

Aesthetics: intercollegiate lectures, Part I

Art, Romanticism and Metaphysics

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Lectures

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|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Art and Truth | 4 Oct |
| 2. | Romantic Theory of Art I | 11 Oct |
| 3. | Romantic Theory of Art II | 18 Oct |
| 4. | Schelling's Philosophy of Art | 25 Oct |
| 5. | Tragedy and Metaphysics | 1 Nov |
| [READING WEEK] | | |
| 6. | Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Gadamer | 15
Nov |
| 7. | Adorno, Postmodernism, and the Art of the Avant-Garde | 22 Nov |

Reading

Background: Kant:

If you are not familiar with Kant's aesthetics, then you should read:

- I. Kant, *Critique of Judgement* (1790), §§1-9, §§23-4, §§27-8, §§43-50, §§59-60. (Recommended is the translation by S. Pluhar: Indianapolis: Hackett, 1996.) These selections include Kant's i) preliminary analysis of pure judgements of taste, ii) theory of the sublime, iii) discussion of fine art, and iv) theory of beauty as the symbol of the morally good.
- R. Scruton, *Kant* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), ch. 6.
- D. Burnham, *An Introduction to Kant's 'Critique of Judgement'* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), chs. 1 and 4.

Collections of extracts:

- D. Simpson ed., *German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism: Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Schopenhauer, Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984). Collection of extracts.
- K. Wheeler ed., *German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism: The Romantic Ironists and Goethe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984). Collection of extracts.
- A. L. Willson, ed. *German Romantic Criticism* (New York: Continuum, 1982). Collection of extracts.

Primary texts:

- F. Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man: In a Series of Letters* (1793-95), trans. E. Wilkinson and L. Willoughby (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982).
- J. G. Fichte, 'On the spirit and letter in philosophy' (1794), in D. Simpson ed., *German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism*.
- Novalis (Friedrich von Hardenberg), 'Logological fragments I' (1797-98), in *Philosophical Writings*, trans. M. Stoljar (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997).
- F. Hölderlin, 'The ground for Empedocles' (1799), 'On the operations of the

poetic spirit' (1800), and 'On the difference of poetic modes' (1800), in *Essays and Letters on Theory*, trans. and ed. T. Pfau (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988).

– F. Schlegel, 'Ideas' (1800), in *Philosophical Fragments*, trans. P. Firchow (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991).

– Jean Paul (Johann Paul Richter), *School of Aesthetics* (1804, 2nd edn 1813 enlarged, 3rd edn 1825 enlarged), extracts in A. L. Willson ed., *German Romantic Criticism*, and in K. Wheeler ed., *German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism*.

– F. W. J. Schelling, *System of Transcendental Idealism (1800)*, trans. P. Heath (Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 1978), Part Six, 'Deduction of a universal organ of philosophy, or: essentials of the philosophy of art according to the principles of transcendental idealism'.

– F. W. J. Schelling, *Philosophy of Art (1804-05)*, trans. D. Stott (Minneapolis: Minnesota Press, 1989).

– P. B. Shelley, *Defence of Poetry* (1821), in *Selected Poetry and Prose* (New York: Signet, 1966). [Included in all editions of Shelley's prose works.]

– M. Heidegger, 'The origin of the work of art' (1950) [abridged], in *Basic Writings: From 'Being and Time' (1927) to 'The Task of Thinking' (1964)*, ed. D. Farrell Krell (London: Routledge, 1993).

– M. Merleau-Ponty, 'Cézanne's doubt' (1948), in *Sense and Non-Sense*, trans. H. Dreyfus and P. Dreyfus (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1964).

– M. Merleau-Ponty, 'Indirect language and the voices of silence' (1960), in *Signs*, trans. R. McCleary (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1964).

– M. Merleau-Ponty, 'Eye and mind' (1961), in *The Primacy of Perception: And Other Essays on Phenomenological Psychology, The Philosophy of Art, History and Politics*, ed. J. M. (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1964).

- H.-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2nd & revised edn. (1st edn. 1975, 2nd edn. 1989), trans. J. Weinsheimer and D. Marshall (Shed & Ward: London, 1993), Part I, 'The question of truth as it emerges in the experience of art'.
- H.-G. Gadamer, *The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays* (1967-80), trans. N. Walker, ed. R. Bernasconi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).
- T. W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory* (1970), trans. C. Lenhardt, ed. G. Adorno and R. Tiedemann (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984); or {a better translation} trans. and ed. R. Hullot-Kentor (London: Athlone Press, 1997); extracts in *The Adorno Reader*, ed. B. O'Connor (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), ch. 14.
- H. Marcuse, *The Aesthetic Dimension: Toward A Critique Of Marxist Aesthetics* (1977), trans. H. Marcuse and E. Sherover (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978).
- J.-F. Lyotard, *The Inhuman: Reflections on Time* (1988), trans. G. Bennington and R. Bowlby (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1991), chs. 6-9.

Secondary literature:

- M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953).
- M. H. Abrams, *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* (New York: Norton, 1971).
- J. Bernstein, *The Fate of Art* (Cambridge: Polity, 1992).
- A. Bowie, *Aesthetics and Subjectivity: From Kant to Nietzsche* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990).
- P. Bürger, *Theory of The Avant-Garde*, trans. M. Shaw (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984).
- P. Crowther, *Art and Embodiment: From Aesthetics to Self-Consciousness* (Clarendon: Oxford, 1993).

- R. Eldridge, *The Persistence of Romanticism: Essays in Philosophy and Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
- R. Geuss, 'Art and theodicy', in *Morality, Culture, History: Essays On German Philosophy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
- A. Megill, *Prophets of Extremity: Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault, Derrida* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985). See especially the Introduction.
- J.-M. Schaeffer, *Art of the Modern Age: Philosophy of Art from Kant to Heidegger*, trans. S. Rendall (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000).
- W. Silz, *Early German Romanticism: Its Founders and Heinrich von Kleist* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1929).
- O. Walzel, *German Romanticism*, trans. A. Lussky (New York: Capricorn, 1932).
- R. Wernaer, *Romanticism and the Romantic School in Germany* (New York: Haskell House, 1966).

Essay questions

1. In what sense, if any, can truth be ascribed to works of art?
2. 'Where philosophy stops, there art begins.' Can this view be justified?
3. Elucidate Schelling's claim that the 'philosophy of art is a necessary goal of the philosopher, who in art views the inner essence of his own discipline'.
4. 'The true significance of tragedy is not moral but metaphysical.' Discuss.