imply both aspects, the critical as well as the affirmative: Reflection and profection.
7. Let us venture, in analogy to a famous passage from Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, (1781/87), the following statement: Affirmation without criticism is empty, criticism without affirmation is blind.¹
8. Criticism and affirmation cooperate.
9. Art and philosophy affirm themselves as critical still in relation to themselves.
10. At the same time, they do not exhaust themselves in negativity.
11. They imply an affirmative element which indicates their receptivity to an inconsistency for which every ordinary artistic or philosophical position must find a form or a name.
12. The affirmative aspect of art and philosophy has nothing to do with the confirmation or acceptance of the social-political status quo, as is believed by the pseudo-critical Doxa.
13. On the contrary, it indicates the inconsistency of a religiosity of factuality which misinterprets itself as critical, whereas it actually conforms to a model of reality which no longer subjects it to inquiry.
14. Affirmation is affirmation of the inconsistency of the promise of consistency deemed to be "reality."

1 Cf. Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, B 75: "Gedanken ohne Inhalt sind leer, Anschauungen ohne Begriff sind blind." ("Thoughts without content are empty, contemplations without concepts are blind.")